

NAVY NUCLEAR WEAPONS ASSOCIATION

“KEEPERS of the DRAGON”©™

NNWA Bulletin



June 2019



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NNWA Board Members 2018-2019

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Vice President	Bethany Gray	360-620-0098	vicepresident@navynucweeps.com
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Service Officer: Kris Hobbs

Gray Dragon: John Cummings

President's Message

Shipmates,

My first year as president has been interesting but not very taxing. This is good because I am the reunion coordinator. Since MRP has taken over most of the job it is a much easier task. There are still things to do, one of which is provide reunion information appearing later on in this newsletter.

I would like to thank John and Bethany Gray and Don Schultz for their advice and assistance. Also John Hawkins, last year's coordinator, for his help. John has also done a lot of work recruiting ex WT's to join the association. We really need "younger" (40 and 50) year olds to keep our association going for many years to come.

All reunion attendees please send your full name and rate (not pay grade) at retirement or discharge to me at:

president@navynucweeps.com

Fran and I hope to see a great turnout in Jacksonville.

Bob Fischer
NNWA President

Vice-President's Message

Fellow Members,

Here it is the beginning of June – 4 months until our annual reunion. We are hoping to see all our members from the Florida / East Coast areas along with everyone else.

From my past experiences attending NNWA reunions I know there will be very well planned tours, sightseeing, entertainment, and meals. Our president, Bob Fischer – and his wife Fran are our reunion hosts

I am very excited to see Jacksonville and Amelia Island. When some of my co-workers fly into Jacksonville to work at SWFLANT they stay at Amelia Island.

NNWA Proposed Bylaw Change for 2019

The president has expressed his desire to clarify the eligibility requirements for Regular membership; specifically in the NNWA By-Laws, Article IV, Section 2 A.

Currently Article IV, Section 2A reads: "A. Have had duties requiring knowledge of the inspection, loading, operational use, support, assembly, or disassembly of nuclear weapons, or"

It is proposed that the words "knowledge of" be removed. This would change Article IV, Section 2A to read "Have had duties requiring the inspection, loading, operational use, support, assembly, or disassembly of nuclear weapons, or".

This proposed change will be voted on at the Annual Business Meeting of the association membership to be held at 1000 11 OCT 19. Absentee or proxy votes are not allowed so all members are highly encouraged to attend the reunion and vote on this proposed bylaws change.

Just a reminder, I maintain the SOP/PDL. 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

Looking forward to our reunion in Jacksonville, Florida! Go to the NNWA website and register to attend today!

Bethany

Secretary's Message

Fellow Weaponeers,

Our upcoming reunion will be held in Jacksonville, FL. Many members were stationed in the area back when our rate was active. The Yellow Water annex, which was then across Normandy Boulevard from the former Cecil Field Naval Air Station, once housed nuclear weapons. The Yellow Water Weapons Storage Area compound, situated in a vast pine forest, was enclosed by a barbed-wire fence.

The annex was built as a gunnery range in World War II. At some point, it switched to weapons storage and included a helicopter pad, Marine barracks and mess hall.

There were 89 ammunition bunkers, ranging from small buildings for high explosives to earth-covered bunkers with heavy steel doors for the nuclear weapons. The weapons have been gone since the early 1990s. Cecil Field, which is about 13 miles west of downtown Jacksonville was decommissioned in 1999, turned over to the city for redevelopment and later converted into Cecil Commerce Center. The Jacksonville Equestrian Center, the Jacksonville Aquatic Center, a community center, softball complex and other amenities are on the Yellow Water or northern part of the base. Two bunkers inside the heavily guarded area and 21 "igloos" outside the higher-security area are all that remained a few years ago. Their powder-blue doors were all open.

Later, some of the bunkers were used by Northrop Grumman to store airplane parts. In recent decades, the area has had the eerie stillness of a ghost town. The roads entering Cecil and Yellow Water have been reconfigured, and the original entrance razed so it might be difficult for those unfamiliar with the area to figure out where it once was.

That said, park users are allowed to walk and ride bikes or horses, but no vehicles, other than

maintenance, are allowed to drive on the asphalt trail. Here is a link to some old pictures of the facility:

<http://www.firemanjax.com/wpla.net/>

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.

I want to make a particular pitch for someone to serve on the Board of Directors as webmaster. I am sure the current webmaster will be happy to train a volunteer over the next year in preparation for them taking over from him full time after that.

We hope to see you all in Jacksonville!
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 13 new and reinstated members since the last newsletter. They are:

Stephen Van Dreser	Willie Burgess
David Meier	Sidney Gibson Jr.
James Tuggle	James McDermott
Michael Scheftic	Daniel Schmitt
William Brickhouse	Jeffery Obley
David Martin	David Nations
David Paton	Raymond Breton
Neil Hunt	

We now have 992 members listed on the membership roster; 468 members in good standing; 52 life members (spouses of deceased members); 459 past members (members with unpaid dues for three years); 97 members with dues in arrears; and one reciprocal member (NAAV).

Past members can be reinstated by sending the \$10.00 reinstatement fee plus \$10.00 for a total of \$20.00, before 1 January 2020 then it will go up to \$25.00. They will then be reinstated as a new member. This policy is because of the cost of mailing newsletters and reunion information.

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 web site 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 will increase to \$15.00 per year. Quite a few members have taken advantage of paying the old rate, of \$10.00, before the dues are increased. Maybe you should too.

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 32162
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 \$25,182.06 on deposit with Wells Fargo Bank.

If you plan on attending the 2019 Reunion in Jacksonville, your dues must be current. A bit of Reunion Trivia, I was the last Officer to be in Charge of the Yellow Water Limited Area before I put the lock on the gate.

When making payment to 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. When sending checks back for the difference, only about 50% are cashed which makes the checking account very hard to balance and in some cases the Treasurer has to make up the difference from his personal funds.

Donald K. Schultz
Treasurer and Keeper of the Roster

Chaplain's Corner

Blessings everyone.

Well we are now on the downside of the time for our Annual get together and like many of you I am looking forward to our time in Jacksonville. My memories of that area are a lot different than most of you. I was never there in the NW field, my time was a few times pulling in on a destroyer during 1960/61 as a Gunner's mate. During those two years we had spent many months picking up boiler plates practicing for the Mercury recovery missions and also as a guard ship for the first Polaris shot from a submerged submarine.

We also spent much time around Cuba on Sub patrols. It will be enjoyable for me to see how much the area has changed from those days. I know many of you will have different memories. I look forward to seeing you all there and being available for you.

Ed Deitzler
NNWA Chaplain

Historian's Message

Continuing with my conversations with Steve Kasunic, original member of the Manhattan Project:

I asked Steve if the fear of the Germans getting a nuclear bomb first was a real concern. "Absolutely!" he replied. It was the overriding threat for everyone. Nearly all the top scientists on the Hill had known Germany's best – Werner Heisenberg and Otto Hahn, and several others – for many years, and that they had 3 or 4 years head start on us and the Brits, but no one knew how far. We had to find out.

General Groves took the military option – when in doubt, ATTACK. He set up a combined scientific and military operation, a group of 30 to 40 dedicated volunteers, scientists and Army intelligence types from the Hill and sent them to Europe. They landed in France a few weeks after D-Day, equipped with weapons, jeeps, a few armored cars and a letter signed by Eisenhower directing all Allied forces to render any required assistance under the highest priority. They were commanded by Col. Boris Pash, one of the Manhattan Project's intelligence group. Their main targets were enemy scientists, documents, equipment and, if found, Uranium. Someone decided to get cute and named the project Operation ALSOS. In Greek, Alsos means "groves". The General was furious, but knew the worst thing to do would be to re-name it and so attract attention to it.

Steve had gone to college with one of the team scientists and got the full story of the mission when the guy got back to Los Alamos after the war. Their first target was the French scientist Frederic Joliot (son-in-law of Pierre and Marie Curie), and his laboratory in Paris. Col. Pash, and all the Alsos members, had every reason to get the mission done as quickly as possible, and were actually among the very first into Paris, right along with the French 2nd Armored Division, and ahead of any US troops. They engaged in combat

with fleeing German troops (and would again), and located Joliot. The scientist, his papers and much of his equipment were taken, and his brain picked. He gave them the last known locations of many on the Hit List and the team took off, next stop Brussels, Belgium. The city wasn't completely captured, but that small detail only delayed them a little. It went like that into the Netherlands and finally Germany itself, each new prisoner leading them to another.

Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin had agreed on how to split up Germany after the war, but Col. Pash did not pay much attention to future borders. The team went into British and French territory, and even areas destined for the Russians, wherever their leads sent them. Often they were hampered by German troops wanting to surrender. Otto Hahn and his entire laboratory were taken, including Germany's only reactor, and tons of Uranium that had been buried. All this material was flown back to the US (ships were too slow) reactor and Uranium included, for close examination.

Speed was essential, especially as the Russians had their own version of Alsos. We wanted ALL of the targets, and if they were somewhere our forces could not get to them, Gen. Groves would have the Army Air Force bomb them – several times factories and laboratories would get visits from as many as 800 B-17s, to be sure the Russians didn't get them either. Finally, at the very end of the war, the team caught up with Werner Heisenberg, right under the noses of diehard SS troops.

But by then it was known that the Germans were never even close to producing a real weapon. Their reactor had never gone critical, they had never separated U-235 in useful quantities and did not know how to mass produce Pu-239. And then Steve dropped a bombshell on me. He told me the Japanese had been far ahead of Germany.

More in the next exciting episode.

Jay Lindstrom

Service Officer's Message

Kris Hobbs serves as the NNWA Service Officer. He regularly posts information regarding veteran's benefits on the NNWA website. Kris encourages members to contact him with questions and concerns regarding their service related benefits. His emails are:

maa@navynucweps.com

serviceofficer@navynucweps.com

Veteran Service Officers (VSOs) will help you write and submit your benefits claims to the VA. Their services are free. They will help you gather the information that supports your claim. Once the claim is filed they will help you track the claim through the system. They can also help you file appeals for denied claims. Here are a couple of links to information about VSOs and how to find one:

<https://www.va.gov/vso/>

<https://nvf.org/veteran-service-officers/>

Upcoming Reunion Information

**NNWA 2019
Jacksonville, FL Reunion
7 – 11 October 2019**

The 2019 reunion is fast approaching. This is the third year we are using Military Reunion Planners (MRP) to set up hotel, tours and banquet. Please use the sign up form on our website:

www.navynucweps.com

The hotel has multiple dining options including Ruth's Chris Steakhouse. The River City Brewing Co. is within walking distance. There are twelve eateries within walking distance.

I recommend you go to the hotels website for detailed information and directions. Just google Doubletree Riverfront. It is in a great location. The Hospitality Room has a river view. The Riverwalk is right behind the hotel. All rooms have balconies. Unless you need two doubles I recommend a king bed. I highly recommend the extra \$10 a night for a riverfront room.

We have added a special tour this year. A dinner theater on Wednesday evening. I have been to this dinner theater and you will thoroughly enjoy the excellent acting and delicious food.

As always there will be a gift exchange at the dinner dance. If you wish to participate, please bring a gift from your home state to exchange with someone else. The gift should be somewhat symbolic of the area in which you live. Please keep the cost under \$20 and remember size is a factor for those who are flying.

I am hoping for one of the biggest reunions this year. Don't hesitate submit your reservations early.

SEE YOU IN THE SUNSHINE STATE

Bob Fischer
Reunion Coordinator
NNWA President

To register, either use the link in the Reunion Reservation Form below or here:

<https://militaryreunionplanners.com/reservations.php?folder=NNWA2019JAX>

Note to Reunion Attendees

The President has arranged for special recognition for members who served on active duty.

All reunion attendees please send your full name and rate (not pay grade) at retirement or discharge to president@navynucweps.com



Navy Nuclear Weapons Association 2019 REUNION Jacksonville, FL / October 7-12, 2019

Welcome to Jacksonville!

Come to [Jacksonville](#), known as Florida's "First Coast", for the 2019 Navy Nuclear Weapons Association Reunion. Among the events being planned are visits to historic [St. Augustine](#), NS Mayport and beautiful [Amelia Island](#). Don't miss this opportunity to catch up with your friends and share some old stories. [Click here](#) to view and make event reservations online.



Hotel Information

The reunion officially begins on Monday, October 7 and ends on Saturday, October 12. You will be staying at the full service [DoubleTree by Hilton Jacksonville – Riverfront](#), located at 1201 Riverplace Blvd., Jacksonville, FL 32207. The Doubletree is centrally located on the downtown riverfront and set amidst the historic San Marco district, near EverBank Field and The Jacksonville Landing. While staying at the hotel you may consider taking the water taxi, from the hotel, across the river to *Jacksonville Landing*. Located along the north bank of the *St. John's River*, *Jacksonville Landing* offers several restaurants, an extensive food court, and unique shops.



The room rate is **\$129.00** plus tax per night, based on room type occupancy and **includes breakfast**. All guest rooms are non-smoking. For those of you who choose to arrive early or stay late, the same room rate is available three days before and three days after the official reunion dates, based on availability. Please make your hotel reservations **now** by [clicking here to make hotel reservations on-line](#) or call the hotel at **904-398-8800** between 9 am-5 pm Eastern and ask for in-house reservations. Mention that you are with the *Navy Nuclear Weapons Association*, **Group Code: NUC**, to assure you are associated with your group.

You may request specific room types when you call to make your reservations (handicap accessible room, etc.). The hotel check-in time is 4:00pm; please don't expect to get into your room before then. Make your reservations today; you can cancel up to 48 hours prior to arrival without penalty. They will ask you for a deposit or credit card number to guarantee your room reservation. The hotel is holding rooms until they sell out or **September 13, 2019**, whichever comes first. Don't miss out!

Transportation & Directions

The closest airport is Jacksonville International (JAX); the hotel is located about 15 miles from the airport. The least expensive way to the hotel would be via Uber or Lyft. You may also take the Super Shuttle for about \$24 pp. The Super Shuttle kiosk is located in Baggage Claim. Reservations are required for your return trip from the hotel back to the airport. Super Shuttle can be reached at 904-765-9999. For those of you driving to the reunion, the hotel is offering complimentary self-parking. Valet parking is also available for a fee. [Click here for driving directions](#).

Travel safely and we will See you in Jax!



NAVY NUCLEAR WEAPONS ASSOCIATION 2019 REUNION

JACKSONVILLE, FL / OCTOBER 7-12, 2019

Meet & Greet: MONDAY, OCTOBER 7 (6:00PM)

Come join everyone and kick-off this year's reunion with a Pizza Party at the hotel.

Historic St. Augustine Excursion: TUESDAY, OCTOBER 8 (9:30AM-4:30PM)

Regarded as the oldest city in the United States, together we'll explore the incredible history of St. Augustine and Florida and discover how it grew and prospered under Spanish, British, French and



American rule. Your professional guide will regale you with captivating historical accounts of the native Indians, Spanish Galleons, Pirates and the Revolutionary War. You will ride through the *Fountain of Youth* property and hear the fable of the fountain, Ponce de Leon's discovery of *La Florida*, and his encounter with the natives. We tour all the major sites and stop at the Castillo de San Marcos, the fort that was never captured in battle. St. Augustine was



also the first winter resort for the rich and famous during the Gilded Age. Hear how Henry Flagler built the most opulent hotels of the day and turned the city into the "Newport of the South. Your local guide creates

an interactive atmosphere that is fun for everyone. Following the excursion, there will be time for self-exploration, shopping, and lunch, on your own, in this quaint little town. We'll drop off on *St. George's Street*, a reconstruction of "Old World Florida", which is lined with stone houses with overhanging balconies and walled garden patios. The neighboring side streets harbor many historical sites, boutiques, gift shops, restaurants and cafes. This will be a wonderful day in *Old Florida*.

NAS Mayport including Lunch: WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 9 (9:30AM-3:30PM)

Welcome aboard *U. S. Naval Station Mayport*, the second largest naval base on the east coast, and home to over 20 ships and several helicopter squadrons. The Aegis Class Destroyers stationed here were built at a cost of over \$1 billion each and we have requested an escorted ships tour. Touring the ship is optional (active duty ships are not very "accessible") and those not interested may visit the Naval Exchange. Afterwards we will have a hot lunch on base which is included in the tour price.

Jacksonville Dinner Theater: Neil Simon's - Brighton Beach Memoirs: October 9 (5:30pm-10:30pm)

Dreaming of baseball and girls, Eugene must cope with the mundane existence of his family life in Brooklyn: formidable mother, overworked father, and his worldly older brother Stanley. Throw into the mix his widowed Aunt Blanche and her two young (but rapidly aging) daughters and you have a recipe for hilarity, served up Simon-style. Ticket price includes bus transfer, a delicious dinner and great seats for the show. Note that this is a small, casual, theater and seats are limited. Please order early.

Amelia Island and Fernandina Beach Tour: THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10 (10:00AM-5:00PM)

Amelia Island is known as "Florida's Golden Isle". One of a chain of barrier islands stretching from



South Carolina, [Amelia Island](#) is a charming place - 13 miles long and two miles wide. Settled by the French, developed by the Spanish, named by the English and tamed by the Americans, *Amelia* is the only location in the United States to have been under eight different flags. Today, Amelia Island is a quaint, unique and upscale destination of renown. Begin the day with a guided inside look of the Island's most historical attractions including the "Silk Stocking District", boasting some of Florida's most elegant Victorian homes, *Fort Cinch*, and *American Beach*, the only beach open to African Americans until the 1960's. Then time is

your own downtown for browsing the many interesting shops and lunch, on your own, in this beautiful setting. We will take the scenic route back to the hotel and make a short stop at Kingsley Plantation. Here you will learn of the unique history of a black African slave who married her white Master and helped him run his cotton plantation, which is now a state park with "tabby slave cabins" an original barn and kitchen areas to tour. This is a great day exploring a classic Florida community.

NNWA Business Meeting: FRIDAY, OCTOBER 11 (10:00AM)

Check your itinerary at registration for specific room location. There is no need to pre-register for the meeting.

Farewell Banquet Dinner: FRIDAY, OCTOBER 11 (6:00PM)

Join your friends for the Banquet Dinner at the Hotel. Cocktails will be available from the cash bar at 1800; dinner will be served at 1900. Please make your entrée selection on the reservation form.

CANCELLATION INSURANCE

Protect yourself from unforeseen expenses caused by illness, injury or any other events that may impact your travel plans. MRP Tour Cancellation Insurance allows you to receive a refund of tour and banquet expenses. Note: This does not cover hotel cancellations. If you do not purchase cancellation insurance, all tour and banquet monies are **non-refundable** 6 weeks prior to the start of the reunion.

Important Reunion Notes:

- Tours may be cancelled if a minimum of 30 people per bus is not met. Full refunds will be given.
- Please understand that a certain amount of walking is necessary in order to view and explore attractions. Please consider your limitations and note any special needs on your reservation form.
- Be sure to bring photo identification (like a driver's license) to all event especially the base.
- Tour times are always subject to change up until tour time. A final itinerary is available at check-in.

All Reservations Are Due by August 23, 2019. Late reservations will be accepted on a space available basis with a non-refundable \$25 late fee. Note tour times are subject to change. Should you need additional information call our offices Monday through Friday CST at 817-251-3551 or email us at info@MilitaryReunionPlanners.com. Requests for refunds must be made in writing and postmarked no later than the reservation due date No refunds will be made after this date unless you have purchased *Tour Cancellation Insurance*. Cancellation Insurance expires at 11:59 pm the day **before** the reunion start date. Please note there is a refund processing fee of \$10 per person. Your cancelled check is your receipt as well as proof of purchase. MRP will not be held liable for failure of vendors to provide contracted services or any injuries/accidents that may occur during the reunion.

NNWA 2019 REUNION RESERVATION FORM

>>> [Click here to make reservations on-line](#) OR mail this completed form with a check payable to: MRP, Box 1588, Colleyville, TX 76034

DATE	TIME	EVENT	COST	QTY	TOTAL
		Reunion Registration - Members	\$45 pp		
		Reunion Registration – Spouse/Guest(s)	\$20 pp		
MON 10/7	1800	Pizza Party at the Hotel	\$1 pp		
TUE 10/8	0930-1630	Event A: Historic St. Augustine Excursion	\$45 pp		
WED 10/9	0930-1530	Event B: Naval Station Mayport incl. Lunch	\$55 pp		
WED 10/9	1730-2230	Event C: Dinner Theater – <i>Brighton Beach Memoirs</i>	\$79 pp		
THU 10/10	1000-1700	Event D: Amelia Island & Fernandina Beach Tour	\$45 pp		
FRI 10/11	1800	Farewell Banquet Dinner – <i>make entree selection below</i>			
		Chicken Marsala	\$42 pp		
		Roast Sirloin of Beef	\$50 pp		
		Non-refundable Late Reservation Fee (If registering after August 23, 2018)	\$25 pp		
		Tour Cancellation Insurance: Protect your \$\$ (Fee is non-refundable)	\$20 pp		
				TOTAL	

>>> PLEASE PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

NAME (As you want it to appear on badge): _____
SPOUSE: _____ GUEST: _____
ADDRESS: _____ CITY: _____ ST: _____ ZIP: _____
PRIMARY PHONE: _____ EMAIL ADDRESS: _____
EMERGENCY CONTACT: _____ PHONE NUMBER: _____
OF NNWA REUNIONS ATTENDED: _____
LIST ANY SPECIAL NEEDS (ex. dietary, wheelchair lift, etc.): _____

RESERVATIONS ARE DUE BY AUGUST 23, 2018

- Reservation money is non-refundable after due date unless Tour Cancellation insurance is purchased above.
- Insurance holders are eligible for a refund less processing fee until Midnight before the 1st day of the reunion.
- Insurance ends once the reunion begins – notification in writing/email must be received prior to start of reunion.
- Late reservations are accepted on a space available basis with a non-refundable \$15 per person late fee.
- Watch for an email confirmation of your order and online roster update as your proof of payment.
- Changes not possible online including cancellations. Email/Mail notice for cancellations required.
- To register and pay by check please print this form and mail it with a check to: MRP, Box 1588 Colleyville, TX 76034

Call or email MRP if you need to add, cancel or modify your reservation at 817-251-3551 or email info@MilitaryReunionPlanners.com. MRP agents are available weekdays from 9-4 CST. Voice Mail is 24/7
You must leave a voice message to receive a call back. Thank you for using Military Reunion Planners, LLC