



# Liberty News

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE USS LIBERTY

Volume 79 | April, 2023

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*President*  
[oclassen@vermontel.net](mailto:oclassen@vermontel.net)

**Bob Scarborough**  
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[lvasec39@gmail.com](mailto:lvasec39@gmail.com)  
307-752-6693

**Terry McFarland**  
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[tlmjumbo92@yahoo.com](mailto:tlmjumbo92@yahoo.com)



## Letter from the Editor

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

Dear Veterans and LVA Members,

The next reunion is coming up quickly, and there is a lot of information about it in this issue.

June 6th - June 9th in Colorado Springs

There is no registration fee.

If you have any questions, please reach out to Moe Shafer at 770-363-3986.

May you have an excellent summer, and we hope to see you in Colorado this June!

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Sincerely,  
William Graves

### SUBMIT INFORMATION TO:

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

# USS Liberty 56th Anniversary Reunion Colorado Springs, CO

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The Mining Exchange – A Wyndham Grand Resort & Spa  
8 S. Nevada, Ave., Colorado Springs, CO – PH: 719-323-2000  
June 6th to June 9th 2023 | Room Rate: \$189.00 Day

**REGISTER HOTEL NOW! CALL 719-323-2000**



**Make plans now to attend our 56<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reunion!  
Call NOW for reservations! Plan on attending and bring family & friends.**

Hospitality Suite | Memorial Service | Speakers | Tours| Crews Meeting | Banquet | More

More details in next LVA Newsletter or Call Moe Shafer 770-363-3986  
[moe.shafer@harbingernational.com](mailto:moe.shafer@harbingernational.com) Sign up Now with Hotel

**NO REGISTRATION FEE! ! !**

### Other Key Info for Reunion

If you want to visit Pikes Peak while in Colorado, it is a highly recommended location. You can learn more about the railway here:

<https://www.cograilway.com/>

Need an airport shuttle? You can learn more about that here:

<https://groometransportation.com/Colorado-springs/>

### Remembering Robert Allen



Robert J. Allen, JD passed away on July 7, 2022. Robert was a retired Attorney and former 30 year member of the Washington State Bar Association. He was the author of “Beyond Treason” Reflections on the Coverup of the June 1967 Israeli Attack on the USS Liberty an American Spy. We remember Mr. Allen as a staunch supporter of the USS Liberty and dedicated a big part of his live writing about our tragic story. RIP Robert – Shipmates of the USS Liberty.

## Letter from the President

We are rapidly approaching our 56th anniversary reunion. This one will be held in Colorado Springs. As we grow older it becomes more difficult to make the trip, but it is important that we all attend if we can. It will be a time that we can support one another more fully. Our first reunion was held around the time that I retired from the Navy. It was a time to renew old friendships and create new ones. I still remember our visit to Arlington. Even with the rain, we stopped at each gravesite of our fallen shipmates.

This reunion will be an important one. We will be selecting a new Board of Directors. Even more importantly, we will be discussing the future of the LVA. As the crew members get older, we need to bring in fresh faces to keep the organization going. We are working to embrace the sons and daughters of our crewmembers as the next generation of the LVA. We will need all the additional ideas we can come up with.

Looking forward to seeing you in Colorado Springs.

## Letter to the NY Times from Wayne Stiles

I am a former Federal agent and Naval Officer/Aviator. Daniel Ellsberg has always been a hero of mine. When I reflect on his bravery I focus on the sacrifices made by the men and women of our armed forces during the Vietnam War. Remember the fictitious Gulf of Tonkin attack followed by the resolution that greatly expanded that war. As you rightly applaud and revere Mr. Ellsberg for his bravery, spare a few minutes for the dead and wounded from the USS Liberty, intentionally attacked by Israel during the 6 Days War. The 34 dead and 171 wounded have never received the justice they deserved. A quick and controlled investigation where not one participant was invited to testify, many at the highest levels of our military knew this was an intentional attack designed to draw us in to that Middle East quagmire. Strange, our National Archives now has no record of the information gathered at the time by other intelligence assets the US had in the area that day. If you are interested in truth watch "Sacrificing Liberty" for what really happened and the investigation that never was. You will see LBJ's fingerprints all over the political outcome.

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Above is a letter I wrote to the NYTimes. I send letters in response to articles which are related to government secrecy and coverups.

Wayne F. Stiles  
Helicopter Rescue Pilot (HC-2)  
USS America (CVA-66)  
June 9, 1967

## 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.**

## “Enemies Within” Play

It looks like the full length play is in full swing. The name will remain, "Enemies Within". The tentative date is somewhere in the month of August. I have been in contact with the Director, Candie Johnson. I will be going down to help with any advisory info. she might need, and just be a general flunkie. I like doing that. The one act which was done several years back, got a standing ovation at Chadron State College. I was there that night and was a bit concerned as to how this would be received. Well Nebraska people in most cases are pretty down to earth, and the standing ovation really made me feel good. The play took second place that evening, and one person, who thought the play was anti-semitic prevented this from going to state, and getting even more public attention. I had to bite my tongue that night, and I did so, as I knew how this could turn out.

The venue for this will be in my hometown of Rushville, Nebraska, and if we are successful who knows where it will go next. Yes my hometown is small, but the opera house there was designated by the state to be a historic piece, so that is also somewhat of a calling card, but the real calling card will be the survivors. Many, many, people that I know are just wanting to shake the hand of a survivor.

Ron

## A Note from Kenneth Reynolds

Dear Liberty Crewmen:

I hope all is well with all of you as a new year has begun. I've attended two Liberty anniversaries and I've talked with some of you. I'm writing now to inform you that I have four copies left of the December 2003 issue of Culture Wars magazine with the cover story entitled Detour on the Road to Armageddon: the Attack on USS Liberty, by Marlene Maloney. It's an excellent read.

These copies I have are the last ones left. I was told by the publisher's office that if more back issues are requested, a minimum order of 50 would be required. If any of you would like me to mail you one of these copies, I'd be glad to send it to you. I don't know if I'll be able to make the next scheduled anniversary in Colorado.

Please reply with a mailing address to send a copy if you'd like one. Bravo Zulu in keeping the story of USS Liberty alive. The best to all of you and your families.

—  
Kenneth Reynolds  
kenreyn@outlook.com

## Likely Suspension of Department of Washington

Last night the Department Executive Committee of the Department of Washington voted to have its charter from the National Legion suspended indefinitely.

According to the Legion's "National Advisory Committee", one effect of suspension will be to strip the Department of its delegates to the National Convention this summer. Although it is not yet certain, it seems likely that the National Executive Committee will approve the suspension.

If so, even if the Department of Washington holds a Department Convention and approves the Liberty resolutions they will likely not be submitted to the National Convention. Therefore, Legionnaires in other Departments must step up to the plate quickly if the resolutions are to be considered at the National Convention this year.

Best wishes,

Michelle J. Kinnucan  
Tel. 206-245-8610

## Los Alamitos, CA MOAA (Military Officers Assoc)

On 3/23/23 I spoke to the Los Alamitos, CA MOAA (Military Officers Assoc). It was a small group of about 7 people. One of the members who is a friend was in the Special Forces and served 2 tours in Vietnam and 2 in Germany. The luncheon was at the old Los Alamitos Naval Air Station which is now a Joint Forces Base. Picture attached although poor quality.

Don



## Rethinking Heroes Broadcast - By Patricia Kime

Blog Date: Feb. 16, 2023

Blog Time: 4:00 PM EST

Headline: Rethinking Heroes broadcast to spotlight controversial 1967 attack on U.S. Navy spy ship

By: Patricia Kime

This week, a new radio broadcast and podcast from Los Angeles' KPFK will examine one of the U.S. Navy's darkest days since the end of World War II – the 1967 attack by Israeli forces on the intelligence-gathering ship USS Liberty that killed 34 sailors and wounded 171.

Cary Harrison, host of the Rethinking Heroes: Life After Duty series, will take on the controversy surrounding the attack and its aftermath, interviewing survivor and Navy veteran Phil Tourney.

Tourney, three-time president of the U.S.S. Liberty Veterans Association, charges that the attack was deliberate, the result of an organized, covert effort by the United States and Israel to ensure Israel's victory in seizing land, including the Golan Heights in Syria.

"The word I use is 'massacre,'" Tourney said in an interview with MVJ. "They shot us, they shot our life rafts out of the water. The plan absolutely was to kill us all. But we stayed afloat."

Israel contends that the attack was a "tragic accident," an explanation accepted by the U.S. Navy and federal government following several investigations.

But Tourney – and many others – contend that the operation, which involved reconnaissance scouts and communications disruptions and planned attacks by aircraft and torpedo boats, was hatched at the highest levels of the U.S. and Israeli governments, and that the coverup continues to this day.

On June 8, 1967, the technical research ship Liberty was operating in international waters off Gaza, Egypt, when it was attacked by Israeli Defense Forces – first with napalm and rockets, then by Israeli torpedo boats. The ship was able to radio the U.S.S. Saratoga, which dispatched 16 aircraft, including 12 fighter jets, but the aircraft were recalled personally, by several accounts, by Defense Secretary Robert McNamara for reasons that remain unclear.

Under fire in a burning ship, the crew struggled to defend their ship, taking a direct torpedo hit and dodging four others, staying afloat as the sailors aboard watched their attackers destroy their lifeboats. The attack lasted for two hours. Liberty limped into Malta six days later, largely as a result of the efforts of Tourney and the other damage controlmen.

Israeli historian Michael Oren has written extensively about the incident and its aftermath, including the allegations of conspiracy, intention and coverup. Shortly after numerous documents were declassified in the 1990s, he wrote that it is "possible to determine whether any of these hypotheses had a basis in fact," he wrote in an essay, *The USS Liberty: Case Closed*."

Five decades have passed since the attack and the issue remains a painful chapter in U.S.-Israeli relations. For the 100 or so sailors still alive from that day, the case will never be closed until all related documents are declassified, and Congress conducts a thorough investigation, Tourney says.

"The USS Liberty veterans are proud of Americans that served our country honorably. And all we want to do is tell the truth, not be labeled, but have the government do their job and tell the truth," Tourney said.

Based on the success of providing military veteran broadcasters to deliver a top-of-the-show "news flash" dedicated to military and veteran concerns, KPFK and the Rethinking Heroes series has paired with Military Veterans in Journalism to provide externship opportunities for its members. Beginning early March, Rethinking Heroes will showcase MVJ journalists in that time slot to lead off the show. The series is funded by Let's Rethink This, a group dedicated to finding innovative solutions to prevent veteran suicide and forgive their VA-related unpayable medical debt.

The broadcast will air on KPFK during their 9am-10am PST drivetime show and is available on Apple podcasts. It is also available on streaming radio at this link: <https://www.kpfk.org/player/>.

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*Submitted by Phil Tourney*



## Remembering CT3 Duane Marggraf, USN, KIA USS Liberty

CT3 Duane Marggraf  
January 27, 1945 – June 8, 1967

Duane was born in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin and lived most of his life there. His parents were Carlton and Esther Marggraf. He was their third child and only son. His two older sisters are Virginia (Ginny) Hoffman and Lorna Stopper.

During his elementary days, he enjoyed biking, Little League Baseball, Cub Scouts, Indian Guides, soccer, fishing and just about anything that boys get into. He liked to have fun.

He began trombone lessons in 6th grade and continued into junior high school with the band. His 6th grade music teacher turned out to be a very important person in his life. But Mr. Moely left teaching for the Navy and junior high band became less important. He got into football and might have continued in that direction in high school but luckily Mr. Moely came back to Fond du Lac after the Navy and the band again took on renewed importance. He had a lot of respect for the band director and the Navy began to become a real career option.

Earning money also became a concern in his young years and he found that being a caddy at the local country club was a rather lucrative business. He worked in a gas station in his later teen years.

He was able to get a car and worked hard at keeping it running and that was a major concern in order to keep up with a normal teenage social life.

It was during his 7th grade year that his sister, Ginny, married Bill Hoffman. Bill was in the Navy and happened to be a communications technician. Bill also had a major influence on Duane regarding joining the Navy. They discussed it at great length.

Duane graduated from L. P. Goodrich High School in Fond du Lac in 1963 and joined the Navy as a communications technician in 1964. His plans were to marry Jane Casper and to go to college and major in music and math.

Among his hometown friends he was known as a true friend. He was always there when needed. Cheerful and caring are a way to describe him.



Submitted by Rich Carlson

**Obituary, Joseph C. Lentini**

**JOSEPH C. LENTINI**  
**10/2/43 - 12/3/22, 2022**

Joe joined the U.S. Navy (USN) in 1961 and served with honor for eight years. During this time, he distinguished himself as an honor graduate of the Communications Technician (CT) School in Pensacola, Florida and ended his career as an instructor at the very same school. He was promoted through the rank of Petty Officer First Class (E-6) and retired from the Navy after eight years for medical reasons related to wounds inflicted by the Israel Defense Forces during their deliber-



ate attack of the intelligence ship USS Liberty on June 8, 1967. He was honored by the USN and the National Security Agency for training efforts related to accurately documenting this attack and for efforts to help establish a Cryptologic Military History Program. Joe was publicly presented with an honorary promotion to the rank of Chief Petty Officer (E-7), and he was greatly moved and he considers this to be one of the highest honors he has received. Military recognition also includes the Purple Heart, Presidential Unit Citation, Combat Action Ribbon, and USN Good Conduct Medal.

## Dan Pageler Addresses Ocean View High School Students

On 2/27/23 I addressed between 60 and 70 students at Ocean View High School in Huntington Beach, CA in an auditorium type setting. One of the teachers (whose students were not in the group) had just covered the 6 Day war the week before. My presentation consists of a 52 slide PowerPoint presentation show with declassified CIA and NSA documents at the end. I had many interesting questions. The man who organized the event took pictures but still have not received them. However I did receive about 60 than you notes from the students.

-Submitted by Don Pageler



**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, Mr. James Ennes, Jr. SEND ORDER TO: Jim Ennes, PO Box 789, Woodinville, WA 98072 \$30.00
- 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**

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- 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

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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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**NEW LVA ADDRESS: PO BOX 3000, PAWLEYS ISLAND SC 29585**

**LIBERTY NEWS**  
PO BOX 3000  
PAWLEYS ISLAND, SC 29585

**Joe Meadors**  
*Director of Operations*  
[joe@ussliberty.com](mailto:joe@ussliberty.com)

**William Graves**  
*Editor*  
[editor@lvaneews.org](mailto:editor@lvaneews.org)

**Terry McFarland**  
*Member at Large*  
[tlmjumbo92@yahoo.com](mailto:tlmjumbo92@yahoo.com)

**Donna Shafer**  
*Ship's Store Manager*  
[donnashafer@bellsouth.net](mailto:donnashafer@bellsouth.net)