Letter from the Editor

William Graves, Editor
editor@lvanews.org

Dear Veterans and LVA Members,

If you haven’t met made arrangements to attend the 57th Anniversary Reunion, now is the time!

June 6th to June 9th, 2024 in Arlington, VA
NO REGISTRATION FEE
View additional details on page 3

Additionally, if you have not yet paid your 2024 dues, please do so. Your support keeps the LVA functioning and allows us to continue telling the Liberty story to all who will listen.

Are you sharing your take on the Liberty story with those in your community?

Do you have information you’d like to share with other readers?

Please do send your content submissions for consideration to editor@lvanews.org.

Thank you, and Happy Spring!

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Sincerely,
William Graves
Editor

Board of Directors

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Vice President

Ed Bechtel
Secretary - Treasurer

Dave McFarland
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SUBMIT INFORMATION TO:
William Graves, Editor
editor@lvanews.org
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.
USS Liberty
57th Anniversary Reunion
Arlington, Virginia

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

June 6th to June 9th, 2024

Room Rate: $159 King
$179 double

Make plans now to attend our 57th Anniversary Reunion!

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

Honoring the USS Liberty Crew

FEATURING:
Hospitality Suite | Arlington Memorial Service
Tours | Banquet on 6/8

NO REGISTRATION FEE!

For information, contact Moe Shafer: 770-363-3986 | moe.shafer@harbingernational.com
Letter from the President

We lost another shipmate this month, heartbreaking. More are sure to follow. Not a good way to start my comments. It tells me how fortunate we were to have been spared June 8, 1967, being alive, having families. What a gracious, loving gift from God. We carry on in His name with the truth.

New Hampshire SB1041 at this point has been tabled until fall of this year. USS Liberty continues its fight for justice, no matter what. Getting a fair shake from our government is not going to happen. Very simple reason, we were dead men walking. We were set up by the very government for death that we swore an oath to defend. That is a national disgrace then - and even more so now.

Our USS Liberty Memorial Monument: At this point we have been turned down by the Navy Museum and NSA. Another long list of denials which has USS Liberty on it. But we don't give up that easily. I am working now with other sources for a place of honor to place it. Our reunion is closing in on us fast. Please make your reservations soon. I hope to see many of you, shake your hands and thank for your service on USS Liberty and to America!

Respectfully,
Phil - 970 201 7612

Letter from the Chaplain

Just recently I have had contact with Terry Halbardier's daughter, and I am going to relieve her of the flag she has that flew over the capital, I guess honoring Terry, as I am not sure yet about all this. Plus I will be getting his uniform and decorations. She also has an official letter stating that this flag I will be receiving is the actual flag.

I will be looking to place it in the Michigan Heroes Museum. She hasn't gotten anything yet for me, but I am waiting, and will make sure his stuff is placed, as I am in a good position to do so. I feel very thankful that she contacted me, and didn't let this stuff go by the wayside. Since our govt. doesn't seem to care, I am going to make sure it happens.

If there is anyone that wants their items placed in a good museum, I am in a position to do so.

-Ron
Hope to post gazebo bulletin board content, as it develops, online. Here is the entire Christmas message I sent out this year to family, etc:

Three photos of the USS Liberty memorial garden are on the back. (I removed the cover from the 5 ft x 2 ft sign temporarily for the photos - official unveiling will be later, maybe with better letters.)

The covered sculpture above is a 9 ft long, 2D steel knockoff of the shot up vessel. The pavers lining the river pebble are salvaged from the Indiana War Memorial. The long path is for slope limits, under the Americans with Disabilities Act. There are 15 stainless garden tags marking 20 native trees and shrubs, and a well elevated overlook of the regional park.

You can Google Earth 2701 E Riverside Dr, Indpls, to see Riverside Regional Park, the new promenade along the street, and the rest of the setting.

Wikipedia, a propaganda machine for Israeli and Jewish interests, calls the massacre an “incident” and omits many of the compelling statements by US military, diplomatic and intelligence leaders. They briefly mention the thorough 2007 expose in the Chicago Trib, omitting John Crewdson’s earlier Pulitzer. Before long, he was gone from major media. Ray McGovern, who gave Pres Reagan his daily CIA briefings, pointed to the attack and its later handling, as the most dramatic example of Israel’s domination of the US, probably true until 9/11.

One garden at a time, restoring America to a self governing republic.

Maybe you can extend holiday wishes to the Christians and others in Palestine, presently facing the likely final stages of the genocide, planned and commenced when Israel was founded, and bankrolled by America.

Gordon
PS: I got your card for 10 cents at Dollar Tree (12 for $1.25). Merry Christmas to me.
Bylaws Update from Ed Bechtel (corrected)

An error was identified in the formatting of section 6.1 of the bylaws update included in the previous issue. This has been corrected and included below for reference:

Article 6
MEMBERSHIPS

Section 6.1 Members
The Members/Friends of the LVA, of the corporation shall consist of the following persons:
   a. The directors of the corporation
   b. Persons selected by the board to receive honorary membership to the LVA.
   c. Any person who served on board the USS Liberty and who has paid dues to the corporation.
   d. Any person who has paid dues to the corporation for the period coinciding with the fiscal year of the corporation to which such dues are related.
   e. Any blood relative (spouse, child, brother, sister, etc.) of a deceased USS Liberty crew member who has paid LVA dues for the period coinciding with the fiscal year.

Section 6.2 Voting Members
The members of the Corporation entitled to vote on corporate affairs shall include those persons described in subsection (a) of Article 6 Section 1. Those persons described in subsection (b) thru (e) of Article 6 section 1 are recognized as “Friends of the LVA” in lieu of “Members”. The classification: “Friends of the LVA” does not carry voting rights. Voting rights are extended to persons in subsection (c) Article 6 Section 1 as described in Article 6 Section 4.
   The voting members of the corporation shall be its “members within the meaning of Section 5056 of the California Corporations Code.

Section 6.3 Honorary Members
The honorary members officially recognized as, “Friends of the LVA”, of the Corporation shall include those persons described in subsection (b) of Article 6 Section 1.

Section 6.4 Equal Voting Rights
All voting members as described in subsection (a) Article 6 Section 1 shall have equal voting rights in the election of board members and in other corporate affairs subject to a vote of the members. Persons described in subsection (c) Article 6 Section 1 shall have equal voting rights, if in attendance of the regular meeting only, as described in Article 6 section 9.

USS Liberty Story on Medium.com - Wayne Stiles

I recently did a story on the USS Liberty incident for Medium.com. It has been read by hundreds of people that frequent that site. I have been approached by another newsletter site for permission to show my story there, which I have given. It is really amazing the interest people all over the world seem to have in the tragic event of June 8, 1967 and its aftermath. I think if more survivors would write about their experiences, there would be greater interest by the public to get to the bottom of why Israel attacked the Liberty.

Here is my story:  https://bit.ly/3J2X7KE

Wayne F. Stiles, Rescue Pilot, HC-2, USS America (CVA-66)
New Hampshire House Bill 1041 - Larry Bowen

On January 12th the state of New Hampshire held a public hearing on HB 1041. This Bill is to formally establish a commission to investigate the attack and aftermath of the June 8th 1967 brutal attack on the USS Liberty. Your LVA President Phil Tourney, former President Larry Bowen, and Marine GYSGT Bryce Lockwood were present to represent the crew. We each had an opportunity to speak to the Bill and explain why we as a crew support the Bill. The weekend began with a pot luck dinner at one of the local citizens’ home. During the dinner we spoke with several citizens regarding why they supported the Bill. After dinner, Phil, Larry and Bryce met with the Bill’s prime sponsor Representative Jason Gerhard. We talked about how we were going to address the Hearing committee the following day. On Friday we got to the capitol by 8:30 to be sure we were there for the start of the day’s hearings. Bill 104 was the second Bill on the docket. The cosponsor, Representative Michael Granger, introduced the Bill and then Larry spoke to it. Bryce followed Larry and Phil followed Bryce. Each of us had a few minutes to address the committee as well as other citizens who were in support of the Bill. The only negative input came from American Legion representative Mr. John Graham who stated that the American Legion did not want to participate on the commission. His testimony was very brief and he took no questions before he left. He did say that he personally did not oppose the Bill but that National had a position. I have to say that I wasn’t surprised by the stance that the American Legion has taken. A critical piece of this entire weekend was the support provided by Matt Sabourin. He coordinated our travel, accompanied us to the capitol, picked us up from the airport on Thursday and generally keep us up to speed on what was happening when. Thanks should go out to the New Hampshire citizens who helped to make our stay as pleasant as possible. Another shout out should go to Ms. Kathy Peterson who met us at the airport, took us to lunch after the hearing and saw us off at the airport on Saturday. Everyone was very kind and treated us like family.

The “Rockstar” Incident - Dave Van Hoven

Shown is the advertisement for the presentation I made as per my email to your website seen in the December 2023, LVA Newsletter.

The presentation was made on January 10, 2024 and was attended by 68 people in our retirement community on a chilly, windy day.

There were no surprises for me. However, those attending had no idea or only vague notions of that day’s tragedy. That was not surprising to me as their presenter as I had already concluded that two principal reasons existed for this to happen: 1). The 1960’s was a decade of tremendous social domestic upheaval and media attention and 2). The complicit and continuing suppression of the facts the by the Israelis and our government to this very day of March 23, 2024.

As we are well aware, the October 7, 2023 Hamas attack had its genesis in the land grab by the state of Israel during the Six Day War of 5-10 June 1967. That the USS Liberty was an innocent non-combatant data collector and a supposed ally of the Israelis only added to the tragic casualty rate of 70% and the loss of a valuable intelligence asset.

Dave Van Hoven
CDR, USNR-RET
Mount Juliet, TN
Obituary - David Neal Carnahan

MOYOCK, NC - David Carnahan, 77, died March 13, 2024. A native of Buffalo, New York, he was preceded in death by his parents, Earl and Freda Johnston Carnahan; and sister, Janet Brunner. David retired from the U.S. Navy with 21 years of service; and later retired as a mechanic at Metro Machine Shipyard. While in the Navy, he was serving as a crewmember on the USS Liberty AGTR -5 on June 8, 1967 when it was attacked, and he received a Purple Heart.

David is survived by his wife of 50 years, Betty L. Carnahan; four children, Michael Carnahan and wife Denise, Tammy Orick and husband David, Sandy Ketterman and husband John, and Norman Metz and wife Toni; one sister, Carol Lamphier; three brothers, Richard Carnahan, Robert Carnahan and Dennis Carnahan; thirteen grandchildren, Crystal, Dylan, Justin, David, Michael, Cheyanne, Donna Joe, Joshua, Autumn, Christopher, Jessica, Jennifer and Sara; and 22 great-grandchildren.

A funeral service will be held on Wednesday, Mar. 27, at 12 noon at Sturtevant Funeral Home, Bennetts Creek Chapel, North Suffolk. Burial with military honors will be at Albert G. Horton, Jr. Veterans Cemetery. The family will receive friends at the funeral home the hour before the service. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to the American Heart Association or the VFW.

www.SturtevantFH.com

Update from Don Pageler

Since my last reporting I have had the opportunity to tell the Liberty story to the following people and groups.

1. N 11/9/23 Nick Dibbs and I met with Congressman Lou Corea’s aids in Santa Ana, CA. Nick addressed the Palestinian issue and I told them about the USS Liberty. I also gave them what I use as a handout. Sorry no pictures

2. On 11/1123 My Neighbor George Chambers and I attended the opening ceremonies for the Orange Community Field of Valor. In Orange, CA. It is a week long display of flags to honor those who have served. I purchased a flag for 3 years in honor of Captain McGonagle. He was listed in the program. Captain McGonagle’s Tag on the flat is to the right.

3. On 11/13/23 I gave my Liberty Power point presentation to the classes of Ray Triggs at Costa Mesa Middle School. Ray is my neighbor however the event was arranged by the Freedom Committee of Orange County.

4. On 11/15/23 my Vietnam veteran buddy and professor at National University had me give my presentation to his International and Domestic Terrorism class. Sorry no pictures.
5. On 1/16/24 through the Freedom Committee of Orange County I told the Liberty story to the students at Back Bay High School in Costa Mesa, CA. I sat at a table and spoke to groups of 4 to 5 students at a time. A little more intimate setting. One girl asked me if I thought wars solved problems.

6. On 2/28/24 I gave my presentation to students at Ensign Middle School in Newport Beach. The teacher of the 2 classes said she majored in history at the University of California at Berkeley ad said she he never seen anything about the Liberty in text books and new nothing about it.

7. Also on 2/28/24 I addressed another one of Saul Lankster’s International and Domestic Terrorism class at National University. The students were so stunned that when asked if they had questions at the end, there was just silence.
# USS Liberty FOIA Lawsuit Update

This update will cover the latest news since Senior Judge Marsha Pechman’s November 4, 2022, "Additional Order on Cross-Motions for Summary Judgment". The case captions are:


Here’s a summary of the major events since the "Additional Order" was filed:

## A. Pages Released.

On January 6, 2023, the government released about 250 pages of partially declassified Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) records. These are records the CIA had previously released to me during the course of the lawsuit. However, in the wake of the "Additional Order" the agency unredacted additional portions.

## B. Third Order Filed.

On July 31, 2023, Judge Pechman issued her "Third Order on Cross-Motions for Summary Judgment". She ruled in favor of the National Security Agency (NSA) and CIA but not before compelling the CIA to release the 250 pages mentioned above. The "Third Order" effectively ends the lawsuit at the trial court level unless the case is remanded on appeal (more on that below).

Judge Pechman's "Third Order" was disappointing to anyone hoping to get the full record on the attack on the USS Liberty released. However, I should add that, given the binding legal precedents which constrain her, Judge Pechman's rulings in the case were probably much better than might be expected from many of her peers. Also, it is important to note what was achieved over the course of the lawsuit.

First, the CIA eventually produced five batches, totaling hundreds of pages, of records that they had initially identified as both responsive to my requests and unreleasable. In sum, the records included 171 pages with no redactions or redactions that are unlikely to be relevant to the attack on the Liberty. While much of the material is not germane nevertheless it is not useless as some of it adds to or amplifies the existing record. Moreover, several pages of relevant material—records that had never been released before or released with fewer redactions were obtained.

Second, the lawsuit helped identify additional unreleased material that is likely pertinent. A minimum of five separate records can be documented to have existed but which the CIA has never produced or acknowledged. Of the released material, the agency also withheld at least fourteen pages in whole. On 24 pages it released, the agency redacted all substantive content. There are an additional 47 pages with less extensive redaction(s) of material that is likely significant to the USS Liberty inquiry. Knowing that there is likely relevant material that the CIA has and still refuses to release is useful. Of course, it’s not nearly as useful as having it released but it’s not without value.

My general sense is that the agency is still guarding material that is very important to understanding what happened on June 8, 1967, and afterwards. Two examples may suffice.

First, the CIA has neither acknowledged nor produced any records bearing on the analysis of the three field intelligence reports directly implicating Israeli officials in a knowing attack. According to these reports, intelligence sources in Tel Aviv stated: "Israel's forces knew exactly what flag the LIBERTY was flying" and Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Dayan "personally ordered the attack" on the Liberty over the objections of senior military officers, one of whom characterized the attack as "pure murder". The agency produced those three reports but no underlying record of any analysis despite the fact that there is documentary evidence they were evaluated.
Second, nearly everything apparently pertaining to the Liberty—up to eleven pages—is wholly redacted from the never-before-released June 28, 1967, Director of Central Intelligence briefing to Congress. If you have the financial or legal resources to help me go after those and other records then please reach out to me via the USS Liberty Veterans Association.

C. Attorney Fees Paid. Last December the government agreed to pay a substantial sum in legal fees to my attorneys.

D. Appeal Briefs Filed. The appeal of Judge Pechman’s ruling on the status of a two-volume December 1967 US House Appropriations Committee (HAC) report in the possession of the NSA is now underway. This document is of great public interest, in part, because it has never been released in any form.

It is also noteworthy because of what investigative journalist Stephen Green claimed the report revealed (see Stephen Green, Taking Sides: America’s Secret Relations with a Militant Israel (Morrow & Co., 1984)). According to Green, the late Robert L. F. Sikes, who was an Appropriations Committee member, said the report contains CIA witness testimony that on June 7, 1967, the Israeli government threatened to attack Liberty if she was not kept far away from the area of Israeli operations. In his book, Green also stated: "The information provided by Representative Sikes has been corroborated by other committee sources who do not wish to be identified".

If true, this would seemingly confirm the three CIA field intelligence reports mentioned above. The opening brief in the appeal was filed on January 22, 2024, and an amicus brief on behalf of the USS Liberty Veterans Association was submitted on January 29, 2024, and filed the next day. You can read or download the briefs at <https://spaces.hightail.com/space/oMuiiUFaID>.

E. USS Liberty Legislation. Although not directly related to the lawsuit, there is positive news out of the New Hampshire legislature. There, Rep. Jason Gerhard and Rep. Michael Granger have sponsored a bill, HB 1041, to have the Granite State undertake what the US Congress has failed to do for so many years—conduct a proper, public investigation of the attack on the USS Liberty. Three Liberty survivors traveled from Colorado, Missouri, and Maryland to testify in support of the bill. You can watch their testimony at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ITq3lRP9ct4>.

I was pleased to submit eight pages of written testimony (plus a five-page attachment) in support of the bill, which you can read or download from <https://web.archive.org/web/20240206054152/https://gencourt.state.nh.us/house/committees/remotetestimony/showtestimony.aspx?id=275133>. The bill was later assigned for "interim study" and was "due out" on March 21, 2024, but it now seems to be stuck in committee limbo. Meanwhile SB 439-FN—a bill that would have the government of the State of New Hampshire punish Americans who boycott Israel—chugs along despite violating the First Amendment and garnering more than 10:1 opposition in a Senate hearing on January 24, 2024.

F. Feds Balk. The federal government was supposed to file their response brief in the appeal on March 22, 2024. However, on March 20, 2024, the government filed a motion to remand the case back to the district court so they can present new evidence and arguments in support of their refusal to release the HAC report. The government also requested the appeals court to "suspend the briefing schedule pending disposition of" its motion. In essence, the government wants a "do over". This is merely the latest episode in the federal government's ongoing blocking and stalling actions more than 56 years after the Israeli attack on the Liberty. My attorneys filed an excellent brief opposing the government's motion on March 28, 2024. We have no idea when the Court of Appeals will rule on the government's motion.
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**

**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**

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Loss of Liberty - New Detailed Film of Attach and Cover-Up (DVD Video) .................................................. **$15.00**

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**

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Grey w/ Black Ship & 2 Lost Marines Tee Shirt - (S, M, L, XL, XXL, 3XL) .................................................. **$22.00**

Golf Shirt: White OR Navy (each with tan stitching) - (M, L, XL, XXL, 3XL) .................................................. **$35.00**

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MEMORABILIA

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USS Liberty Cigarette Lighter - Zippo, Brushed Chrome, Ship Insignia on One Side and Silhouette on the Other .................................................. **$30.00**

USS Liberty Ship Patch - Multicolored, 100% Embroidered, 3 Inch .................................................. **$6.00**

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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.

Make your tax-deductible check payable to:
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