
USS THOMAS JEFFERSON 618 ASSOCIATION

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Letter from the Desk of the Commander

Good day to the shipmates and families that had the opportunity to serve or support a crew member of the USS Thomas Jefferson SSBN/SSN 618. We are now less than six months from our next reunion, which will be held in Jacksonville, Florida. The dates are September 25 through September 29, and Jim Beauchamp has scheduled several interesting tours including a tour of the King's Bay Submarine Base. I know Jim has been working on the plans for the reunion since shortly after our last reunion in Charleston. I will let him give you the most up-to-date information in his section of the newsletter. I will encourage everyone planning to attend to get their reservations made as soon as possible so Jim can finalize the activities. Sharing my thoughts about reunion attendance: I was not a big "joiner" in the past and

it always seemed that life commitments got in the way of reunion plans. I always remember reading the reports and viewing the pictures from the reunion, wishing I had determined a way to attend. I now realize, after having attended several reunions, my motivations are: reconnecting with shipmates I had not seen in too many years, the opportunity to get to know shipmates that had served after I transferred and more importantly had continued building the excellent reputation that the TJ enjoyed.

Most of you are either immersed in or peripherally involved with our ability to "reach out" to friends, family and even passing acquaintances by the various tools we have grown to accept. With Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat and other media as well as email, snail-mail and even phones we stay in touch (assuming we want to). Hopefully, many of you use our Facebook Group (USS Thomas Jefferson SSBN/SSN 618) to stay in

touch. The thing that jars me is when I read about the passing of a shipmate from years ago and wish I just had one more chance to swap sea stories or hear about the roads that shipmate had walked down. The point I am wandering toward is that I lost my brother in late February and it struck me about a month later that the part of me now missing is not that much bigger than the parts of me that are missing from the loss of shipmates. Of course, I talked to my brother frequently and sat by his bedside, however, I find myself wishing I had taken the time to swap more sea stories with shipmates like Ken Holcomb, Glen Riley, Joe Douty and Roy Van Dyne and many others. Don't miss the opportunity to renew time with your brothers from the TJ and hopefully realize how quickly those years melt away. To answer a question that I have frequently heard - "Will I know anybody there?" The answer is - possibly not, but every one of us that proudly wear and/or display our Dolphins is a brother and has been certified as such by that device.

For those who have been out of touch, the really GOOD news is that all past TJ Association dues have been deleted so anyone attending who is not a life member only needs to pay dues for THIS year. We will be discussing and voting on changes/amendments to our association by-laws during our business meeting. I am very much looking forward to seeing you at the reunion in September!!! Let's make it a Great Reunion!!!

From Desk of the Vice Commander:

Shipmates:

As Ron mentioned, we have lost a few more shipmates and as we get older the pace will just accelerate so I hope everyone is keeping well and let's keep going as long as we can.

We visited the Riverfront Hotel in March for a weekend and I met with all the key people from the hotels staff and sampled the restaurant food for several meals along with sampling the bar in the Lobby Lounge. Some relatively minor changes have been made to the ground floor layout. The Lobby Lounge has new furniture and is laid out in a den atmosphere with comfortable sofas and armchairs. The lobby itself has new furniture too and is also laid out comfortably which encourages sitting and talking as well as having work tables for laptops and tablets. The hotel restaurant has a better menu and the food preparation has improved. Ruth's Chris steakhouse has been somewhat renovated also. There is another bar, the Riverfront Lounge adjacent to the steakhouse which has a pretty good Happy Hour with reduced price munchies from the steakhouse.. We stayed in a riverfront room and the view was quite good.

The hotel seems to be running smoothly now and I think most of the kinks have been worked out, something can always jump up and bite us but we will deal with it when it occurs.

So my esteemed shipmates and old friends, send those reunion signup sheets to Dan and let's have a great one. Keep your baffles clear and I look forward to seeing you soon.

From Desk of the Secretary:

Shipmates:

I hope this newsletter finds all of you in good health and spirits. As, most are probably aware by now, that I have established communication with the USS Thomas Jefferson SSBN 618 Facebook page. I am also maintaining the USS Thomas Jefferson Association website, www.ssb618.org. I am doing this to the best of my ability however, occasionally, a typo or some other slip up occurs. If you see something that needs correction please bring it to my attention.

I have put together a signup sheet for the next TJ Association Reunion being held in Jacksonville, FL which is included on the last page of this newsletter. I have also posted information about the reunion on the website and the Facebook page. Just think, it's only a little less than a year away. How time flies.

At the last reunion some shipmates bought with them baskets of stuff from their local area or memorabilia from the TJ that we raffled off at our banquet dinner. This went over very big with the shipmates and their spouses. I am hoping that this can happen once again if anyone is so inclined to do so.

Please check your information on the sailing list and send any corrections to me. Also, always feel free to communicate directly with your current group of elected officers. We are here for you and want to do the best job possible. The Association Officers are:
Ron Whitener-Commander
Jim Beauchamp-Vice Commander
Sam (Sandy) Cook-Secretary
Dan Higgins-Treasurer.

I want to take a moment to remind everyone that the Facebook page for the USS Thomas Jefferson SSBN 618 is not administered by our association but, the folk there have been gracious enough to allow us to use it and I'm sure we all appreciate that. So far, I have found it to be a great way to dispense information and for shipmates to keep up to date.

I will try my best for you and not to let you down.

From Desk of Treasurer:

I received a check from the outgoing treasurer for \$16630.02 and deposited it in a Navy Federal Credit Union checking account. We have received a gift check for \$100 from a member for the bench. Any other donations for the bench or the scholarship program would be appreciated. Our balance is \$16733.12.

While we have suspended dues until the next reunion in hopes of gaining shipmates coming to the next one, I will accept them if you want to pay them. We lose \$1000.00 a year to the scholarship program (a great investment in our offspring) it won't go forever.

USS THOMAS JEFFERSON 618 2016 REUNION APPLICATION
Jacksonville, Florida (Sunday, Sep 25 – Thursday, Sept 29th)

NAME(S) OF PERSON(S) ATTENDING

Attending # X \$10 = \$_____

BANQUET DINNER BUFFET

Dinner # X \$39 = \$_____

- Mixed Green Salad
- Entrée (Selection of 2)
 - Chicken Marsala
 - Sliced Skirt Steak w/ Burgundy Mushroom Sauce
- Vegetable (Selection of 2)
 - Mixed Vegetable Medley
 - Roasted Peppers
- Starch (Selection of 2)
 - Roasted New Bliss Potatoes
 - Black Beans and Rice
- Dessert (Selection of 2)
 - Key Lime Pie
 - Tiramisu
- Coffee, Decaf & Iced Tea
- Drink Prices (Cash Bar)
 - Premium Cocktails @ \$7.50, Call Brand Cocktails @ \$6.50
 - Domestic Beer @ \$4.50, Imported Beer @ \$5.50
 - House Wine, Glass @ \$6.50, Premium Wine, Glass @ \$7.50
 - Soft Drinks, Bottled Water @ \$2.50, Sparkling Water Bottle @ \$3.50

Kings Bay Submarine Base tour (Tuesday)

Attending# X \$69.00 = \$_____

Luncheon Cruise (Wednesday)

Attending# X \$59.00 = \$_____

50/50 RAFFLE

- 6 TICKETS FOR \$5
- 13 TICKETS FOR \$10

OF TICKETS ____ \$_____

*No limit on the number of tickets purchased

TOTAL \$ _____

MAIL FORM & CHECKS TO:

Dan Higgins
509 Papaya Circle
Barefoot Bay, FL 32976

QUESTIONS OR ADDITIONAL INFO

Call or E-Mail
Sandy Cook (TJ Secretary)
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Jim Beauchamp (Reunion #13)
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