



USS Yosemite AD-19 Association
President Report From
Bill Krug
570-878-2860
w.krugiii@gmail.com

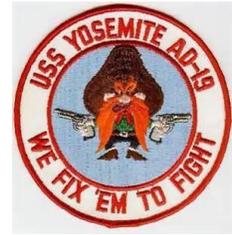


To All Hands

I hope all of you have had a Merry Christmas and are looking forward to a Happy New Year. If you have been on our website, you see that we are looking at changing what was projected for 2019. I, like most of you, was looking forward to going to Savannah. The problem is, as scheduled, we were in their peak tourist season and pricing reflected it. In an effort to lower the cost, I have moved the dates one week forward into the first week of May and the pricing did not improve. I was not pleased with the hotel billing of \$200 or more, in most cases, per night. That was prior to talking about a Hospitality Room, Banquet dinner, and our needs as a group. Let us also remember that food and entertainment are not part of that. We need to find the best deal for our members making it cost effective for them to attend the reunion. I felt we had a good pricing for the hotel we were at last year and yet I still had people that were concerned over costs. In some cases, individuals were electing to come for the raffle and pass on the banquet dinner. When we picked Savannah, we were not aware of the costs we would be potentially facing. Two years ago, we did a cruise out of Port Canaveral and spent 7 days at sea. I think those that went will agree it was a lot of fun. The food and a lot of the entertainment was included. Perhaps the only drawback was that it was a week long and not everyone can support a week away for a Reunion that normally lasted 4 days. So once again I am going to see what kind of deals we can get and perhaps offer you a much more cost effective Reunion. It took some doing last time. We managed to have a room to ourselves for the Banquet Dinner and Raffle. That took a lot of behind the scenes negotiating. We managed to find a bar that we claimed and as a rule, if you went there between 7 PM and Midnight any day you would find it occupied by someone from our group. For those with medical concerns, I think you will find the Cruise



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Lines very accommodating and well equipped. We had one medical emergency on our last cruise and the individual received excellent immediate care, and was airlifted to a stateside hospital, and in the end all was well. His family was kept aware of everything the entire time. Having a small hospital with doctors and medical staff right with you is an advantage. This proved to be the case. While some have said there is a lot of walking on a ship, when we were at hotels and on our tours, walking was also an issue for many. At least on a ship you can pick a room that is centrally located and minimize you need to travel. I also know that no matter where we go or what we do some individuals will be impacted by the distance to travel. The only significant offset I can say applies to the majority is the cost of what we do.

I feel that Savannah is close enough to Jacksonville that perhaps we will pull Yosemite Shipmates from not only Jacksonville, but also Mayport. I am sure all are aware that the Yosemite was homeported in Mayport for not only the last years of deployments, but well prior to that. I have looked into a Carnival cruise ship out of Jacksonville. They also sail out of Port Canaveral and Miami. Miami was further away for those that might have driven to Savannah. Those that have taken cruises know that the closer you are to the departure date the less choices you have about your cabin, and in some cases the perks. But we are in the best deal window now. So in the interest of getting you the most for what you will spend, this is what I am working on. During the last Reunion we used Helms Brisco to get us the most for our money. They did not charge us as Reunion planners do, but they do get a cut of what we spend, and we are locked into minimal numbers which we almost did not meet, and would have been charged for. That is why this year we were utilizing the free services of the Savannah Tourist and Vacation Center. They solicited hotels on our behalf and the bids came to me. We were eliminating the middle man in an effort to get the most for your money.



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Additionally, they would not go out to any hotel that had anything but a stellar reputation.

Last but not least, if you have been a Carnival customer before, you will be given perks and perhaps a better price than below. You need to think about this now. If you had planned to go to Savannah, this is well within your reach and will cost you less. Please pass on to our Secretary, Alan Koepke, your name and how many people would be in your party if you think you will attend a cruise out of Jacksonville, Fl. I think it may go down as our 2019 Reunion At Sea. This will give me a negotiating point as I try to improve pricing. I am not locking you in, just trying to see what the numbers could be. I would also pass on that deposits could be \$50 or \$100 and the final payment would be due February 26th, 2019. I will be in contact with the Board Of Directors and we will discuss this further. We will provide you with the Cruise information and a point of contact for booking with the Cruise Line. Those that cruise often may get a better rate at the time of booking. I have been assured that on a case by case basis, every effort will be made to provide upgrades and perks. It will be important that you still contact the person we are using at the Cruise Line to assure they know how many “Yosemite” customers the ship will have on board.

Below represents a 5 day cruise that will cost approximately \$390 (not including tax), and in some cases less depending on how soon you could book, onboard credits, and upgrades in some cases. This would be for an inside cabin. A cabin with a view would run about \$50 more, but better pricing depends on how many members we can attract. We would also be able to pull people from the Jacksonville/Mayport area that were once on the Yosemite. When I have an idea of how many would be a part of this, I will share it with my point of contact at Carnival and that will help a lot. I also have ties with Vacations to Go and they are



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offering the same cruise at the slightly lesser price I see, reviewing an email they just sent me. They show \$369 for this cruise at this time. You can be sure when I have a sense of how many of you are interested, I will work with whoever will get us the best deal. But for now, please let our Secretary Alan Koepke, know no later than January 18th if you are planning to attend the Reunion. Additionally, we have 20-30 members that do not have email, and I will have Alan send them a hard copy of this message.

Alan's email address is ajkoepke@gmail.com, or you can reach him on his cell at 920-960-8579.

I hope to see as many of you as possible. Surely, we can make this better than our last Reunion At Sea.

Bill Krug III

City: Jacksonville, Fl
Port: Jaxport
Pier: Cruise Terminal
Begin Time: 1PM
End Time: 3 PM

04/27/2019	Sat	Jacksonville Fl		Depart 4 PM
04/28/2019	Sun	Fun day at sea		
04/29/2019	Mon	Nassau, Bahamas	Arrive: 8 AM	Depart 5 PM
04/30/2019	Tue	Half Moon Cay, Bahama	Arrive: 8 AM	Depart 5 PM
05/01/2019	Wed	Fun day at sea		
05/02/2019	Thu	Jacksonville, Fl	Arrive 8 AM	