



# Liberty News

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE USS LIBERTY

Volume 57 | September, 2015

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## Letter from the Editor

From all of us at *Liberty News*, we hope you have had a wonderful 2015. We'd like to wish you and yours a very...



--  
Wayne Kelley, Sr.  
*Editor*

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## Letter from the Vice President

Dear USS Liberty Shipmates, Family and Supporters:

As this year comes to an end I am truly amazed how many persons work so tirelessly to tell the American people the story of the USS Liberty. This year I spent time with Ted Arens and Herman Bender and these gentlemen work so hard to tell our story. We are truly blessed. This year I attended a reunion where we were honored not only by Manistee Michigan but also veterans who honored us in Manistee. Then in August Ted, Ernie and I and our wives attended a Veterans reunion in Kokomo, Indiana where we once again were able to tell our story to over a thousand veterans. At this reunion we met Navy veterans who write letters to their congressmen, send out DVD's, call the Legion headquarters to get their support and talk to their veterans organizations about the Liberty. We are not alone as many of the survivors also talk to organizations that help us tell our story and other towns in America are also recognizing the Liberty. I have learned of a play about the Liberty that is going to be put on in Nebraska, imagine, a Navy story in the Heartland. I am most proud of Phil Tourney who once again has his radio show going with support from Ron and Cat. Phil has many wonderful guests on his program and if you haven't had a chance to listen please do.

As this year comes to a close, I realize how important for me to realize the blessings we have been given and how I want to follow Joe Meadors email says, "I never want to give up trying to tell the American people the truth."

Two things in the planning stage, first, please think about attending the 50th reunion in Little Creek Virginia in 2017 and second, please pay your \$20 dues when you get the envelope in the mail.

God's blessings to you all.

Glenn Oliphant

## Statement of Purpose

**IN JUNE 1967** jet aircraft and motor torpedo boats of the Defense Forces of the State of Israel brutally assaulted the American naval intelligence-gathering ship, *USS Liberty*, while in international waters off the coast of the Sinai Peninsula in the Mediterranean Sea. The attack was preceded by more than six hours of intense low-level surveillance by Israeli photo reconnaissance aircraft, which buzzed the ship as low as 200 feet directly overhead. The carefully orchestrated assault that followed was initiated by high performance jet aircraft. This was followed by slower and more maneuverable jets carrying napalm, and was finally turned over to lethal torpedo boats, which blasted a forty-foot hole in the ship's side. The attack lasted more than two hours, deliberately killing 34 Americans and wounding at least 171 others. Over 821 rocket, cannon and machine gun holes were inflicted. When the *Liberty* stubbornly remained afloat despite her damage, Israeli forces machine-gunned her life rafts, firefighters, stretcher bearers, and sent troops carrying helicopters to finish the job, no survivors were to be taken.



At this point, with Sixth Fleet rescue aircraft supposedly en route, the government of Israel apologized and the identity of the assailants became known.

Details of the attack were hushed up in both countries. Israel claimed that her forces mistook the *Liberty* for an Egyptian ship, and our government quietly accepted that excuse despite evidence to the contrary. No ship in our history has ever received such damage and casualties by accident. Then our government downplayed the intensity of the surveillance and the severity of the attack, and imposed a news blackout on the crew to keep the story under control. The official version is that the *Liberty* was reconnoitered only three times and only from a great distance. The American people were told that the air attack lasted only five minutes and that it was followed by a single torpedo and an immediate apology and offer of assistance. Nothing could be further from the truth. In June 1982, fifteen years after the assault, crewmembers reunited for the first time in Washington, D.C. It was a tearful, joyful reunion in which the men not only released their pent up emotions and decided that the **USS Liberty Veterans Association** would be formed with the firm goals of finding all crew members, holding reunions, proper recognition of Captain and crew (in particular those who lost their lives), obtaining a Congressional investigation into the attack, and...

**TO BRING THE TRUE STORY OF THE ATTACK ON THE U.S.S. LIBERTY AND HER**

## Kokomo, Indiana (Writeup)

On 15 September 2015, Patricia and I left home and drove to Kokomo, Indiana, to meet up with Ted and Pam Arens and Merrilee and Glenn Oliphant. The occasion was the 33rd gathering of the Vietnam Veterans which lasted until Saturday, Sept. 19. Ted is a Marine who served fighting on the DMZ. Ted and Pam arrived on the 16th pulling Ted's red trailer (see the picture). The trailer had large signs painted on the side explaining facts about the attack and the bigotry suffered after the attack. It was very well done including a large banner placed on top which said "USS Liberty Veterans Association". Ted was given the prime spot to park the trailer for all to see as folks interfaced with events on stage nearby. Both Oliphant's and Gallo's arrived the evening of the 16th and as always it was great to see Merrilee, Glenn, Pam, and Ted. Our hotel was about 40 miles from the event as all the local hotels were quickly booked solid.

As indicated in some of the pictures, there was hundreds of temporary living quarters from tents, campers and RVs, to spectacular buses like mobile homes. The setting was rustic to say the least, where the folks were super friendly with lots of camp fires and places to gather. There were thousands of Vietnam Vets with their families. Once settled in, folks got around in golf carts or all-terrain vehicles.

We had tables set up in front of the trailer selling "Liberty" stuff to include clothing, DVDs (Justice for Liberty and Dead in the Water), and books. We also had hand-out material insuring that when coming by our location, they would know about the attack on the Liberty. As we have experienced in the past, there were lots of people who never heard about it. Once they did they were very upset. I was very impressed with the patriotism coming from not only the vets but also their families. It further inspires me about my feelings toward America, our way of life, and our LVA mission. We need to continue to do this. FYI: We had a dynamite staff and I especially mean our wives. I would do it again in a hart beat.

One of the folks we met was a salt named Jim Clendenning who was a Machinest Mate on the USS Belmont. Jim was very interesting to talk to us as we traded sea stories. He returned a few times to just pass the breeze. He was also very instrumental in helping us get the trailer ready for the road for which we were very thankful. I am including this paragraph because of what happened after the event when Jim returned home and wanted to talk with the National Commander of the American Legion about their LVA shortcomings. In a subsequent telephone conversation, he related the following: Jim called and asked to speak with the National Commander of the American Legion but instead they connected him to the National Judge Advocate, Phil Onderdonk. Mr. Onderdonk was hostile to Jim and said, "The Liberty and the Pueblo both were spy ships and should have never been there – I would nuke them both". Jim could not believe what he just heard and said "would you put Israel before American sailors?" Onderdonk replied, "Now I never said that". Still upset, Jim called back again asking to speak to the National Commander and was denied again. He has not spoken to him yet. I for one feel sorry for all the patriotic and dedicated members of the American Legion that believe and support the Liberty truth. Most American Legion personnel probably have no idea that they are being short changed by in-charge bigots.

While we were doing "our thing" at the trailer, Ted talked with one of the managers of the event and indicated to him that Ernie Gallo here is the President of the USS Liberty Veterans Association and gives presentations -- you should have him speak to the folks here. So, on Saturday, the main event day, I was the second speaker on stage and I was very well received. All of this could have never happened if it were not for Ted and Pam Arens. We have so much to be thankful for.

-Ernie

*Photos can be viewed on the following page.*

### Kokomo, Indiana (Photos)



## Herman Bender at Work

This is an example of just a few months of Herman's dedication and support to getting our message out to the public. That is, Mr. Bender, an honorary USS Liberty crewman, takes out newspaper adds all over the country. Many thanks Herman!!

See the following list. The newspaper add is from the Miami Herald, Feb. 13, 2015.

- Miami Herald, Feb. 13 and 15
- Virginia Pilot (Norfolk), June 7 and July 19
- Newport Daily News, June 6, July 3, and August 8
- Newport This Week, June 4, July 2, and August 6



Herman also explained that the Pittsburgh Post Gazette would not print his add and ignored his plea for an explanation. This is “controlled press” operating at its best. What could possibly be the issue from the example given?

## Gerry, Surette of the USS DAVIS

I was a crewmember of the USS Davis (DD-937) from August 1966 to July 1967. My rate was RM3. My name is Gerald R. Surette. When the ship departed for a Med cruise, the crewmen of the Davis had no idea what was going to happen to one of our ships later on. This is how I remember what happened. We had entered the Med and enjoyed a liberty in Gibraltar after crossing the Atlantic with the USS Saratoga (CVA-60) and her group. We fully expected to hit all the liberty ports that the Med had to offer, but this was not to be. We were instead told to stay at sea and operate with the Sixth Fleet as the Middle East was heating up.

The USS Davis was operating off of Crete with the Sixth Fleet when the first call came in from ROCKSTAR that she was hit and needed assistance. The date was June 8, 1967. ROCKSTAR was the call sign for the USS Liberty (AGTR-5). At this time, we were the Flagship for COMDESRON 12. One of our Radarmen, John Williams heard the first call and alerted the Captain of the Davis and the Commodore of COMDESRON 12. According to John, the Commodore and Captain Leahy, in a smoking jacket, ran up to the radar room and alerted the rest of the ship. About this time, the Flash Emergency message came over the teletype from the Saratoga on the circuit for fleet communications. I received it; and then ran it up to the bridge. By this time, all hell was breaking loose with the Sixth Fleet. Planes were being launched from one of the carriers, and there were flashing lights everywhere.

The whole fleet was coming together in battle formation. We got called back to the center of the fleet with the USS Massey, and the Commodore was sent over to the USS America in a whaleboat. When he got back to the Davis, we got our orders. The Davis and the Massey were to proceed to the USS Liberty's position and try to protect and help the ship. At that time, she was off the Sinai Peninsula. We were off Crete, about 300 hundred miles away. The Davis, with the Massey proceeded at top speed to the last reported position of the Liberty; from what we heard on the radio, we didn't know if she was going to be afloat, when we got to her position.

The night was spent checking gear, and getting ready for whatever faced us. We all knew that we were going into a war zone, and we were going to help a ship that was attacked and torpedoed. We knew men had been killed, and the USS Davis was more than ready for anything that came her way. The Davis and the Massey were to go to General Quarters about 5 A.M. on the morning of June 9, 1967. Every one of the men on those ships was at his battle station well before that. My duty station that day was to be in the whaleboat with a PRC10 radio strapped to my back. The whole crew of that whaleboat was ready an hour before we were to go into the water, and the engines were warmed up already. When we got to the Liberty, we were trucking. Our listed speed was 36 knots or better. We were going a lot faster than that. All stops had been pulled out, and the battle nozzles were in the boilers. General Quarters had been called, and we had live rounds up to the guns.

We slowed and circled the Liberty, and most of us on deck saw some things we had never seen before. That was the most beat up ship I ever saw afloat. She was listing to starboard and down at the bow. She had a large hole from the torpedo about amidships or just forward on her starboard side, and there were holes everywhere in the skin of the ship. The bridge had been worked over and the gun tubs were filled with holes. There was nothing left of the lifeboats or the rafts; they were gone. We launched the whaleboat, and went over to the Liberty. They had set the rope ladder over the hole made by a torpedo, so it was scary to say the least. The XO went first; and I went second. I had never made a boarding before and didn't know about the wave action that got you. I got on the ladder as the wave was almost at the bottom in a trough, and when I got on the ladder, a wave came along and lifted the boat up and smacked me in the butt, and dumped me into the bottom of the whale boat right on the radio. I was going to be damned if I couldn't get on that ship, so when the lifeboat came up, I grabbed for a rung.

*Continued on following page.*

## Gerry, Surette of the USS DAVIS

A Radioman from the Liberty met me on deck, and said he'd guide me to the bridge. The Executive Officer was nowhere in sight. The Radioman took me through the crew's mess where all the wounded were, and then up some ladders to a radio shack that had more holes in it than you could imagine. He finally led me to the bridge of the ship. The Captain of the Liberty and my XO were talking and discussing what the Liberty needed. Shortly, I was called over and the XO wanted Stokes litters. At this time, the Davis came alongside and tied up to the Liberty. Many of the crew from the Davis went over that day. The Engineering crew went over and helped Mr. Golden and Chief Brooks repair the engine room, and a Damage Control party went over and assisted the Damage Control party of the Liberty to stabilize the ship. The Doctors and Corpsmen were in the crew's mess, where the emergency first aid station had been set up, and were working on the men who were wounded. There were many Doctors and corpsmen from ships in the Sixth Fleet. We had several Doctors aboard that were attached to the USS America, who went over and helped the Liberty's Doctor. To say the least, the corpsmen and the Liberty's Doctor and the other Doctors from other ships did one hell of a job that day. The wounded were laid out all over the mess decks. They were on every table that was available, they were on the floor, and all over the ship; and the walking wounded were trying to get their ship to run.

I have never seen, before or since, such carnage as I saw that day. All because someone didn't want the USS Liberty to be there, and because Johnson and MacNamara didn't want to embarrass Israel. Planes were launched to cover the USS Liberty. Then, the President of the United States and the Secretary of Defense recalled them. I WATCHED THEM GO AND COME BACK! I heard the radio messages. The USS Davis and the tug, Papago escorted the Liberty from the attack site to Valletta, Malta, where she was put in dry dock and patched to sail home to Norfolk, Virginia. The trip from the attack site to Valletta took six days at 4 knots, which was as fast as the Liberty could go without sinking. During this time, the tug, Papago and the Destroyer, Davis trailed her to render assistance, if needed; and to recover anything that would come from the torpedo hole. The only thing that held her up was the repairs made by the Damage Control parties. During the journey, divers from the Papago tried to put a net over the opening that the torpedo had made, in the hopes that they could stop anything coming out of the torpedo hole. We stopped in mid ocean and the net was attached, but that exercise failed miserably as the net lasted about 10 seconds after the Liberty got moving again.

We escorted the Liberty to Valletta, and then had a few days liberty. We then left Valletta and started cruising around the Med. I got off in July and got discharged after sailing a 'PEACETIME CRUISE'. The Davis went on to a distinguished career, and was decommissioned in 1982 and was sent to Quincy, Massachusetts for scrapping in the early 90's.

Gerald R. Surette  
Former RM3  
USS Davis (DD-937)

## E-mail Version of Newsletter

Signup to receive your copy of Liberty News in FULL COLOR via e-mail instead of regular mail. This gives you a better copy of the newsletter AND helps us minimize our overhead.

**Signup today at:**  
<http://goo.gl/mzbwrE>





## Liberty Plaque at American Legion Post #75

This is the Plaque that the American Legion Post #74 Newberry MI presented to me and LVA to be displayed in their post - what a turnout - 175 people!

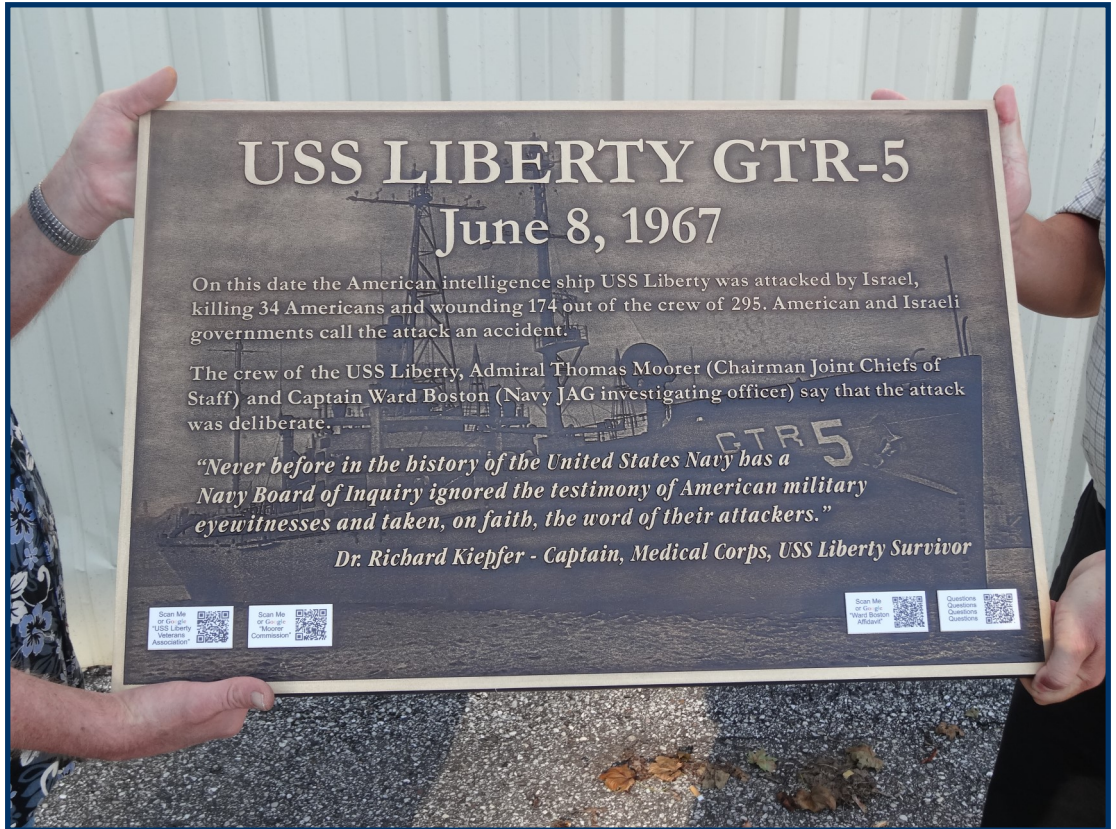
I met a Quartermaster veteran off of the "America" that came up to the Liberty the next day, and he took some pictures that I had never seen! He drove 120 miles to be there.

-Jack Beattie



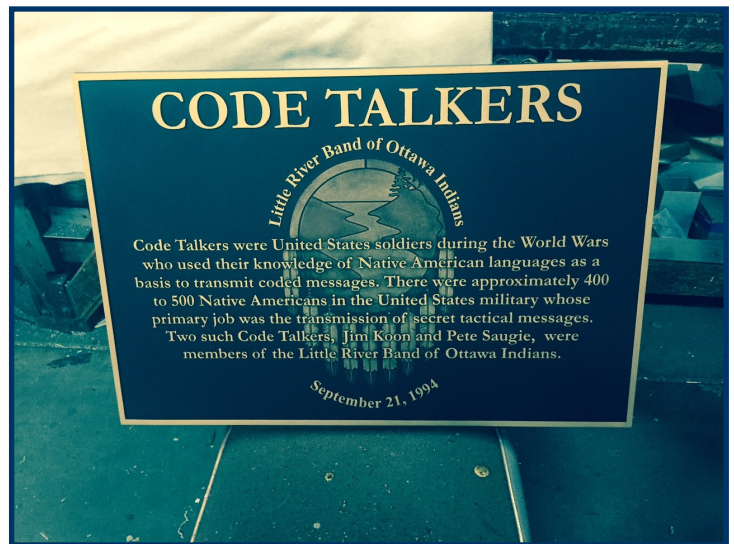
### Code Talkers Plaque in Manistee

The plaque for the Code Talkers was dedicated at Veterans Memorial Park in Manistee on October 3 at 2:00 pm. It was mounted next to the USS Liberty plaque. It is fitting that they are displayed next to one another. Another area will be prepared soon for two more plaques. In the early summer we will dedicate a plaque for Dwayne Dewey (MOH Korea) and later for Dr. Lewis



Haynes a Manistee High school graduate who served on the USS Indianapolis.

Anyone who wishes to help - you can donate to the Manistee County Community Foundation (Veterans Park) - the donations are tax deductible.



Fighting for the Truth

www.ludingtondailynews.com

\$1.00

Fighting for the truth for the USS Liberty crew

BY BRIAN MULHERIN  
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

MANISTEE — Whatever led to the events of June 8, 1967, crew members of the USS Liberty were never interviewed and never heard by Congressional investigators. In fact, crewmen were told never to discuss the incident or they would face court martial.

The "official" story is that the ship came under fire by Israeli forces in a tragic accident. Those who survived the attack beg to differ and have demanded for years that the truth be known.

The Liberty lost 31 sailors, two marines and an NSA civilian that day. Seventy percent of the 294-man crew became casualties, as 174 were wounded in addition to the 34 killed.

The ship is the most decorated Navy vessel for a single engagement in U.S. Navy history. Its captain, William McGonagle, received the Medal of Honor for guiding the ship to safety while under heavy fire.

There is still anger, rage and resentment in the hearts of the crew over the attack, over U.S. planes that were en route being told to

turn back and over the ship being left burning. But the deepest-seeded feelings are over what they call a cover-up that ensued.

On Saturday, the City of Manistee became the first municipality to honor the crewmen and their plight during a ceremony to dedicate a plaque along the Manistee River.

The plaque does not mince words.

"The crew of the USS Liberty, Admiral Thomas Moorer (Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff) and Captain Ward Boston (Navy JAG

SEE USS LIBERTY, A7



BRIAN MULHERIN | DAILY NEWS

Manistee Mayor Pro-Tem Jim Smith presents Ernie Gallo, left, of the USS Liberty Veterans' Association with a proclamation declaring Saturday to be USS Liberty Day in Manistee.



ent cartridges fly as members of the Manistee VFW Drill Team fire off a salute to the lost USS Liberty crew members.



Arens describes the piece of hull pierced by Israeli fire shown at Saturday's ceremony. Jim Matws, chaplain of the Manistee VFW post and Johner of Michigan's Military and Space Heroes Museum holding the piece donated to the museum by crew Jack Beattie.



Auger presents items from his museum for the crowd to examine, including the dress uniform of Lt. Cmdr. Phillip Armstrong Jr. of Detroit.

Continued on  
the following page

Fighting for the Truth (contd.)

MONDAY, JUNE 22, 2015 LUDINGTON DAILY NEWS

# USS LIBERTY: Seeking the truth about the attack

FROM PAGE A1

investigating officer) say that the attack was deliberate.

The plaque features a short synopsis of the events of that date and QR codes that can be scanned for more information.

Among those in attendance were Manistee Mayor Pro-Tem Jim Smith and State Rep. Ray Franz, R-Onekama.

Franz said he has introduced resolutions every year he has been in office to seek to have the incident fully investigated by the U.S. Congress, but the resolutions have failed.

"I'll introduce it again next year," Franz said.

Smith told the veterans during the ceremony that "generations to come will learn of your sacrifices." He read a proclamation declaring Saturday "USS Liberty Day."

Ted Arens, who was the driving force behind the plaque, said it's about respect and justice for those involved.

"I was in the Marine Corps in Vietnam," Arens said after the event. "Under the Uniform Code of Military Justice, you do not abandon comrades under fire."

Arens said when he first learned of the Liberty's plight, he was angry at the Israelis, but now he's angry with his own country for not fully investigating the incident and the cover-up that ensued.

"The Israelis did what they did for their country," Arens said. "The American government, for political reasons, abandoned these guys under fire."

During the ceremony, he thanked the citizens and city council.

"Here in Manistee, we choose with our hearts to honor the crew," Arens said. "Manistee, you make me so proud to be a part of this community."

CT2 Ernie Gallo, a member of the crew, told the crowd that Arens' support was "so steadfast and immense, he has been made an honorary USS Liberty crew member."

The crew members present each read names of some of those killed in the attack as a bell was tolled for each, then each crew member dropped a red rose into the river to remember the victims of the attack.

**THE STORY**

According to pamphlets provided by the USS Liberty Veterans Association, the ship was conducting surveillance off the Egyptian coast when it came under attack by the Israelis. The ship had traditional American markings on its bow (GTR-5) and had its name on the stern. It was flying a large American flag. The ship had been subjected to several flyovers by Israeli aircraft at altitudes as low as 200 feet.

After the surveillance flights, the ship was strafed, rocketed and bombed by Israeli jets. It was then subjected to 40mm canon fire and torpedo attacks by three Israeli torpedo boats. The Liberty, being a surveillance vessel, was armed with only four .50-caliber machine guns.

The LVA contends that the attack was designed to "send a message" to the U.S. over leaving Israel to fend for itself in the Six Day War with the Soviet Union.

"It was obvious to the Liberty crew that survivors were not to be taken as the Israelis were observed machine gunning life rafts and fire fighters," according to the pamphlet "The USS Liberty Story," which was distributed by the LVA at the event.

Planes from nearby U.S. ships that were en route were recalled, with the recall order confirmed twice by the White House, according to the LVA.

SEE USS LIBERTY, A8



BRIAN MULHERIN | DAILY NEWS

Crew members snap off a salute to Ted Arens, who was declared an honorary USS Liberty crew member on Saturday for his efforts to bring light to the events of June 8, 1967.

# USS LIBERTY: Members of crew thankful for recognition

FROM PAGE A7

**REACTIONS**

The crewmen were thankful for the recognition of their plight.

MRC Jack Beattie of Clay, Michigan, wore his dress whites to the ceremony and said it was a great event.

"It's a true story," Beattie said. "I was a survivor."

He said the way the attack was whitewashed was "like a slap in the face."

"There was no investigation," Beattie said. "I was an eyewitness. Nobody ever asked me what I saw."

He said finding out that the planes were recalled was "beyond comprehension."

Gunnery Sgt. Bryce Lockwood was one of the people on the ship who dove to try to help comrades. He said the ordeal since has been like a bitter divorce with his government. Asked about how veterans

were treated after Vietnam, where he subsequently served, and the USS Liberty incident, he said the United States of America is still the greatest country in the world.

The reception Saturday helped, he said.

"This is marvelous — heartwarming," Lockwood said. "It gives you faith in America again."

Gallo said Saturday's reception was wonderful.

He said Arens has passion as a patriot of the United States.

Arens said the plaque is the first of six planned for the memorial park near Family Dollar. The next one will be about the Native American "code talkers," and one is also planned for Mason County Medal of Honor recipient Duane Dewey.

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843-1122 x348

**TAPS for Survivor: Kenneth Burton Eakins**

**Kenneth Burton Eakins**  
**September 18, 1947—October 15, 2015**  
**Corpus Christi, Texas**

Eakins, age 68, went home to be with our Lord and Savior on the morning of October 15, 2015 with family by his side. He was born in Vancouver Washington at 7:11 a.m. on September 18, 1947. He was the eldest son of Jean and Buddy White. Kenny loved God and his country. He enlisted in the Navy at the age of seventeen, where he served his country aboard the U.S.S. Liberty as a Cryptologic Technician Seaman. After being wounded in action, Kenny was presented with a Purple Heart. He was also awarded the Navy Combat Action Ribbon, Presidential Unit Citation and National Defense Service Medal. The U.S.S. Liberty was splashed across world headlines in 1967. She was attacked by Israeli Forces in the Mediterranean Sea. Thirty-four Americans lost their lives as the ship was strafed by aircraft machine guns and torpedoed by patrol boats. Kenny was best known for his dry sense of humor. He was very witty and could out wisecrack anyone, anytime. We will forever miss his laugh and the laughter he brought to us. Kenny enjoyed family time. He loved to have a good home cooked meal prepared by his mother and sisters, while he watched football with the guys. Kenny was an avid reader and liked to fish. He also enjoyed playing poker and pool with his buddies. Kenny is survived by his mother, Jean White and his five younger siblings; Jennifer Burkham, Terry (Darla) White, Sharon (David) Green, Rhonda Moody (Brent), David White; nieces and nephews Terry, Tammy, Katie, Savannah, Buddy, Ashley, Cathy, Kevin, David and Kyle; as well as numerous cousins and friends, all who loved him dearly. A Memorial Service will be held at 10:00 a.m. on Friday, October 23, 2015 at, Corpus Christi Funeral Home. An Interment to follow at Rose Hill Cemetery. The family would like to thank the staff and nurses at Christus Spohn Shoreline for the compassionate care that was given to Kenny.



IN LOVING MEMORY

*Kenneth Burton Eakins*

*September 18, 1947 - October 15, 2015*



## A Bitter Sweet Event

The reason I wrote my book, “Liberty Injustices – A Survivor's Account of American Bigotry” was to document some of the deceit, hatred, and intimidation the crew of the USS Liberty have experienced. The story I am about to tell is a continuation of the same.

The story begins with the “Founder and CEO of the Silver Star Families of America”, Steven Newton, who wanted to help our cause, contacted the Palm Coast Mayor, Jon Netts, with a bullet list of facts regarding Liberty assets and requested the mayor declare June 8th as “USS Liberty Day” into infinity. The mayor's office was taken by this list and enthusiastically created a subject proclamation and mailed it to me. I was very impressed and pleased. Then, the thought struck me that it would be great if the mayor could present the proclamation to me in front of the Palm Coast's Liberty tree located within the city's Heroes Memorial Park. So, I called his staff with the proposal, they agreed, and a mutual date was chosen. I indicated I would invite Palm Coast friends and asked his staff could they contact the Press and they agreed. Everything was set for Wednesday, November 18th at 10 AM.

I decided following the proclamation presentation, I would treat everyone to a cup of coffee and doughnut at our local Dunkin Doughnuts. I contacted fellow shipmates, Warren Heaney and Mickey LeMay and they agreed to come. In addition, I knew our Liberty Supporter and Honorary crewman, Ted Arens and his lovely wife Pam, would be coming to Florida for the winter and he agreed to stop off at Palm Coast. I advised our local VFW post and they agreed to support the event. I anticipated about forty to fifty people. I was satisfied everything was falling into place.

On Friday, November 11, I received a call from the mayor's staff calling off the presentation. They told me the mayor was ill, but in addition, the USS Liberty story was too controversial and therefore no one from the city council would participate. I was devastated but not surprised. I assume someone or some group must have gotten to the Mayor's office. While the proclamation is in effect, the City of Palm Coast, will not present it publicly. I personally visited City Hall to give Mayor Netts a copy of my book to explain my extreme disappointment and passion. After waiting a few minutes the mayor passed by and I gave him my book and discussed the non-event. Who knows if he will read it?

*Continued on following page.*

A Bitter Sweet Event (contd.)



PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, on June 8<sup>th</sup> 1967, after eight hours of aerial surveillance, Israel launched a two-hour air and naval attack against USS Liberty, the most sophisticated intelligence ship in the world, inflicting 34 dead and 173 wounded American servicemen and;

WHEREAS, the U.S.S. Liberty became the most decorated Navy ship ever for a single engagement and;

WHEREAS, Captain McGonagle was awarded the Medal of Honor for his valiant leadership throughout the attack. Two valiant members of his crew were awarded the Navy Cross--posthumously. According to Captain McGonagle's own records, a total of 11 members of the crew were awarded the Silver Star (3 posthumously), in addition to 20 Bronze Stars, 9 Navy Commendations, and 204 Purple Hearts and;

WHEREAS, the U.S.S. Liberty was awarded a Presidential Unit Citation and;

WHEREAS, the City, wishes to honor the U.S.S. Liberty and her valiant crew and wish their memories to never be forgotten.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED by the Mayor and City Council of the City of Palm Coast that every June 8<sup>th</sup> be

"U.S.S. LIBERTY REMEMBRANCE DAY"

Signed this 6<sup>th</sup> day of October 2015.

CITY OF PALM COAST, FLORIDA

Signature of Jon Netts, Mayor

Witnessed by:

Signature of Virginia A. Smith, City Clerk



(continued from previous page)

**WHEN**

7:30 pm,  
Dinner at 6:30 pm,  
Wednesday,  
November 4, 2015

**WHERE**

Mimi's Bakery &  
Restaurant  
18461 Brookhurst St.  
Fountain Valley, CA



*Freedom Forum*  
*of Orange County*

*Sponsored by Freedom Force International*

*Presents*

*Donald Pagler*

*On the subject of*

**THE ATTACK ON THE USS LIBERTY ON JUNE 8<sup>TH</sup> 1967**

Donald W. Pageler, born Wamego, KS.; Entered USN June 1966; Assigned – boot camp, San Diego, CA; Communications Technician school, Pensacola, FL; USS Liberty Norfolk, VA; Naval Communications Station, Oahu, HI; discharged Treasure Island, San Francisco, CA, Mach 1970. There is much more to say about him and the ordeals during that period that will be told at the meeting.

He returned to the University of Kansas after the service, for a B.S. Degree in Business Administration. He is now retired from a management staff where he participated in the planning and development of the communications satellite programs for Boeing (formerly Space & Communications Group of Hughes Aircraft Company).

As the title states, he was part of the crew on the USS Liberty when it was attacked on that fateful day, He was wounded June 8, 1967 while the Israeli's attacked the USS Liberty during the 6 Day War. Received lacerations and burns while transporting wounded shipmates on board during the attack. The attack resulted in 820+ rocket & cannon holes, 3000+ machine gun hits, napalm fires, & a 40 ft. torpedo hole leaving 208 of 294 sailors and marines killed or wounded. 20 years later Don found he suffered from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. He was released from active duty in March 1970 as CT2 (E-5). He was awarded the Purple Heart, Presidential Unit Citation, Combat Action Ribbon, Good Conduct Medal & National Defense Medal. On August 28, 1993, married Eva G. Pageler. They have four step children.

He returned to the University of Kansas after the service for a B.S. degree in Business Administration. He is now retired from management staff, who developed the planning of communications satellite programs for Boeing (formerly Space & Communications Group of Hughes Aircraft Company).

Wondering why this is relevant in today's times? We have many veterans today who may have similar stories of earlier times that we need to understand because many of we Americans have not had to face a combat situation in our lives. There are many individuals today who have had a similar kind of experience in different wars since then. By understanding Donald's experience, one may see others in a different light who have had similar experiences; not necessarily in this particular type of event, but in similar ones that affected them afterwards.

Today, one thing differs from his experience; women who have taken on combat duties today face the same challenges and possibly even more, considering the place of the woman in some of those countries they now fight in.



## Liberty Cryptologist Honored

### *Liberty Cryptologist Frederick J. Walton honored at Niagara Falls Veterans Monument*

Some years ago, Michael Williamson gave me the 1971-1974 Niagara Falls City Directory that idly adorned a bookshelf at his father's funeral home. I wasn't sure what I would do with them, but reference material in the home is always a good idea, as far as I am concerned.

At about the same time, a fellow whose name and description escapes me, brought to my attention that our Niagara Falls Veterans Memorial Sarcophagus, a place upon which our city's war dead is enshrined and honored, was missing the name of one Frederick J. Walton, a Niagara Falls Cryptologist who served on the USS Liberty, an American spy ship that was attacked and gravely damaged in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea on June 8, 1967. Walton was one of 34 Americans who died there that day.



After five years of collecting information on Walton and trying to find family members to let them know that we would include his name, I was about to give up hope, accepting that there were none left. And then on November 9, 2015, as if inspired by God Himself, I gave it one last try. I did an anywho search on Waltons as far away as the Midwest, but to no avail. I searched every online resource of which I could think, and found nothing that I thought to be of significance. I checked the Niagara Gazette for obituaries in hopes of finding a family member and was just about to give up after I found that his father and mother had died and that there were no siblings mentioned in it. That's when I noticed an aunt of Frederick Walton and searched for her online. Her last name led me to a search of the city's OARS website and gave me a couple of leads. It was then that I decided to check the City Directories that Michael Williamson had given me and nailed down a possible address for his aunt. It listed her as a payroll clerk working for the city comptroller in 1971 and married to a police officer. But most importantly, it gave me an address.

Back to [www.anywho.com](http://www.anywho.com) for telephone numbers, found one and left the message. I received a call from Kathleen M. Moyer the following day, affirming that she was Walton's first cousin. My words to her were, "Do you know how long I have been looking for you!"

With a trembling voice filled with great joy, she promised me that she would be at the monument to see "Freddy's" name upon the Monument. She tearfully kept her promise. No matter how often I see the relatives of these men and women stand before the Sarcophagus or the Walls of Honor and cry, I have to fight to keep my own composure to not cry with them.

Her hug of gratitude was all I needed for the scores of hours that the Commission and I put into getting the name of this fellow sailor placed in its rightful place. It's all that any of us should need.

Thank you, Mike, for the books.

*Submitted by Jim Ennes*

## A letter from Edward Jajko

To the USS Liberty Community:

This is a much-belated letter. Liberty crew members and friends will recall, I hope, that during much of my tenure as curator of the Middle East Collection of the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace, of Stanford University, I sought to preserve the documentary record of the attack on the USS Liberty and its aftermath. Thanks to my position, I was able to invite crew members and others who held important papers and materials relating to the Liberty to place them in the Hoover Institution Archives, where they would be preserved and made available to scholarly researchers.

Liberty crewmembers responded generously, starting with Jim Ennes, who placed all his papers relating to Assault on the Liberty in the Hoover Institution Archives. Other crew members also placed their papers, and their trust, in the Hoover. They were Ron Kukal and Don Pageler. Then, through Jim's good offices, the family of Captain William McGonagle gave the Hoover his papers as well. After I left the Institution, the papers of Ward Boston were added.

These collections have already been used, by Dr. John Borne, for his book on the Liberty, while Ron Kukal's movies made on the ship were used by filmmakers.

One collection I acquired because I believed it could be of great importance was that of Judge A. Jay Cristal (Please keep reading, guys!). When I learned of Judge Cristal's Ph.D. dissertation on the Liberty, I bought a copy for the Hoover Institution Library. Skimming thorough it, I came across the pages in which he cited his sources, which included open and classified Israeli and U.S. military and government reports. Without seeking necessary permission, I immediately solicited Judge Cristal's papers, and he responded eagerly and positively. His papers finally arrived in 2014, long after my retirement. The 111 boxes of papers and other materials are open to researchers. The Cristal Collection is potentially of great importance.

When I retired at end August 2002, I was greatly concerned about continuation of my collection efforts, especially on the Liberty. I was happy that Linda Bernard, who became Acting Archivist, and Brad Bauer, reference archivist, not only expressed interest in what I had been doing but promised to keep at it. I continued to serve as an informal liaison outside the Hoover. referring inquiries to the right people.

Since that time, Brad Bauer left the Hoover for a senior archival position in Washington, D.C. The Hoover made an intensive national search for a new chief archivist, with expanded responsibilities, and sometime ago, appointed Eric Wakin as Director of Library and Archives.

Quite a while back, a former colleague arranged a lunch with Eric and me, to discuss the Middle East Collection and archival matters. One thing I brought up was the USS Liberty collections. I am happy to report that Eric Wakin is interested in the Liberty, would like to see additions to existing collections, and of course would be happy to discuss the placement of new collections. I believe Liberty crew members, families, and friends can place full confidence in him.

*Continued on following page*

## A letter from Edward Jajko (contd.)

Eric's contact information is:

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Director of Library and Archives  
Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace  
Stanford University  
434 Galvez Mall  
Stanford, California 94305  
tel. 650-725-2250  
wakin@stanford.edu

Of course, I will be happy to serve as a go-between, and you have my contact information below.

From what I was told years ago by those who were in a position to know, USS Liberty crewmembers still hold invaluable collections of documents and materials relating to the attack and its aftermath. Forty-eight years is an awfully long time to hold on to increasingly fragile documents that can be taken care of better in an archives where the highest standards of safety, security, and archival practice are maintained. As I did in talks at two reunions, in e-mails and letters, and in personal conversations, I again urge all Liberty crewmembers and family who still have personal collections on the attack to contact Eric Wakin and discuss placement of those materials. As Wayne Kelley wrote in his Letter from the Editor in the August 2015 Liberty News, "The memory must not be forgotten!"

Edward A. Jajko  
Middle East Curator emeritus  
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Stanford University  
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## Veterans Day Parade with Don Pageler

Each year, Don Pageler participates in the Veterans Day parade in Palm Springs:



## Liberty Servicemen Honored in Day of Dead Observance



The 34 U.S. servicemen who were killed in the June 8, 1967 Israeli attack on the USS Liberty were honored by 14 Friends of Palestine at the 27th annual Day of the Dead observance in the Albert J. Boro Community Center in San Rafael, California. The Nov. 7 event featured memorial altars honoring deceased loved ones and victims of current or historic tragedies.

Thirty-four miniature handmade boats with each service member's name and a small American flag adorned the altar, along with a chain, anchor and nautical life vest. A backdrop in front of a large American flag included photos, names and biographies of the slain men, along with details of their heroic efforts to save shipmates during the attack.

Attendees lingered before the poignant display to read about the innocent victims of the unprovoked attack on the Navy intelligence ship by Israeli military forces without warning in international waters.

The circumstances of the attack have never been the subject of a congressional investigation, despite the filing of a Report of War Crimes by the USS Liberty Veterans Association with the secretary of the Army. For more information visit [www.gtr5.com](http://www.gtr5.com). —Elaine Pasquini

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**READING MATERIALS**

- Assault on the Liberty: The True Story of the Israeli Attack on an American Intelligence Ship** - By Survivor and LVS Historian, \$30.00  
 Mr. James Ennes, Jr.,  
 SEND ORDER TO: Jim Ennes, PO Box 789, Woodinville, WA 98072
- The Attack on the Liberty** - The Untold Story of Israel's Deadly 1967 Assault on a U.S. Spy Ship, By James Scott, son of crew . . . \$25.00  
 member Lt. John Scott,
- What I Saw That Day: Israel's June 8th, 1967 Holocaust of US Servicemen Aboard the USS Liberty and its Aftermath** . . . . \$25.00  
 By USS Liberty Survivor Phil Tourney and Mark Glenn

**VIDEOS**

- 25th Anniversary Memorial at Arlington National Cemetery** (DVD Video) . . . . . \$15.00
- USS Liberty Survivors: Our Story** - Patrick King Documentary (DVD Video) . . . . . \$25.00
- Loss of Liberty** - New Detailed Film of Attack and Cover-Up (DVD Video) . . . . . \$25.00
- Dead in the Water** - Documentary: Find out how a nuclear war in the Middle East was averted at the last minute (DVD) . . . . \$20.00
- Justice for the Liberty** - An All American Documentary by Break of Dawn Productions . . . . . \$25.00

**LIBERTY WEAR**

- Blue Multicolor Tee Shirt** - (M, L, XL, XXL, 3XL) . . . . . \$20.00
- White w/ Black Ship & 34 Lost Shipmates Tee Shirt** - (M, L, XL, XXL, 3XL) . . . . . \$20.00
- Grey w/ Black Ship & 2 Lost Marines Tee Shirt** - (M, L, XL, XXL, 3XL) . . . . . \$20.00
- Golf Shirt: White OR Navy OR Black (each with tan stitching)** - (M, L, XL, XXL, 3XL) . . . . . \$30.00
- USS Liberty Color Jackets: Lined navy blue nylon fabric** - (M, XL, 2XL, 3XL) . . . . . \$50.00
- USS Liberty Baseball Cap - Solid Fabric, Not Mesh with Plain Bill** . . . . . \$20.00
- USS Liberty Unstructured Golf Hat - Navy or Tan** . . . . . \$16.00

**MEMORABILIA**

- USS Liberty Bumper Sticker** . . . . . \$ 2.00
- USS Liberty Key Chain** . . . . . \$ 4.00
- USS Liberty Cigarette Lighter** - Zippo, Brushed Chrome, Ship Insignia on One Side and Silhouette on the Other . . . . . \$25.00
- USS Liberty Lapel Pin** . . . . . \$ 5.00
- USS Liberty Ship Patch** - Multicolored, 100% Embroidered, 3 Inch . . . . . \$ 6.00
- USS Liberty Ship Patch** - Multicolored, 100% Embroidered, 5 Inch . . . . . \$ 8.00
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