



USS Yosemite AD-19 Association

From Bill Krug
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USS Yosemite Reunion 2023



January 1, 2023

Fellow Association Members, Former Sailors, Friends, & Family

I want to start by wishing everyone a Happy New Year that's both healthy and prosperous.

It has been an interesting year for all of us. I have moved from Florida to New Jersey and enjoying close contact with my family and a big old house.

COVID-19 is still around, and the numbers of severe illness and death are down. But there are still people dying of COVID. The current 7-day average COVID death rate is approximately 350 per day. So please ensure you are fully vaccinated. The vaccine will not prevent you from being infected but will protect you from going to the hospital and dying. The COVID booster vaccine will most likely be a regular procedure like the flu shot. If you haven't already done so, please make arrangements to get fully vaccinated or booster as soon as possible.

Our website has 3 stories, *Jim Jewell's Story*, *Vincent Diomedes's Story*, and *Buffy Lin Levasseur's Story*. We are still looking for stories about sailors that served on *the Busy Lady* that we can post on our website. Jim Jewell wrote a new book entitled "*Steel Decks and Glass Ceilings*" and provides an exciting narrative about the USS Yosemite as the first Navy ship to have women sailors and officers aboard for an extended time at sea. I look forward to reading it.

If you have a story to tell, please don't hesitate to contact me or write your story down and email it to info@ussyosemite.net. Thank you in advance for your efforts for a story that we will save as part of the history of the USS Yosemite.

So now I want all of you to start thinking about the USS Yosemite Reunion to happen from 4/26/2023 through 4/30/2023. The hotel has assured me they will be ready to welcome all of our special Yosemite People, just like last year. Now it is time for us to get together once again, tell stories, and have some fun reminiscing.

Please mark the dates of April 26 to April 30, 2022. It is time for our annual Reunion again and to enjoy the company of those that are tied to "the Mighty Y" (plank Owners and Original Crew



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called her), "Battle Tender" or "The Busy Lady" or "The Ship with Helping Hands". That and the motto "We Fix 'em To Fight". No matter how you like to refer to this ship, this Reunion is about all of us from all different time periods coming together to share our memories and enjoy one another's company.

Please be advised that Wendy Krug has taken over the Ship's Store from Cooper Gilbreath. Wendy will bring the most popular items to the Reunion, but she cannot carry all the items. So if you want a specific item, please contact Wendy at: wwkrug94@gmail.com, and Wendy will bring that item to the Reunion for you.

Now for our Reunion to be a success, we need you! Our Reunion is a family event, and I have found each year leaves me with new friends and unforgettable memories of having been with all of you.

Most of you have seen the following information before, as I have put it out previously. But we always have new people looking at our website and new people that will be joining us. So please bear with me as I recap some essential details.

The cost of the Banquet Dinner is \$40.00 per person.

The Banquet Dinner menu includes assorted bread, salad, and dessert.

Main Entrees:

- Rosemary Breast of Chicken, Oven-Dried Tomato Barley, Crispy Summer Squash, Reggiano Sauce
- 6 oz. Grilled Flat Iron Steak, Oven Roasted Potatoes, Asparagus, Baby Carrots, Cremini Mushroom Reduction, Chimichurri Sauce
- Atlantic Salmon, Braised Lentils, Sweet Pea, Cremini Mushroom, Bay Leaf Shallot Sauce

Tours for Thursday & Friday Thursday Tour

USS Orleck Museum, Veterans Memorial Wall & Jacksonville Driving Tour (Thurs 4/27/23)

Enjoy the history and culture of the largest city in the continental United States! Your professional tour guide meets the group at your hotel for a river city experience that will



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entertain all your senses. Our first stop is our Veterans Memorial Wall to pay tribute to our fallen veterans and hear the stories of the local heroes. The tour continues, stopping at the USS Orleck DD886 Naval Museum to see one of the most decorated US Navy ships since WWII. Lastly, we take a driving tour of the city before stopping at an indoor antique mall for lunch and free time to explore the shops. Your guide creates an interactive tour atmosphere that is fun for everyone.

Length: 5 hours, 9 am – 2 pm.

Price: \$88/person; based on a minimum of 40 people and max of 54 people. The per-person price includes motor coach transportation, driver gratuity, a cooler of bottled waters, escort/tour guides, and lunch.

St. Augustine and the Lightner Museum (Fri 4/28/23)

Enjoy your day in the Nation's Oldest City! The various architectural styles, narrow brick streets, and European flavors combine for a unique escape. Your professional tour guide meets the group dressed in period costumes and weaves a tapestry of stories from the early colonial years to the Victorian Flagler era. The driving tour passes all the famous sites that, include the Fountain of Youth, Spanish Mission Grounds, City Gates, Spanish Plaza, Cathedral-Basilica, Spanish Government House, Flagler Memorial Church, the old Ponce de Leon Hotel, and the Castillo de San Marcos, the stone fort that was never captured in battle.

We will stop to enter the Lightner Museum attraction to see Otto's Lightner's impressive collections of displays inside an old 1888 Flagler hotel. Lunch today is on your own, combined with shopping and free time exploring the historic district. You can visit attractions such as the free Government House and Cathedral-Basilica during your free time. Your tour guide in colonial attire creates an interactive tour atmosphere that is fun for everyone.

Length: 6 hours, 9 am – 3 pm.

Price: \$78/person is based on a minimum of 40 people in a 56-passenger motor coach and a maximum of 54 people. The per-person price includes motor coach transportation, driver gratuity, a cooler of bottled ice waters, Lightner Museum admission, an escort, and a tour guide.



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Register Now for the Reunion

Please take a moment to fill out our Yosemite Reunion Registration Form. A registration fee of \$25 is to accompany the completed Yosemite Reunion Registration Form. Please mail the completed form and check for the total registration fees to the following:

Mike Polyniak,
USS Yosemite Association Treasurer PO Box 20863
Bakersfield, CA 93390-0863

The registration fee will support our Hospitality Room, hors d'oeuvres, drinks, snacks, and other costs. Please note our registration fees are separate from the hotel reservations. Keep in mind you need to make Hotel Reservations directly for yourself.

Tours and payment for our Banquet Dinner are handled directly by the Treasurer, Mike

Polyniak. Please send your check for your registration fees to Mike by 4/12/2023.

Your Hotel Reservations are made directly by you.

Hotel Reservations

Hotel reservations must be made directly with the hotel. The USS Yosemite Association doesn't make hotel reservations or take any payments for the hotel. Please be aware that the hotel room costs have increased. The price is now **\$139 for Sunday through Thursday** and **\$149 per night for Friday and Saturday**. I think you will find the current rates you spend per night for you and your wife or significant other will be well worth it.

Please call (904) 731-3555 to make your reservation at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Jacksonville for the USS Yosemite Reunion from April 26 through April 30, 2023, and mention the group code of "UYA".

You may also click on the link below to make your Hotel reservation to support your Yosemite Reunion booking that is part of our room block. Our group code is "UYA".



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If you have trouble booking your room, please let me know immediately. Worst case, you can contact the Group Sales Manager (Karen Howell) and get her help. One thing to remember is that most of our good deals are with the expectation that our members will show up. **We will not be able to book any rooms at this rate after March 25, 2023.**

But I hope most of our people book rooms now and do not wait until the last minute. Part of our planning is also trying to support the correct number of guests we will have attending. We look at numbers often to try to stay ahead of the curve. Booking impacts our planning for hors d'oeuvres, chips, dip, snacks, wine, beer, and alcohol for the Hospitality Room.

Reunion Arrival and Length of Stay

The whole Yosemite Reunion experience is from April 26 to April 30, 2022.

We encourage our attendees to arrive on Wednesday, April 26, during the day to sign in, pick up your name tag and a welcome bag, and meet the Yosemite Reunion crew. At 7:30 pm, hot hors d'oeuvres will be available. Some of our members will fly into Jacksonville, and some will drive cars or trucks. Parking at the hotel is free for guests. If you have special parking requirements, please share them with me, and I will have an area marked off for your vehicle.

Next, stay and enjoy tours, attend the General Meeting, and be with new people. It's important that you attend our General Meeting. You will leave like most on Sunday morning in a perfect world. This suggestion provides a leisurely stay with no rush or stress.

Some of you have jobs, and you can't take time off to attend the entire Yosemite Reunion. I understand. Please try to take as much time off as possible, even if that means attending just one or two days. Remember, Friday and Saturday are key days. Saturday is the most important. Whatever time you can dedicate to being with the group will be greatly appreciated.

Saturday is the Banquet Dinner. Following that, we have our Raffle. Lots of people have expressed a desire to arrive Friday and be with us Saturday for the festivities.



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Reunion Raffle – Bring a Gift to Raffle

Most people attending bring a gift for our Raffle, with the proceeds used to support our Association. The gift may be a bag of small items or a single gift. In any case, the gift should be of interest to the group and what you think is best. The gifts will be put on a table in a designated secure area. Gifts are displayed until the Raffle that follows after our Banquet Dinner Saturday evening. We will take our time and raffle the whole table of gifts to the Reunion attendees.

You may buy as many raffle tickets as you want. And you can place as many tickets as you desire into the container associated with each gift. Then, sit back, and we will draw tickets for each item on the table. Some people leave with a whole pile of "treasures". I have seen some exceptional gifts such as paintings, ships clocks, naval memorabilia, brass compass, ships sextant, or items directly tied to the ship that were given out to crew members. Also, I have seen Yosemite belt buckles made in the foundry & Yosemite Yo – Yo's made in the machine shop. So take your time and bring something special or different that some lucky person will cherish.

Bring Your USS Yosemite Stories

I want you to walk away remembering stories and having shared yours. Remember, collectively, we are all linked to the USS Yosemite History, and hoping that I will hear them and we can talk together at our next event. I do not need to remind you that life is short.

You are an essential asset and a living testimonial of Naval History. So, please don't put off attending this Reunion and connect with our Yosemite People. We want to hear from you. This year our goal is to continue to capture the stories and history of the "Busy Lady" and post them on our website and save these valuable stories for posterity before there lost.

I know most of you remember the fond experiences, funny or interesting incidents still fresh in your mind, familiar stories, battle-stations drama, and your time aboard the Busy Lady. We share a common history of the USS Yosemite, and when we tell our stories, the room lights up and triggers old memories to surface. Think about some of the really unique things you were



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involved with that very few know about. Think about your funny stories, finest moments, challenges that you met, the first port you visited with your buddies, etc. Bring them to the Yosemite Reunion; if you want, we will capture them and share them.

In closing, I hope this finds all of you safe, in better spirits, and looking forward to our planned Yosemite get-together. This is not a single-person event; it is accomplished in concert with the help of our team and key people like Mike, Alan, Cooper, Janice (active secretary), and Alphonso (webmaster), who are busy doing the business of our Association. That includes our Board Members as well. When you come to our Reunion, it makes it all worth the effort.

If you have any issues I can help with, please email me at w.krugiii@gmail.com or call me at (570) 878-2860. If I don't answer, please leave a message.

All the Best,

William C. Krug III (Bill)

President USS Yosemite Association