

Liberty News

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE USS LIBERTY

Volume 73 | April, 2021

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Letter from the Editor

William Graves, Editor editor@lvanews.org

Dear Veterans and LVA Members,

I hope 2021 has brought you good health and a return to a certain degree of normalcy. If I've learned anything this past year, it is to not take the seemingly routine and mundane for granted.

It has been encouraging for me to see the continued news of the Liberty story being shared in spite of the obstacles we have faced recently, and it is tremendously exciting to have a reunion being planned for just a few short months away.

As a reminder, I encourage all members to submit content for this publication to me via e-mail (editor@lvanews.org). While there isn't space to include all submissions, this newsletter is truly assembled by members - for members, and we welcome any news or updates that are submitted.

Stay healthy and stay safe.

---Sincerely, William Graves *Editor*

SUBMIT INFORMATION TO:

William Graves, Editor editor@lvanews.org

www.USSLibertyVeterans.org | www.USSLiberty.com

Liberty News

Letter from the President

The Liberty story is getting wide distribution thanks to the TRUNEWS and the continued efforts of many of the crewmembers who want to see justice for our fallen shipmates before we are all gone. Each newsletter seems to have someone's obituary or the fact that another shipmate is unable to make the trip to a conference or a reunion due to adverse health.

As you all know, the Liberty Veterans Association's 54th annual reunion is planned for June 4th -7th and we still need to get an accurate list of attendees to the hotel ASAP. If you haven't made your reservations yet Please do so quickly. Our block of rooms can only be held for a limited time before they will be released by the hotel.

I want to tell you about a special project that will be presented during the reunion when Mr. David Fournier describes his wood carving skills while displaying a carving that he has done a former CT site. David takes great pride in his work and has offered this piece to the Liberty Veterans Association as a potential money maker. You may bid on this carving that will be on display during the reunion and the high bidder will have this for their very own. David has a 15-minute presentation on a wood carving project that will probably be held Friday evening. I would encourage as many as possible to attend his presentation to experience what really goes into this labor of love.

As spring rolls around, I hope everyone has gotten their COVID-19 shots so that we won't have any more concerns about someone not being able to make the trip due to a health issue. I hope everyone had a safe and happy holiday season and are now ready for the warmer weather and outdoors activities. Remember we will be going to Florida for the reunion so plan accordingly as far as the clothes you pack.

I want to thank everyone for your support this past year and hope we can continue to get the message out far and wide which has been one of our key goals since the beginning. Have a safe trip to the reunion and have a wonderful experience while you are there. There will be a showing of the TRUNEWS docuseries Sacrificing Liberty over a two day period during the reunion but the exact date and times have yet to be determined.

Peace be with you

Larry

Liberty News

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE USS LIBERTY

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 na-



palm, 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.

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www.USSLibertyVeterans.org

USS Liberty 54th Anniversary Reunion Pensacola, FL

Holiday Inn Pensacola – 7813 N. Davis Hwy, Pensacola, FL 32514 – (850)472-1400

June 3rd to June 7th 2021

Room Rate: \$169.00 Day \$139.00 Sunday



Make plans now to attend our 54th Anniversary Reunion! Call NOW for reservations! Plan on attending and bring family & friends.

Hospitality Suite Memorial Service Base Tour TruNews showing "Sacrificing Liberty"

Crews Meeting Banquet – Speaker Sunday More!!

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

No Registration Fee - confirm reservation with Moe - Info above

Liberty News

54th Annual Reunion!

IMPORTANT NOTE:

We are working to identify an accurate headcount for the sake of planning. Once you make your hotel reservation, or if you already have, please fill out the short questionnaire at the link below to help us plan.

Reunion Attendee Questionnaire: http://reunion.lvanews.org

Note: If you are unable to complete the questionnaire above, please confirm your attendance by contacting Moe Shafer: moe.shafer@harbingernational.com / 770-363-3986

We could not be more excited to see you at the 54th reunion in Pensacola, Florida this June. While some of the information below is subject to change, we are excited to share the agenda with you.

June 3rd, Arrival

June 4th

- 9:30am 12:00
 Showing of Sacrificing Liberty Documentary by TruNews Episodes 1 & 2
- 1:00pm 4:00pm Crews Meeting - David Fournier Wood Carvings - Peter Hounam Author Operation Cynanide - Other

June 5th

- 9:30am 1200pm Showing of Sacrificing Liberty Documentary by TruNews - Episodes 3 & 4
- 1:00pm 4:00
 NAS Museum NAS Chapel Memorial Service Times TBD

June 6th

- 9:30am
 TBD for Sunday
- 6:00pm Liberty Banquet - Speakers - Dave Wiles TruNews - Phil Tourney - Larry Bowen

June 7th, Departure

Hospitality & Ships Store open each day

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TruHistory Films Presents SACRIFICING IBERICUSERIES

TruHistory Films Releases Sacrificing Liberty movie

"The USS Liberty coverup is over!" That is how Matthew Skow announced the official release of Sacrificing Liberty.

Skow is the film director for the groundbreaking four-part docuseries produced and distributed by TruHistory Films, a Florida film company.

The project began in 2019 when Skow participated in an episode of Trunews, an independent digital news commentary program that originates from Vero Beach, FL. Trunews host, Rick Wiles, interviewed four USS Liberty veterans who told their story about what happened on June 8, 1967. Wiles and Skow were so shocked by the men's gut-wrenching testimonies that they decided the true story of the USS Liberty demanded a highly professional movie.

"The USS Liberty story ranks near the top of the biggest coverups in

modern history," exclaimed Rick Wiles, the docuseries' producer. "We determined that somebody had to record the truth for the whole world to see and hear," he added.

Although other films have been made about the USS Liberty, Skow said his film is the first and only documentary that allows the veterans to narrate the film. Skow spent nearly a year recording hundreds of hours of video from numerous survivors.

The four-part film series is available at www.SacrificingLiberty.com for rental, digital purchase, and DVDs.

"We hope that Americans who love our veterans will hold USS Liberty parties in their homes and watch all four episodes," said Skow. "Let's tell the whole world what happened on June 8, 1967."

Watch Online or Purchase DVDs



www.SacrificingLiberty.com

Liberty News

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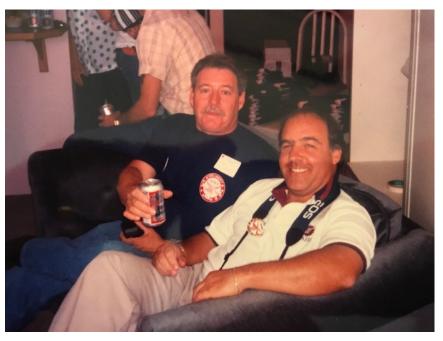
Obituary - Calvin (Cal) Landis



Calvin Louis Landis, 75, of Warwood, WV, passed away on Friday, September 10, 2020 at his residence. He was born on November 25, 1944 in Ypsilanti, MI, son of the late Calvin Louis Landis and Cona Jean Eddings. Calvin was a Christian by faith, former Marshall County Deputy Sheriff, former Chief of police in Cameron, WV, former employee of C.A. House Music and Guerrero Music, former Animal Control Officer and dispatcher, retiree from the US Post Office, member of the American Legion Post 1, Purple Heart Chapter 709, Veterans Outreach in Bethlehem, and a US Navy Veteran that received a purple heart, but, Calvin's true love was

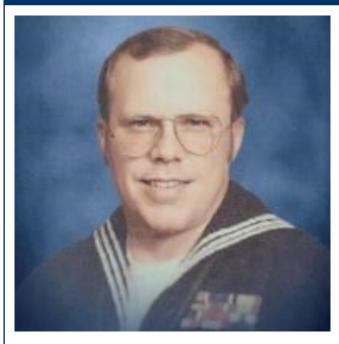
Country Music Entertaining. In addition to his parents, he preceded in death by his step-father, Thomas Hardy, daughter, T. Denise Landis and granddaughter, Satiana Landis. Surviving are his wife of 54 years, Mary (Burge) Landis of Warwood; children, Tracy Landis and her wife Jennifer Gilzow of St. Albans, WV, Calvin (Tanya) Landis III of Moundsville, WV, Clinton (Jessica) Landis of Wheeling, Tiffany (Butch) Powell of Wheeling and Clifton (Amanda) Landis of Wheeling; two sisters, Patricia Allee of California and Debbie (Anthony) Nichelini of California; grandchildren, Sarah And Will Morgan, Logan, Lindsey and Lexi Landis, Tyler (Jenna) Landis, Gianna Landis, Heidi (Andrew) Woolf, Brandon, Butchie, Cali,and Shelbi Powell, Paisley Landis and Abigail Un-

derwood and Arielle Devore; great grandchild, Harper Landis and several nieces and nephews. Friends will be received on Sunday, September 13, 2020 from 2-4 & 6-8pm at Altmeyer Funeral Home, Elm Grove Chapel, 154 Kruger Street, Wheeling, WV where funeral services will be held on Monday, September 14, 2020 at 11am with Pastor Tim Seidler officiating. Interment will follow at a later date at Arlington National Cemetery, VA.emorial contributions may be made to Helping Heroes 256 Jefferson Avenue, Moundsville, WV 26041 or to the USS Liberty Veterans Org.



Liberty News

Obituary - Herbert Peetoom



Herbert Charles Peetoom, age 74 of Tina, Missouri, passed away at home on Friday, February 12, 2021, with his beloved wife by his side.

He was born in Bethany, Missouri on September 7, 1946, the son of Earl Leon (Shorty) and Marian Matilda (Mainstream) Peetoom. Herbert graduated in 1964 from Bogard High School and later served his country for twenty-one years in the United States Navy. On May 13, 1965, Herbert married Wanda M. Dempsey in Bogard, Missouri; they were later blessed with two children, Edward Ray, and Kelly Wayne. Herbert worked for sixteen years at SEMCO in Chillicothe, Missouri as a sheet metal worker, after they closed, he worked for Roberts Tool and Die in Chillicothe, Missouri for eight years. He was a member of the Coloma Baptist Church, Hale V.F.W. Post #3464, and V.F.W.

Post # 1773 of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Carrollton, Missouri.

Herbert is survived by his wife, Wanda of the home; two sons, Edward Ray Peetoom of Tina, Missouri, and Kelly Wayne Peetoom and wife Julie of Liberty, Missouri; one sister, Patricia Ann Hawkins and husband Melvin of Carrollton, Missouri, and Robert Earl Peetoom and wife Shelley of Norborne, Missouri; three grandchildren, Logan Osborn and husband Keith of Higginsville, Missouri, Samantha Marie Elliott and husband Justin of Bosworth, Missouri, and Olivia Peetoom of Liberty, Missouri; and one great-granddaughter, Mila Osborn.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Shorty and Marian Peetoom; and one grandson, Alexander Ray Peetoom.

The family will receive friends from 11:00 a.m. until 11:45 a.m., on Saturday, February 20, 2021, at Bittiker Funeral Home, 1201 North 65 Highway, Carrollton, Missouri.

Funeral Services will follow at 12:00 p.m. (noon), at Bittiker Funeral Home, with Brother Richard Colliver officiating.

Burial will be in Carroll Memory Gardens, Carrollton, Missouri, with Full Military Honors provided by Pence-Lovell-England Post # 1773 of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the United States Navy. We will be led in procession to the cemetery by the Patriot Guard Riders.

For those who would like to make a memorial contribution, the family respectfully suggests they be made to H.E.L.P. Cancer Fund. They may be left at or mailed to Bittiker Funeral Home, P.O. Box 223, Carrollton, Missouri, 64633.

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Obituary - Richard Sturman

Richard "Rocky" Sturman, 74, passed on April 14, 2021.

He was born September 14, 1946 in New York, NY, the son of Nancy Hannon and Herman Sturman (both deceased). On November 22, 1969, he married Maureen McNamara, who pre -deceased him in 2001.

Rocky served in the U.S. Navy as a Radioman 2nd Class aboard the USS Liberty. After his discharge, he worked for the telephone company for 2 years and then as a Gapfiller/Signal Maintainer for the NYC Transit Authority for 30+ years. He retired in 2003 and moved to Elmira, NY, where he lived for 10 years with his beloved cat, DeOGe. Rocky was an avid photographer who always had a camera in one hand and a ciga-

rette or a beer in the other (sometimes both)!!

He is survived by his daughter and son-in-law, Theresa and Tom Foley, also of Saint Augustine, FL (previously Levittown, NY); son and daughter-in-law, Rick and Abigail Sturman of Falls Church, VA; grandchildren, Ryan and Colin Foley; sister, Mary Okul and brothers Anthony Sturman and James Franz.

Services are as follows:

Drago Funeral Home 43-10 30th Avenue, Astoria, NY 11103 Wednesday, April 21st 7:00 - 9:00 pm Thursday, April 22nd - 2:00-5:00 pm and 7:00 - 9:00pm

Mass St. Joseph's R.C. Church 43-19 30th Avenue Astoria, New York 11103 Friday, April 23rd - 10:00 - 10:45am

Cemetery Calverton National Cemetery 210 Princeton Boulevard Calverton, New York 11983

IN LIEU OF FLOWERS, the family requests donations be made to the following: USS Liberty Veterans Association PO Box 680275 Marietta, GA 30068

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Liberty News

Letter from Phil Tourney

Dear Shipmates, Families, Friends and Supporters,

The reunion will be here soon, and I am looking forward to gathering with true American heroes. Unfortunately, Lisa will not be able to attend but will be with us in spirit. So much has happened in the past 54 years. Some incredible things have happened through these years. Some moments were also negative. This organization has stuck to its guns, doing all we could for the memory of our murdered shipmates. Most of all, to show our to respect them for the ultimate price they paid for America. We never gave up on them, no matter what. Our fellow mates who have passed on since are always in my heart as well.

Our men never had a chance to continue with life, love, have family grandkids, and enjoy anything this life has to offer. Why were we the ones who were spared? I could never figure that one out for the longest time. I firmly believe I have figured it out, and I am going to tell you why. Our government set us up so we would all be slaughtered at the hands of our so-called allies. "Allies" that continue to divert any blame or responsibility for the attack. This attack was a worldwide cover-up. Those who survived the attack were spared so that we could tell the truth of what happened that day. We have had some very high-profile people help us along our journey for truth. I want to note Admiral Moorer, Ted, Ben, Grob, Pete McCloskey, Paul Findley, Adlai Stevenson, George Ball, and so many more.

We beat all the odds, we miraculously survived, and the ship didn't sink that day. All of you here today did more than that with the help of God's good graces. All our government wanted was war, but WW3 was prevented. "Sacrificing Liberty" impacted me immensely. Mates, to all of you in the film, you should be very proud of yourself. It's never too late to add your story if you want. I believe that TRUNEWS would welcome more stories from survivors because I know I would. Believe me, gentlemen, the more survivors that come forward with their stories, and tell the world how they feel, will experience an immense feeling of relief and clarity.

Your voices will live beyond our graves, so please give it some thought because this is so important. Thank you to Moe, Ron, Larry, Bob, and all board members for a job well done setting up our reunion. The board representing us is unyielding in their support. Thanks to William Editor for allowing me this opportunity to share my thoughts.

Very Respectfully,

Phil

Liberty News

Submission from Ron Kukal

Today I woke up, and felt pretty darn good, and I want others to know that this flag flew over the Liberty in 1966. Stan White ended up with it, and then after Stan's death, I think his wife Laura gave it to Gary Brummett, and Brummett wanted to donate it to the museum.

The flag is there, and hopefully will be exhibited at the Annex, but who knows for sure.



Liberty News

"The Uniform Story" - By Run Kukal

I believe it was August of 2001 that the first History Channel documentary was shown. Not so long after the documentary was aired, Jim Ennes was inundated with emails about the program, from just about everywhere in this nation. He was so overwhelmed with those emails that he sent the overload to me to answer. I did answer all of them, but the one email that worked out well, was the one from the Hampton Roads Naval Museum, in Norfolk Virginia. A man by the name of Joseph Judge wrote this email, to which I did all the answering. We did exchange emails for a short while, until I realized that it would be to this nation's benefit, if the survivors contributed all they could to the museum for posterity's sake. My contribution was my own tropical white uniform, and that uniform remained on display at the museum for many years. It is only an estimate, but I think it was very close to fifteen years. I was never going to make any changes to the display, that is until the death of our own Master Chief Petty Officer Stan White. As the Chaplain for this organization I did go to Chief White's funeral at Sturgis, SD. and was able to speak at the funeral. It occurred to me that Stan's uniform was much more presentable than mine was, after all who could not see the difference between Stan's Dinner Uniform and mine.

Let me just say that Stan White became a close friend after we both had left the service, and I did visit him at his home which was close to Custer SD several times. Took my family with me, and they did enjoy both Stan and Laura. I remember our own Commander Dave Lewis saying how great Stan looked in that dinner uniform, so I felt it was my responsibility to make sure his uniform remained out there for the public to see, and consequently I did request for mine to come down, and his to go up in its place. The museum complied, and that is where the uniform is to this day. After this was accomplished, I talked Commander Lewis into sending his uniform to the same museum, and at first Dave was hesitant, but finally consented. Once the uniform was there, I did ask when it would be put on exhibit, and as luck would have it, the Covid thing was taking place at about the same time. There was only one person working at the museum, but this gal took it upon herself to make sure the uniform found a place, and even more gratifying she found a place for it at the Annex, on the Norfolk Naval Base. Hampton Roads Naval Museum has a downtown museum, and an annex on the base, and as far as I know that is still the case. The Annex as I understand it is right across the street from Admiral's Row, so Dave's uniform is certainly in the right place. wouldn't you agree? I know Dave never got so far as Admiral, but I think he would have made a good one. To add to this, there a few things we needed to iron out, such as the medals, and Dave never sent his hat, so Commander James Smith and Phil Tourney took care of that for me. I can't thank them enough, simply because they went overboard, and presented the flag that flew over the USS Liberty in 1966 to the museum, and that story has already been printed in the newsletter. So now we have the uniform of Stan White and Dave Lewis in a prominent museum, and as far as I know those uniforms will be there for a very long time.

Next we got to the Cold War Museum in Vintage Hill, Virginia where another one of my uniforms has been on display for a very long time. In my own personal opinion, I felt that there are other people who needed their uniforms displayed, so I requested mine come down, and Commander James Smith's uniform go up in its place. I requested Jim to send the uniform, to which he promptly complied. I am not sure the uniform is up yet, because the Covid thing caused a lot of delays in everything, even displaying Commander Smith's uniform. The Cold War Museum evidently lost their volunteer help because of it, so the Director Jason Hall was stuck doing their work, plus his own. I am still in contact with Jason, and have asked others in the area to go and help him out. Phil Tourney is now in the process of sending his uniform to the same museum, and they have promised to display Phil's also. This is all a work in process, but I am sure it will all happen.

This is the actual story of how the uniforms found their place, as near as I can remember. I am sure there could be some minor mistakes, but as my own life has been a whirlwind, I didn't really have the time to make notes. I counted the memorials that are listed on the Jim and Joe's USS LIberty web site, and near as I can tell there are around 70 of them, so let them try and revise that history, if they think they can.

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Ron

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	
Blood in the Water (1 REMAINING) - By Joan Mellen	\$25.00
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 Attach 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)	
Justice for the Liberty - An All American Documentary by Break of Dawn Productions	
A USS LIBERTY REMEMBERANCE 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	
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	
Challenger Coin - With the Names of 34 Fallen Shipmates	
USS Liberty Coin - Without the Names of Fallen Shipmates	\$10.00

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PHONE	: EMAIL:				
	ITEM DESCRIPTION	SIZE	QUANTITY	PRICE EACH	TOTAL
	SHIPPING CHARGE (See below) **			GRAND TOTAL:	
** \$5.00 SHIPPING CHARGE FOR DOMESTIC ORDERS OVER \$10. \$15.00 SHIPPING CHARGE FOR INTERNATIONAL ORDERS. PLEASE MAIL LVA STORE REQUESTS TO: Moe Shafer, PO Box 680275, Marietta, GA 30068 MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: USS LIBERTY VETERANS ASSOCIATION					
	For a one year membership in the USS LIBERTY Veterans As	sociation and Ne	wsletter Subscrip	otion, send \$20 to Moe	e Shafer.

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

Liberty News

Liberty News is the official journal of the USS LIBERTY Veterans Association - a California nonprofit, taxexempt 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.

Make your tax-deductible check payable to: LVA, C/O Moe Shafer, PO Box 680275, Marietta, GA 30068

BOARD MEMBERS

Larry Bowen Bob Scarborough Ron Kukal Frank O'Classen Terry McFarland

www.USSLibertyVeterans.org

www.USSLiberty.com

LIBERTY NEWS PO BOX 680275

Marietta, GA 30068

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Joe Meadors Director of Operations joe@ussliberty.com

William Graves

Editor editor@lvanews.org

Terry McFarland

Member at Large tlmjumbo92@yahoo.com

Donna Shafer

Ship's Store Manager donnashafer@bellsouth.net