

# NAVY NUCLEAR WEAPONS ASSOCIATION

“KEEPERS of the DRAGON”©™

## NNWA Bulletin



January 2020



Our website address is: [www.navynucweeps.com](http://www.navynucweeps.com)

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Service Officer: Denice Young

Gray Dragon: John Cummings

## President's Message

Greetings fellow Dragon Keepers,

2020 is here and I hope everyone had a safe and happy holiday season. We had a great 34th reunion here in Jacksonville. The turnout was less than expected seeing there are many members living in the area that did not attend. The 92 that attended enjoyed the tours to St. Augustine, Mayport, and Amelia Island. This year we had the opportunity to add an evening at the Alhambra Dinner Theater and those that went were thoroughly entertained and well fed. Military Reunion Planners set everything up and Fran and I enjoyed hosting.

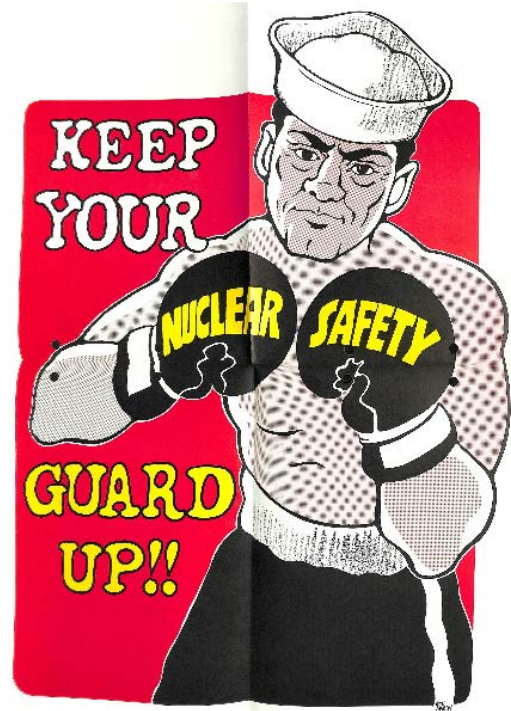
All board members whose terms were up agreed to serve another term. Unfortunately Chuck Weber resigned as Service Officer. I would like to thank Chuck for many years of service to the association. Denise Young has stepped up to fill the duty of Service Officer. I also welcome Charlie Behymer as a member of the BOD. This year there will be vacancies. We need members to run for the board. Some board members have served 6 years or more and need a break.

We have been receiving too many applications from people that are not qualified to be regular members. The wording in the bylaws is too generic. I will be working with rest of the board to make changes so they can be voted on at the general meeting in Colorado.

2019 was a good year for new members. John Hawkins made a big push to sign up new members through social media and telephone. We are still looking so dig deep in the memory banks and reach out to shipmates.

Fran and I look forward to seeing everyone in beautiful Colorado Springs in 2020.

Bob Fischer  
NNWA President



## Vice-President's Message

Fellow Members,

I am honored to be your Vice President and would like to welcome all new board members.

As a reminder to members, per the association Standard Operating Procedures and Pass Down the Line Information document:

*It is the Vice President's responsibility to maintain the SOP/PDL document, keeping it accurate and current.*

If you have any recommended changes to this document then forward them to a board member for consideration. If approved I will update the SOP/PDL.

Beginning in January 2020 NNWA membership dues was increased to \$15 per year.

Three years ago we began using a Reunion Planner to set up our reunions. This has helped tremendously with planning but we are in need of

Hosts! The planner cannot do this alone. A member needs to be the host. If anyone has an interest in being a reunion host please contact one of the board members and we will assist in getting you started, and the BoD is always there to help host.

Since we have John Hawkins recruiting new members we would like to have some of these new members step up and become board members. It takes a year or two as a board member before holding an office. If you are interested please let a board member know.

Our last reunion in Jacksonville, Florida had a good turnout. We have been attending these reunions for over 25 years now and each and every one of them are unique. Come join us in Colorado Springs. Chip and Shelley Chipperfield will be our Hosts.

Looking forward to our next reunion!

Happy New Year!  
Bethany  
NNWA Vice President

### **Secretary's Message**

Fellow Weaponeers,

Our upcoming reunion will be held in Colorado Springs, CO. As many NNWA members may know - Colorado played a major role in the nuclear arms race during the Cold War.

During World War II, the western Colorado town of Uravan provided part of the uranium needed by the Manhattan Project for the first atomic bomb. The Rocky Flats Plant, near Denver, was a manufacturing complex that produced nuclear weapons parts. The facility's primary mission was the fabrication of plutonium pits, which were shipped to other facilities to be assembled into nuclear weapons. The plant was operated from 1952 to 1992 by the AEC/DOE.

Two nuclear tests were conducted in Colorado. As part of Operation Plowshare, Project Rulison and Project Rio Blanco were conducted to explore peaceful engineering uses of nuclear explosions. The aim was to determine if natural gas could be easily liberated from underground regions. Project Rulison was an underground 40-kiloton nuclear test conducted on 10 SEPT 69, about 8 miles SE of the town of Parachute. Project Rio Blanco was an underground nuclear test consisting of three 33-kiloton nuclear devices detonated nearly simultaneously that took place on 17 MAY 73 in Rio Blanco County, Colorado, about 36 miles northwest of Rifle.

The tests succeeded in liberating large quantities of natural gas; however the resulting radioactivity left the gas contaminated and unsuitable for immediate use, and while the radiation has since reduced to less than 1% of background, public acceptance of any product containing radioactivity, no matter how minimal is almost impossible.

We won't be visiting any of these spots, but there are many attractions to see in Colorado Springs – including Pikes Peak, the National Museum of World War II Aviation, and a multitude of craft breweries. I am sure our reunion host will arrange a variety of tours that will make the reunion memorable. I and the rest of the Board of Directors hope to see you there.

Again – I encourage any member who has not served on the BOD to consider it – it takes members serving on the board to keep our organization running.

We hope to see you all in Colorado Springs!  
All the Best,  
John

### **Treasurer's Message**

As treasurer and keeper of the roster, let me welcome our new and reinstated members since the last newsletter. We have 27 new and

reinstated members since the last newsletter. They are:

Bobby Burns	Dale Herlein
James Armstead	George Tweedy
Larry Brickman	Norman Rafsol
Richard Staugstis	Sam Sottile
Richard Akre	Phil Howell
John Lance	Arnold Andrijeski
Theo Loudis	Steven Urban
Roy Work	William Pass
Clifford Tennyson	David Engel
Andrew Vittetoe	Joseph Gerant
Peter Smith	Gary Dunbar
Alan Krant	Adam Burbridge
William Chasteen	Mary Maldonado
Thomas Linner	

We now have 1002 members listed on the membership roster; 465 members in good standing; 54 life members (spouses of deceased members); 483 past members (members with unpaid dues for three years); 121 members with dues in arrears; and one reciprocal member (NAAV).

Past members can be reinstated by sending the \$10.00 reinstatement fee plus \$15.00 for a total of \$25.00. They will then be reinstated as a new member.

If you are unsure whether your dues are up to date and you receive your newsletter by mail, look at the date in the upper right corner of the mailing which shows the month and year to which your dues are paid. If you receive your newsletter electronically, log onto our website and check your membership status there in the Membership Roster. The dues date will be listed in the date column to the right of your name on the membership roster.

Beginning in January 2020, NNWA Membership dues have been increased to \$15.00 per year. Any dues received in the incorrect amount will be returned to the sender.

The current membership roster is posted on our website. Members not on-line can request a hard copy of the roster by calling or writing:

Donald Schultz  
573 Beaulieu Loop  
The Villages, FL 32163  
Phone: 352-259-1403

Please review the roster and notify the Treasurer or any board member of any changes in your status.

Currently, we have \$23,949.53 on deposit with Wells Fargo Bank.

When making a payment to the NNWA, please make checks payable to NNWA Treasurer or Donald Schultz NNWA Treasurer or Donald Schultz. The bank will not accept made out any other way. Please ensure that when sending money to the NNWA that it is the correct amount.

Donald K. Schultz  
Treasurer and Keeper of the Roster

### **Chaplain's Corner**

Greetings Everyone,

Welcome to the second decade of this century as we start the year 2020. I hope that you all had a wonderful Holiday Season and wonderful New Year to end the old and start the new. Should it not have been as pleasant as some may have wanted, I know that we all have something better to look forward to as we move on.

Jacksonville, for those of you that missed it was a good time and we are looking forward to a better time in Colorado Springs in September. Oh by the way, for those of you that may not be aware and might be interested in football, our NAVY Midshipmen are playing the Air Force at their Academy on October 3rd. Yes our reunion ends

on the 2nd but just thought I would let you know. Yes, I know, there are a select few that would have to sit in the end zone if they went because they would have to cheer for both sides. So may it be, just enjoy.

On a side note. As those of you who attended the reunion in Jacksonville know, I was the fortunate one to win the 50/50 drawing and NO, I did not only buy one ticket as I advertised. After I won, a comment was made to me that being the Chaplain they were sure that I would put the money to good use. Well folks, I will tell you where it went. On my return home, I put 10% in my church offering plate. Since then, the money has gone toward building a home in Tijuana, fed at least eight homeless people, provided breakfast for a number of Service People, (ones that I saw in uniform, in a restaurant I frequent), as well as some WWII Veterans. So I thank you all for them for your contribution.

Remember, if you hear of any members that are ill, having surgery or pass on to the Supreme Commander's fleet, PLEASE LET ME KNOW. Also if you hear of a fellow "Keepers of the Dragon" pass on, no matter if they are members or not, please let me know so we can add them to the Two Bell Ceremony".

See you in Colorado Springs.

Blessings to you all,

Ed Deitzler  
NNWA Chaplain

### **Historian's Message**

Merry Christmas Shipmates!

Continuing with my conversations with Steven Kasunic, original member of the Manhattan Project.

Right after Steve had designed the prototypes of the molds for the HE lenses, Gen. Groves finally got his way and all work on the Hill was fully compartmentalized. Steve then worked only on the gun type weapon until the war ended.

In early 1945 Oppie went to Steve and (by then) Capt. Parsons and asked if their design would work the way it was right then. They said it would, and the implosion team also said their design was ready, so Oppie froze the designs just the way they were. He didn't want any further unnecessary tinkering while the Hill waited on the delivery of the fissile material. Oak Ridge had not begun actual delivery of U235 until November 1944, and for Plutonium 239 from Hanford, it was February 1945. Plutonium production far outstripped U235, and soon enough it was known there would be enough for a full scale test of the implosion system.

In the meantime, those who had essentially worked themselves out of a job began a massive review of all their designs and procedures to see what could be improved. In the spring and early summer more and more people began to disappear from the Hill. Unknown to most of those left behind, some went only 200 miles south, but the rest were going 6000 miles west.

Come July rumors started flying about the test of the "Gadget" at Trinity. The word was unofficially passed that everyone on the Hill should be awake very early on the morning of the 16th and look to the south. Steve and his young (and very pregnant) wife were astounded by the flash. He was finally able to tell her "That's what I've been working on", and only then she understood the secrecy and everything else that had been affecting Steve and everybody on the Hill.

Captain Parsons had long before made it known that he would be the one going on the first bombing mission to perform final assembly (which was actually only placing the propellant in the gun assembly) of the weapon in the air. But he

needed an assistant. Steve had wanted to go (he was a Navy Reserve LT) but Capt. Parsons, who was a parent himself, said he needed to be with his wife who was about to become unpregnant. So the second seat went to Army 1stLT Jeppson.

The Hill was hit by both many cheers about their success, and deep worries about what it meant for mankind. Most of the scientists had wanted to leave and return to research or academia when their work was done, but there were some who decided to stay on. Fears of Nazi-ism were replaced by fears of Russia. Steve stayed on, and worked there for another 38 years. He retired with the title of Design Checker. The designs of every proposed weapon from the Hill, Livermore, and Sandia Labs had to pass his strict inspection before production could begin.

After the war ended secrecy was relaxed, slightly, and Steve was able to learn a lot more of the scope of the entire project. He learned, and later told me, that the Japanese had their own atomic bomb project, and it was much farther along than the Germans had ever gotten. It's head was a top-notch nuclear physicist named Yoshio Nishina, who had been an associate of Albert Einstein and was a great friend of Niels Bohr.

The Japanese had occupied Manchuria since 1931, and it had two of the most essential things for a bomb project - considerable Uranium deposits, as well as hydroelectric power. Plus, it was virtually ignored by the U.S. Army Air Force and never underwent aerial bombing. Obtaining U235 was something the Germans had never mastered, but Japan had been developing two of the three methods the Manhattan Project had used – magnetic separation and thermal diffusion.

Somehow U.S. Military Intelligence was aware of the Japanese efforts, and as soon as the occupation began after the surrender troops went directly to Prof. Nishina's laboratory and removed the calutrons.

Jay Lindstrom

## **Service Officer's Message**

Denice Young serves as the NNWA Service Officer. She regularly posts information regarding veteran's benefits on the NNWA website. Denice encourages members to contact her with questions and concerns regarding their service related benefits. Her email is:

[serviceofficer@navynucweps.com](mailto:serviceofficer@navynucweps.com)

## **Upcoming Reunion Information**

**NNWA 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Reunion  
Colorado Springs, CO  
27 SEP – 1 October 2020**

Hello All,

The reunion is scheduled to be held 27 September through 1 October 2020 at the Hotel Elegant'e in Colorado Springs, CO. More information will be available in the next news letter

Dwight and Shelly Chipperfield

## **Future Reunions**

The 36<sup>nd</sup> reunion of the NNWA in 2021 will be held in:

Region:	Central US
Location:	TBD
Host:	The BOD and the Military Reunion Planners (MRP)

The 37<sup>nd</sup> reunion of the NNWA in 2022 will be held in:

Region:	Eastern US
Location:	Tidewater, VA
Host:	Jim Harris, the BOD, and the MRP