

# Liberty News

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE USS LIBERTY

Volume 76 | April, 2022

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## Letter from the Editor

**William Graves, Editor**

[editor@lvnews.org](mailto:editor@lvnews.org)

Dear Veterans and LVA Members,

First and foremost, thank you for continuing to tell the LIBERTY story to all who will listen. The ongoing reports from our readers are nothing short of inspiring.

As you work your way through this issue, do please take careful note of information on the upcoming 55th Anniversary Reunion. We hope to see you, as well as your family and friends, in Arlington in June!

If you are moving or are aware of an address change for another member, do please let Donna Shafer know at [donnashafer@bellsouth.net](mailto:donnashafer@bellsouth.net) so we can ensure we continue delivering this newsletter to you each issue.

And from all of us at *Liberty News*, we hope 2022 brings you and your family health and happiness as you continue to spread the LIBERTY story to all who will listen.

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Sincerely,  
William Graves  
*Editor*

**SUBMIT INFORMATION TO:**

William Graves, Editor  
[editor@lvnews.org](mailto:editor@lvnews.org)

## Letter from the President

Well another quarter has passed and your leadership team has been busy on several fronts. Let me first say welcome to spring for all us non-snowbirds. We didn't get a lot of snow here in Maryland, but the cold weather let us know it was winter. It won't be long and we will be breaking out the lawn mowers and planting spring flowers.

As you have probably heard by now, we are planning on have a 55th anniversary reunion in Washington, DC from June 6th- June 8th. There is probably a more detailed write-up elsewhere in this letter so I won't say too much here. We are still working on the specific activities and speaker(s). Our hope is that we will get in to see a Congressman or two while here in DC.

On March 8th, I was flown out to California to participate in a two and a half hour interview with Jocko Willink. He does a weekly Podcast and wanted to interview some Liberty veterans. Phil Tourney, Joe Meadors, and I went to San Diego for a couple days to be interviewed and then returned home. The Podcast is scheduled to air in late March or early April. This was a big deal in terms of the number of listeners he has.

I have been working with Congressman Pete McCloskey (retired) on a petition to have June 8th established as USS LIBERTY REMEMBRANCE DAY. The hope is to get signatures of candidates running for office along with other key people to add credibility to our request. I'm working it in Maryland now, but if anyone wants to do it in their state just contact me and I'll get you the forms.

The Liberty Veterans Association will soon be live streaming chats over the internet. We have purchased the rights to do streaming and Phil Tourney is working with industry partners to make sure we are setting things up correctly. I am anxious to see how well that goes and how large an audience we can glean.

We are still looking for family members and other interested folks who might want to step up and help out in a volunteer status. We need people to take on some LVA leadership roles as well as helping out on reunion plans. June 6th is just around the corner so please speak up if you can help. I look forward to seeing many of you in June which is only three months away.

--

Larry

## 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 helicopters carrying troops 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 HEROIC CREW TO THE AWARENESS OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.**

## 55th Anniversary Reunion

USS Liberty Survivors and Supporters,

Mark your calendars and plan to attend our 55th Anniversary Reunion that will be held in Arlington, VA this year.

The dates are to arrive on the 6th of June, and plan your departure for the 9th of June. We will have planned activities for the 7th & 8th with a banquet the evening of the 8th. Please see the full page ad on the following page and get all your information from this.

Former Congressman Pete McCloskey, respectfully asked us to have this reunion, even though his health will not allow him to attend. Pete is one of our greatest supporters, fought for us when he was in office and continues to fight for us. His objective is to connect us with some leaders on Capital Hill hoping that we can get some interest in getting a Congressional Hearing.

Note that we will have other activities included, with more information to come.

**You should have received a separate mailing with a return post card in it letting us know if you are attending. If you have not sent back please do so, even if you can't come. We need more updated information so fill out the post card and return.**

Looking forward to seeing you all in Arlington, VA this summer.

--

Moe

Moe Shafer, Survivor  
LVA Executive Director

# USS Liberty

## 55th Anniversary Reunion

### *Arlington, Virginia*

#### **Holiday Inn Arlington**

4610 N. Fairfax Drive  
Arlington, Virginia 22203  
(703) 243-9800  
HIArlington.com

June 6th to June 9th, 2022

Room Rate: \$149 single  
\$169 double



**Make plans now to attend our 55th Anniversary Reunion!**

**Call now (703-243-9800) to reserve your room. Ask for USS Liberty rate!**  
Plan on attending with friends and family!

**Honoring USS Liberty Crew & US Congressman Pete McCloskey.**

#### **FEATURING:**

Hospitality Suite | Arlington Memorial Service | Capitol Hill Visits  
Navy Memorial | Banquet on 6/8

**NO REGISTRATION FEE!**

Photo Submissions (Submit yours to editor@lvnews.org!)



**From left to right:**  
Robert Scarborough, David Hawkins,  
and Tommy Thornton (KIA)  
*Submitted by Robert Scarborough*



“Women's Club bldg. in Big Horn Wyoming. Phil and I had our first public meeting there.”

*Submitted by Ronald Kukal*

Chaplain's Corner - Ronald Kukal

As the Chaplain for the USS Liberty Veteran Association, I feel strongly, and compelled by God to add this onto what Phil has just written for the newsletter.

I have no idea as of this date, how many interviews I have conducted, all giving credit to the Power of God, being the only reason we are here. I will continue to do that every time I am asked. As it stands right now, Darryl Cooper, Jocko's right hand man will be flying to Billings, Montana to interview me about the spiritual side of the attack, and I am delighted to do this. If things work out, it is possible that Pastor Chuck Baldwin will be right there with us. Right now we are shooting for the months ahead, as Darryl says JOCKO's schedule is tight.

I hope others will participate in the program that Joe has set up, with letters to our congressman requesting a copy of the Congressional Investigation. I wrote to mine and the answer was his team could not find one. How important are those types of letters?

Very Important.

With Respect  
Ron

## Letter from Phil Tourney

Another helpful event for LVA, on March 09, 2022.

Larry Bowen, Joe Meadors, and myself, were on the Jocko Willink Podcast in San Diego, CA. My wife Lisa was with us as well, we were treated with respect from everyone in Jocko's chain of command. In the past three years plus, in my view, the goals of the LVA have been front and center, for all that have stood with us. TruNews, and Pastor Chuck Baldwin have all treated us with respect going to the heart of the truth, with facts, and patriotism. Special thanks to Ron Kukal, for our appearance with JOCKO. Darryl Cooper, JACKO' producer estimates this show will get 4 to 5 million downloads, which should air in two to three weeks on March 9th. JOCKO is a retired Navy Seal LCDR. combat tested bad ass, his interview with us was precise and to the point. Thanks JOCKO for giving us another milestone in our goal for the God's honest truth, about how our shipmates were slaughtered in premeditated, cold blooded murder. As soon as we get the exact date please download it, and share it with everyone.

The LVA has been blessed over the decades with so many coming to us with one common goal, the truth, such as memorials in many states across our country. So many have passed on, however their spirit will never be forgotten. Thanks to all for continuing to support us with money, spiritual guidance, along with the love of us and our country. The facts of what really happened on that fateful day, are gaining more ground than I ever thought was possible. Many more positive contacts about the truth and the gallant crew of the USS Liberty are within our grasp. Patriots and the will of this LVA have overcome many obstacles, and will continue to do so.

Respectfully,  
Phil

**Editor's Note:** To learn more about Jocko Willink and listen to his podcast, visit [www.JockoPodcast.com](http://www.JockoPodcast.com).

## A Live Service Honoring The Crew Of The USS Liberty

This message was preached by Pastor Chuck Baldwin on Sunday, November 14, 2021, during the service at Liberty Fellowship featuring USS Liberty survivors.

The service can be viewed online at:  
[https://youtu.be/tf1oil1\\_5S8](https://youtu.be/tf1oil1_5S8)



*Submitted by Ronald Kukal*

**LCDR Armstrong at Michigan Heroes Museum**



“LCDR. Philip M. Armstrong, USN, executive officer in USS LIBERTY, was killed when the ship was mistakenly attacked by Israeli forces on 8 June in the Mediterranean. Services were held from the Twiford Funeral Home, Virginia Beach, Va., with interment in Arlington National Cemetery with military honors on 16 June.

LCdr. Armstrong, who was born in Detroit, Mich., enlisted in the U. S. Navy in July 1947, and served with Patrol Squadron 23, Naval Air Station, Patuxent River, before entering the Naval Academy Preparatory School at Bainbridge, Md. He was graduated from the Naval Academy in 1953 and served in the destroyer escort MCCAFFERY until June 1955 when he joined the landing ship FORT SNELLING.

In February 1958 he was transferred to the staff of the Commandant, Third Naval District in New York, then had duty in USS BETELGEUSE. He served in the Bureau of Naval Personnel for two years, then on the staff of Commander Naval Beach Group Two for operations and plans. In March 1966 he was assigned to the LIBERTY.

Surviving are his widow Marie and five children, Philip M., III, Timothy B., Christopher M., Katherine K. and Elizabeth R. of 131 Cayuga Road, Virginia Beach, Va. 23462; his father, Mr. Philip M. Armstrong of Detroit, three brothers, Thomas, John, and Christopher, and a sister Marjorie Armstrong.”

**- From the Sept-Oct 1967 Issue of Shipmate**



**LVA Memorabilia Store - Order Form**

**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
- REMEMBER THE LIBERTY Almost Sunk by Treason on the High Seas** ..... \$20.00  
 By Phillip F. Nelson with Ernie A. Gallo, Ronald G. KuKal and Phillip F. Tourney
- LIBERTY'S WOUNDS - By Jeremy P. Amick: A biography of Bryce Lockwood, USMC Survivor** ..... \$20.00

**VIDEO**

- 25th Anniversary Memorial at Arlington National Cemetery (DVD Video)** ..... \$15.00
- USS Liberty Survivors: Our Story - Patrick King Documentary (DVD Video)** ..... \$15.00
- Loss of Liberty - New Detailed Film of Attack and Cover-Up (DVD Video)** ..... \$20.00
- 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** ..... \$20.00
- A USS LIBERTY REMEMBRANCE of 50 Years of US Government Cover-Up of the Attack** ..... \$15.00
- History Channel DVD** ..... \$15.00

**LIBERTY WEAR**

- Blue Multicolor Tee Shirt - (S, M, L, XL, XXL, 3XL)** ..... \$20.00
- White w/ Black Ship & 34 Lost Shipmates Tee Shirt - (S, M, L, XL, XXL, 3XL)** ..... \$20.00
- Grey w/ Black Ship & 2 Lost Marines Tee Shirt - (S, M, L, XL, XXL, 3XL)** ..... \$20.00
- Golf Shirt: White OR Navy (each with tan stitching) - (M, L, XL, XXL, 3XL)** ..... \$30.00
- 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 OR 50th Anniversary Lapel Pins** ..... \$ 5.00
- USS Liberty Ship Patch - Multicolored, 100% Embroidered, 3 Inch** ..... \$ 6.00
- USS Liberty Ship Patch - Multicolored, 100% Embroidered, 5 Inch** ..... \$ 8.00
- USS Liberty Ship Patch - Multicolored, 100% Embroidered, 10 Inch** ..... \$12.00
- Challenger Coin - With the Names of 34 Fallen Shipmates** ..... \$10.00
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*For a one year membership in the USS LIBERTY Veterans Association and Newsletter Subscription, send \$20 to Moe Shafer.*

*Contributions are tax deductible! So please give and give generously!*

**Liberty News** is the official journal of the **USS LIBERTY Veterans Association** - a California nonprofit, tax-exempt corporation representing the **USS LIBERTY** Survivors and former Crew Members, their families, and other patriotic Americans.

The yearly subscription rate is **\$20.00 for an associate member (former and non-crew member)**. Due to our small size, however, we cannot survive solely on subscriptions. We are grateful to, and rely heavily upon our many members who voluntarily donate more generously with each passing year.

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