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NAA&NV NEWS

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Members Publication of the National Association of Atomic & Nuclear Veterans

FROM THE DESK OF THE COMMANDER

It's that time of the year again. We want to wish all a *Merry Christmas* and a *Happy New Year!*

We had a very nice time this year at the Albany, Oregon Veterans Day Parade. We met with the Marshall Islanders again. What a wonderful group of People. They are very supportive of NAA&NV and what we are doing to help them.



This year, after convention and with the British attending, I asked the NAA&NV board for help getting Myself and the Vice Commander, Keith Kiefer, to attend the British Convention in England. While we're that close, we want to meet with the French Nuclear Veterans and give them a special invitation to attend our next convention. The board responded with a yes vote. So Keith and I will be going to Paris and London May 11th of 2018, first to meet with the French Atomic and Nuclear Vets and then to attend the British Convention May 18th through May 20th, 2018. On the 20th we will meet again with the French and the British to encourage them to attend next September convention. This is something that should have happened several years ago. Now it is happening this coming year. Both My Wife, Barbara, and Keith's wife, Mary Ann, will join us. Keith and I will be paying their costs.



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ATOMIC VETERAN LEGISLATIVE CORNER

On the Federal level HR632 in the House and S283 in the Senate titled Mark Takai Atomic Veterans Healthcare Parity Act now have 229 and 10 cosponsors respectively. This legislation adds the Enewetak Atoll Radiological Cleanup Veterans to the list of Atomic Veterans included for Tittle 38 presumed diseases. It remains to be seen how Senator AL Franken's (D MN) resignation will affect the Senate Bill.

Legislation for the Atomic Veteran Service Medal was introduced in both the House and Senate. Both AMAC and the American Legion have been very supportive. The House version, HR2754 has bipartisan support with Congressman McGovern (D MA-2) coauthoring the Bill with Congressman Emmer (R MN-6) it has nine cosponsors. The Senate version, S1283 introduced by Senator Markey (D MA) is the only sponsor. The House bill (HR2754) text was introduced as an amendment to the NDAA (National Defense Authorization Act of 2017) with a vote of 424 to 0 in favor of the amendment. We were unsuccessful in getting an amendment to the Senate NDAA bill. This then required the NDAA bill to go to a Reconciliation Conference Committee. Despite letters from Congressman McGovern and Emmer and Senator Markey, as well as, a letter of support from AMAC (Association of Mature American Citizens) the text was stripped from the final bill. Senator John McCain and Congressman Mac Thornberry did not support the bill in committee. Congressman McGovern and Emmer and Senator Markey have sent a letter to President Trump urging him to pass this thru an Executive Order.

National Atomic Veterans Day continues to be on the radar, no Bill has been introduced on the Federal level, nor do we have any expected introduction date. On the State Level Minnesota House and

Senate introduced Bills to change Chapter 10 of the Statues to Include July 16th as Atomic Veterans Day. These Bills made it out of committee. The Senate version was voted on as a stand alone Bill, all 67 Senators voted in favor. While the House Bill was attached to another Bill Passing only to be vetoed by the Governor. Another attempt was made to included the House Bill in an Omnious Bill. This effort was unsuccessful. We received a Proclamation from the Governor, like last year. Another attempt will be made to make it permanent in Feb 2018.

Rep. Schaffer of Ohio introduced a bill for Atomic Veterans Day and a concurrent resolution urging Congress to pass the Atomic Veteran Healthcare Parity Act. Earlier this year Wisconsin passed a one year resolution good for 2017 declaring July 16th 2017 Atomic Veterans Day. On October 18, 2017 the Michigan Legislature passed Senate Resolution 0073. A resolution to memorialize the United States Congress to do all it can to support atomic veterans, their spouses, and dependents in receiving medical care and disability compensation. The text content can be viewed at: [http://www.legislature.mi.gov/\(S\(ebejst2tfccyxwa1y0f31jhx\)\)/documents/2017-2018/resolutioncurrentversion/Senate/PDF/2017-SCVRS-0073-6721.PDF](http://www.legislature.mi.gov/(S(ebejst2tfccyxwa1y0f31jhx))/documents/2017-2018/resolutioncurrentversion/Senate/PDF/2017-SCVRS-0073-6721.PDF)

Delno Taylor and several Atomic Veterans facilitated passing, in Arkansas, a section of Highway designated as an Atomic Veterans Memorial Highway on Nov. 13, 2017. No information as to which Highway section this applies to.

In Oregon a bill was passed to make a section of I-5 designated Atomic Veterans Highway, approximately 20 miles long from Salem to Albany Oregon. This goes into effect Jan 1, 2018.

--Submitted by Keith Kiefer, Vice Commander

LOOKING FOR A SHIPMATE

Anyone that was aboard the USS Independence CVL-22 from April 1948 to August 1949 would you please contact Gillie Jenkins our Director of State Commanders at 804-334-8585 or e-mail him at atomicgillie@verizon.net.

NOTE JACKET SALE

DAVID SCOOT won the bid for the NAAV Jackets that Gillie put up for sale. So a \$300.00 donation went to NAAV for the sale. Thanks to you Dave maybe you will send a picture so we can add that to our newsletter some time soon.

FROM THE DESK OF THE COMMANDER

(Continued from Page 1)

I attended a meeting of the Marshall Islanders recently. The two pictures on the bottom of page 1 were taken at that meeting. H.E. Hilda Heine President, also The ambassador Gerald Zackios was also in attendance along with Eldon Alik Consolate, plus about 40 Marshall Islanders. I presented 3 NAAV Caps and 6 pins. To the President, Her husband and the Ambassador.

Many of our state commanders have really gone to work this year trying to get passed the July 16th Atomic Veterans Day annually and having designated a section of highway, Atomic Veterans Memorial Highways. The highway in Oregon, I-5 from Albany to Salem, OR is to be named Atomic Veterans Memorial Highway. I am very proud of our members for the work you have permitted the board to get done.

Thank you and a Merry Christmas and Happy New year to all.

Fred Schafer
NAA&NV
National Commander

SHIPS STORE ITEMS

Shown as Q-Store Items on our WebSite
NAAV.COM

We have NAAV Jackets in M-L-XL-XXL sizes \$45.00
NAAV Hats at \$15.00
NAAV T-shirts (short or long sleeve) M-L-XL-XXL and they are available in Army Green, Navy Blue, Marine Red and USAF Blue for \$28.00
Auto Decals 4x6 -- \$10.00, 2x4 -- \$6.00 and 2x3--\$5.00
Windshield Stickers -- \$10.00
4" Jacket Patches -- \$10.00
1" Label Pins -- \$10.00
License Plate -- \$25.00



Jacket Patch

All items are available by sending in your order to NAAV, INC. 130 Cleveland Street, Lebanon, OR 97355
Please include the size of any shirt or jacket you order.
All prices include Shipping & Postage Fees.

NAAV Membership Benefit Offer

NAAV does not endorse, nor support any candidate, business products or services. This offer is not an endorsement and should a competitor offer the same or similar offer it would be presented to the membership. Use your own judgement as to whether you want to associate with this firm.

AMAC (Association of Mature American Citizens) is a fifties plus organization that advocates for conservative alternatives to Tax Reform, sustainable Social Security and other problems seniors face.

AMAC has advocated for Atomic Veterans legislation, the most recent was writing a letter to the reconciliation committee advocating for an Atomic Veteran Service Medal.

AMAC has offered to provide a one year membership free to NAAV members. The annual fee is normally \$16 for a year, \$42 for three years, \$59.95 for five years, and \$500 for a lifetime membership. A URL (website address) or other means to take advantage of this offer will be provided within the next month.

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PARRY ISLAND • HDQS JOINT TASK FORCE 7

As a member of the U.S. Navy I was privileged to have been "hand-picked" to work with Top Secret bombs and other atomic missiles for AFSWP (Armed Forces Special Weapons Project) which was a combined military effort organized in the 1950's working with the U.S. Army, Navy and Air Force.

Out of boot camp in July of 1953 I was sent immediately to Sandia Base in Albuquerque, New Mexico where, myself and eleven others, were subject to reading Top Secret literature while a secret base was being built in North Las Vegas, Nevada where we were to be sent upon completion. This was information which none of our families were to know about at the time.

In 1954 the base in Nevada was finished and preparations were made for our Navy unit to be transferred. A unit of Marines was stationed there in Las Vegas for security as the base was listed to the public as an Ammunitions Depot. At the new base my duty was to test the fuses of atomic bombs. Also to be checked were missiles from the U.S. Air Force, U.S. Army as well as the U.S. Navy. The fuse (after being tested electronically) was sent to the mechanical bay where it was made into a bomb then transported and stored in "igloos" outside the city of Las Vegas, ready to be called into service by the President of the United States.

Late in 1955 I was picked to be an engineer on Admiral Hanlon's barge to meet up with others in the Pacific Proving Ground for Operation Redwing which was to start in May of 1956.

Flying directly to Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, I was picked up there to fly on to Kwajalein Island in the Marshall Islands, then on two-star Admiral Hanlon's DC-3 to Eniwetok Island.

I met up with 3 others assigned to Hanlon's barge and after a time the barge arrived and we crew members then were assigned to Parry Island a few seas miles around the Atoll, which was to be HDQ JOINT TASK FORCE 7, for the Staff of Operation Redwing, my home for the next few months.

Our job was to get the barge ready for the transportation of the Staff anywhere in the atoll mainly back to Eniwetok where planes were constantly flying in and out with mail, dignitaries,

supplies, and other personnel needed in the Operation. It was a very busy airfield during that important time with all kinds of aircraft involved such as Boeing B-52 bombers being the largest to land on that airstrip which was just a little beyond one mile.

On Parry Island, I was joined by the other members of our crew as we waited for the arrival of the Admiral's barge. After the arrival there was a lot of preparation for us to make it an official 23 foot boat with a lot of chrome, such as replacing brass screws on the deck with chrome screws to make it look better. I don't believe it had anything to do with the operation rather than make it look nice for the "Brass" that was to ride on it for the next 5 months as the General's Staff along with Admiral Hanlon.

Our crew of 4 soon adapted to the barge as we worked together cleaning, testing the barge as to speed, and getting the engine to perform correctly without problems. I was the engineer, but got to run the boat on occasion and all of us practiced bringing the boat into the dock safely and securing the rope to the cleats so as to load/unload the passengers. While officers were aboard all of us (3 crew members) had a spot where we were to stand at parade rest until the time when we were to go to our stations, while Murphy brought the boat into the dock. We practiced daily at our routine so we would be efficient when on duty taking the Admiral and other officers around to other islands while the atomic "weapons" as they were called were detonated.

Parry Island was about 30 minutes, by our barge, up the atoll where the Staff of JTF-7 and a construction unit was to call home. That island was even smaller than Eniwetok because it had no airfield where larger planes like B-47's and B29's were to land on a daily basis. On Parry Island I was assigned to live in a tent with two of the deck hands. The coxswain, or the one who piloted the barge, was Admiral Hanlon's private driver while in Washington D.C. and lived in another tent.

MY MOST UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCE
After thirteen days of waiting and nine postponements it was the eve of May 21st 1956. Our boat crew had carried the men in charge of

PARRY ISLAND (CONTINUED)

"OPERATION REDWING" to Eniwetok so they could board a plane for Bikini Atoll in order to initiate the first airborne drop of a hydrogen bomb. This trip had been made nine times only to see their tired and disgusted faces returning to our island of Parry after the shot had been called off in the wee hours of the morning.

On this eve we sort of felt secure in our feelings that the shot would go as scheduled this time. When we got back to Parry, after unloading the Commanders of the operation on Eniwetok, we noticed that the tower light was green which meant that the weather was still favorable for the early morning spectacle.

We attended the free movie just like we did every night before and frequently glanced to see that the light was still green. On our way back to our tent after the movie, the light was still green and we all felt that by morning the light would remain the same.

As we awoke anxiously the next morning at about 4:30 AM, I looked out the tent door and sure enough the light was still green instead of red like it had been so many times before.

After getting dressed we walked over to the eastern side of the small island and sat down on the sandy beach with a few other civilians and military workers. We could hardly see our hands in front of our face, but we knew that in less than 30 minutes history was going to be made just 160 miles away on the island of Namu on the Atoll of Bikini.

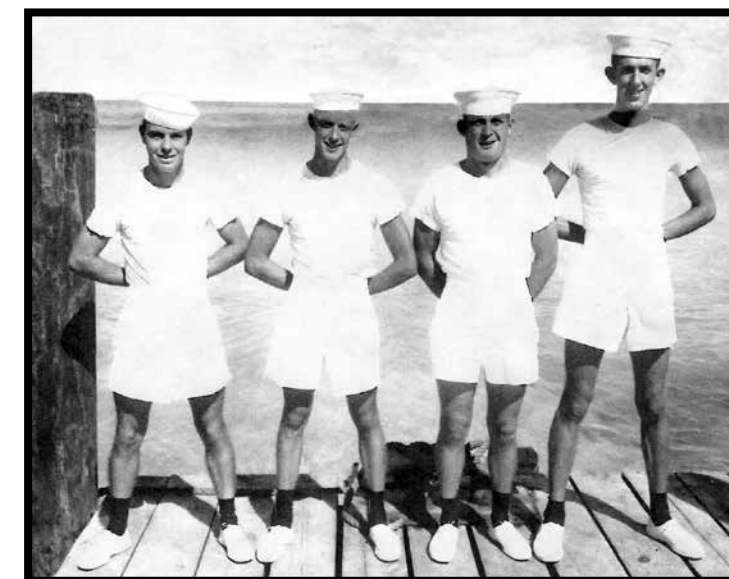
About fifteen minutes went by, which seemed like hours, when our eyes were getting accustomed to the darkness then... at a split second we saw what looked like the sun come up all of a sudden. It was as bright as noon day for about 40 seconds. The ball of fire in the sky to the east produced all the colors in the rainbow and more. The fire ball soon began to loose its brilliance but the luminous clouds in the sky around the ball could still be seen easily.

We stood in complete amazement as we watched history being made. We were among about 100 military and mixed civilians who witnessed the sight from our island of Parry.

After watching the sky for about 20 minutes we started for the mess hall. As we walked toward it

we heard a loud roar come out of the sky. At first we thought it was thunder but on second thought we realized it was the sound wave just getting within our range. It was a continual roar that lasted for about seven minutes then slowly died down until we couldn't hear it anymore.

That May Day known as "CHEROKEE" I and thousands of other servicemen and civilians witnessed a sensational air drop of a hydrogen bomb equal to 10 megatons of TNT. Although I was miles away from ground zero I will never forget the most beautiful sight I have ever seen.



ADMIRAL HANLON'S BARGE CREW
(Left-to-Right) O.L. Bowman, R.D. Bryan,
W.J. Murphy and R.A. Mowry

TAPS

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- Leon Crawford Jr. Terre Haute, IN
- Robert A. Raymond Old Orchard Beach, ME
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