

# KEARSARGE

## U.S.S. KEARSARGE ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 75

CV, CVA, CVS-33, LHD-3

FALL 2020

### President's Message by C. V. Lindley



Fall salutations to all Kearsarge Association "Shipmates," Families and Friends. As I write this column here in Pensacola, Florida, we are still in the aftermath/recovery period of Hurricane Sally. She swept through here (almost directly over my house) on 15 and 16 September. A very slow moving hurricane, we received 20 - 25 inches of rain in about 24 -30 hours and had winds around 100 mph +/- . Jan and I were truly fortunate as we only had minimal damage overall with electrical power out for 84 hours on our street. The power outage did not affect us as we have a "whole house" generator, thankfully. Our prayers go out to any/all members that have been impacted by other catastrophic events like strong winds, rain, flooding and fires out west.

I wish that I had better news about the impending 2021 Milwaukee Kearsarge Association Reunion, but do not currently. It appears that Covid 19 still has a firm grip on our country along with the totally INSANE MADNESS that our nation is experiencing. I hope that some leaders (of all affiliations) WILL GET THE BACKBONE and courage to step up and face reality sooner than later.

Anyway, as for the 2021 planned Reunion, your leadership team is staying actively involved in preliminary thinking and planning. Right now, the originally planned dates of 30 May to 4 June 2021 are still planned and in the works. ONLY AS INFORMATION, we have briefly thought about moving the dates to early September. If Milwaukee gets too difficult, then we will seek another venue. Rest assured that we are not "asleep at the switch." We do not want to just cancel 2021 (originally 2020), unless it absolutely becomes too hard. Your input is strongly requested and welcome. Please e-mail them to

me or any name listed on this newsletter address page as crunch time will be here NO LATER THAN December 2020.

You will find a letter (e-mail) that was sent to me by Captain Mark Epperson of the U.S.S. Hornet Museum Group. Your elected Officers voted recently to donate \$1,000.00 to the Hornet Museum (one of our sister ships in Long Beach) as they have experienced terrible financial troubles due to Covid 19. As some of you might remember, Hornet had a Kearsarge room at one time and they now have RECOGNITION SPACES for all ESSEX class carriers. She was originally being built as KEARSARGE (Kearsarge name is welded on her keel) but changed (directed by FDR) to Hornet after CV 8 Hornet (Doolittle Raid Carrier) was sunk by the Japanese. All Kearsarge Association members now have FREE admission aboard the Hornet in Alameda. (You might want to print a copy of the e-mail letter as verification if you go there.)

I hope that all of you have had a great summer under the conditions that our great USA is under. Staying home is certainly boring and not too much fun but, as Sailors always do, we will meet the issues "HEAD ON" and steam on. My absolute best to all. **C. V.**

**"IN OMNIBUS PINNACULUM"**

## U.S.S. Hornet Donation

Master Chief Lindley,

We received the generous donation from the USS Kearsarge Association. I want to express my gratitude to the members for "throwing in" to support the Hornet in these perilous times. Please send me an address as I want to mail a personal response to the members and you.

Also, I am not sure what you mean by group member but rest assured any USS Kearsarge shipmate and their family are welcome to visit the Hornet at no charge.

If you agree, I will put your email on my newsletter list. Please contact me any time by email or on my cell phone.

Fair Winds and following seas!  
Capt. Mark Epperson  
USNR (Ret.). Executive Director

# Court Orders VA To Cover Veterans' Emergency Room Debts

By Leo Shane III

A federal court this week ordered Veterans Affairs officials to reimburse veterans for all expenses at non-department emergency medical centers, a move that could mean payouts of tens of thousands of dollars to patients facing financial distress because of their hospital bills.

A divided three-judge panel on the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims on Tuesday said that VA's current reimbursement regulation for veterans who seek non-department medical care violates existing federal law.

They blasted administration officials for creating an "unacceptable" policy and ordered that any emergency medical expenses not covered by veterans' private medical insurance must be covered by the agency.

In August, the VA Inspector General found \$716 million in improperly processed payments in cases involving veterans who sought medical care outside the department's health system in 2017, including about \$53 million that should have been refunded under existing rules.

The legal defeat is the second time in the last three years that the court has struck down VA's emergency medical services payment policies, both times chastising the department for only partially covering veterans' expenses. Advocates praised the ruling, which also established a class of veterans eligible for reimbursement

"The court's decision rights a terrible injustice and its order ensures that veterans who were unjustly denied reimbursement for critical emergency treatment at non-VA facilities will finally be reimbursed," said Bart Stichman, executive director of the National Veterans Legal Services Program. "It is a hard-won victory for hundreds of thousands of veterans."

## How To Find Your Benefits!

Step 1 Secured & powered by ID.me

Sign in with an existing account

Sign in with DS Logon

Sign in with My HealtheVet

ID.me Sign in with ID.me

OR

Don't have those accounts?

ID.me Create an ID.me account

Use your email, Google, or Facebook

Step 2

We can help you find and apply for benefits.

Our new "Find VA Benefits" tool can help you quickly learn which benefits you may be eligible for, and how to apply. Get started by clicking on the "Find VA Benefits Now" button below.

Find VA Benefits Now No, Thanks

Sign in to the new [VA.gov](https://va.gov) to get the most out of this new experience. Once you sign in, you'll be able to use our new Find VA Benefits tool to help you find and apply for benefits that are relevant to your interests. [Sign in today and take advantage of this new tool.](#)

# TAPS!



**Kenneth Durkee, #671, 90 – Passed**  
away on May 24, 2020.

**Margaret Durkee**

# MAIL CALL



- From Martin Donnelly to Bill Hollywood. Attached is a check for 2 years dues. Please take note of my new address. My wife has dementia and is living in a Memory Care Unit. I would like to thank you for the great job you do for the Association. I am now 83 and I don't do much. I visit my wife of 63 years every morning for between 2 and 3 hours and then I go back home and listen to Country Western music & read. Take care of yourself.
- From Homer Meeds to Bill Hollywood. Attached is a check for \$45.00. I guess that is what I am behind. I will be 90 years old in August. I hope all will be well after the Covid has passed. I like to read the Kearsaga but the Meetings are totally over for me. Hope all goes well for the Association in the future. I went aboard the Kearsarge in 1948, February 8th as I remember. Got off in drydock in March of 1950 at Bremerton, Washington. I remember when Harry Truman gave me another year for Korea. Then I went aboard the Rochester, CA 124. Got out at Treasure Island on the 3rd of October 1951. My best to all.
- From Bill Waller to Bill Hollywood. I see by my mailing label that my membership has expired. Enclosed find my check for \$75.00 for another 5 years. I am 93 and hope I last to extend my membership again in five years. My connection to Kearsarge goes back to a tour of the USS Kearsarge CS 1, formerly USS Kearsarge BB 5 while at Hunters Point Naval shipyard in 1948. I was there for overhaul of the USS Henderson DD 785. Then in 1952, i became part of the Commissioning Crew of the USS Kearsarge CV 33 which included being Commissioning OOD followed by a year as one of five Underway OODs off Korea. In 1993, I was invited to pass the Long Glass at the commissioning of USS Kearsarge LHD 3. Has anyone else been aboard three different Kearsarge vessels? I had been looking forward to the Milwaukee reunion as my youngest granddaughter lives in Milwaukee and I was using the reunion as an excuse to check out her new house and job. So, I have been dusting off all of my Kearsarge stories.

## Elimination of Widow's Tax

Senators Doug Jones and Susan Collins sent a bipartisan letter - co-signed by 64 of their Senate colleagues - to the chairmen and ranking members of both the House and Senate Armed Services Committees calling on them to ensure the House-passed provisions to repeal the SBP/DIC offset (Military Widow's Tax) remains in the final version of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA-HR 2500-S. 1790). Senators Jones and Collins were unsuccessful in their efforts in June to amend the Senate NDAA. However, the House NDAA includes this FRA-supported provision. The final bill is currently being negotiated between the House and the Senate. The final bill will be voted on by both chambers and if approved will go to the President to be signed into law or vetoed.

If signed into law, this legislation will repeal the unfair law that prevents as many as 67,000 surviving military spouses nationwide from receiving their full Department of Defense and Department of Veterans Affairs survivor benefits. Currently, military widows and widowers who qualify for the VA's Dependency and Indem-

nity Compensation (DIC) are forced to take a dollar-for-dollar offset from the Survivors Benefits Plan (SBP) benefit, even though retirees elected to pay into the program.

Legislation to repeal the Military Widow's Tax has been repeatedly introduced in the Senate and House over the past 18 years, but this is the first time this provision has been included a bill that has passed either chamber of Congress. The text of the letter can be found online.

FRA members can weigh in on this issue through the FRA Action Center located on the FRA website. This issue is listed in the campaign at the top of the page entitled: "Ask Senators to Support House NDAA Provisions."

**MEMBERSHIP DUES NOTICE**  
**All KEARSARGE Association Members,**  
**Please be attentive to your membership**  
**expiration date that's on the address label.**  
**We don't want to be forced to drop a single**  
**member for EXPIRED dues.**

## U.S.S. KEARSARGE ASSOCIATION SHIP'S STORE



### Ship's Crest

Cloth CV, CVA,  
CVS 33 - \$5.00



Magnetic - CV, CVA,  
CVS 33 - \$5.00



### Golf Shirts

CV, CVA, CVS 33 - Navy  
Med, Large, X-Large, 2X Large-\$29.00



### Sweat Shirts

CV, CVA, CVS 33 - Navy  
Med, Large, X-Large, 2X Large-\$36.00



### Dress Shirts

CV, CVA, CVS 33  
Short Sleeve Navy  
Med, Large, X-Large, 2X Large-\$29.00

### Hat

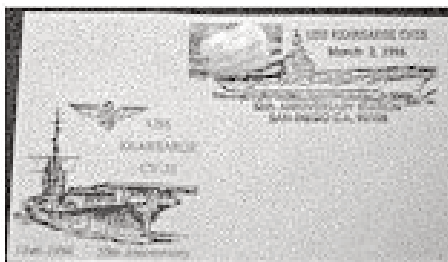


CV, CVA, CVS 33  
NAVY - \$16.00

### Watch Caps



Navy - CV, CVA, CVS 33  
\$11.00



**50th**  
**Anniversary**  
**1st Day**  
**Cover**  
**Envelope**  
**\$1.50**

### Jackets



The Port Authority Challenger jacket has a Tekon nylon durable, water repellent outside with a poly-filled body with heavyweight fleece lining. It has rib knit cuffs and waistband, zippered pockets outside and a zippered inside pocket. We are offering it in Navy with a Navy lining with USS Kearsarge, CV, CVA, CVS and ship's silhouette on the back.  
**Small, Medium, Large & 1X Large for \$78.00**  
**2X Large for \$83.00 - 3X Large for \$85.00**



A light weight nylon jacket with flannel lining is also available in Navy with the same stitching on back.  
**Small, Medium, Large & 1X Large for \$60.00**  
**2X Large for \$65.00 - 3X Large for \$68.00**

They are Special Order items only and all sales are final. When I have 6 orders, I will place the order with the supplier. We need a minimum of 6 to be eligible for the above mentioned prices.

### ALL PRICES INCLUDE SHIPPING AND HANDLING

Make your checks payable to the Kearsarge Association and send order to:

**Charles Patton**  
**9125 Live Oak Avenue**  
**Ocean Springs, MS 39564**

**(228) 324-7174**  
**charlottep@bellsouth.net**

## House Passes A Joint Resolution to Start Pilot Program for Veteran Dental Care

The House suspended the rules and passed H.J. Res. 80, sponsored by House Veterans Affairs Committee Ranking Member Rep. Phil Roe (Tenn.), to approve a request from the Department of Veterans Affairs to pursue a pilot program that increases veteran access to dental care. Currently, only eight percent of veterans have dental coverage from the VA for service-connected dental problems. The measure now goes to the Senate for further consideration. H.J. Res. 80 would approve the request.

Section 152 of the FRA-supported MISSION Act created a VA Center for Innovation for Care and Payment to test new payment and service delivery models that could increase the quality of care for the veterans while reducing taxpayer spending. The law requires the VA to submit a report to Congress requesting the waiver of any such authorities necessary for carrying out an innovative pilot program and requires that Congress pass a Joint Resolution approving the VA's request. The program will be limited to five years and must obtain appropriations funding.

On Dec. 6, 2019, the VA submitted a request to Congress asking to pursue the pilot program to increase access to dental care for veterans. They entered into arrangements with community dentists who agreed to provide free or discounted services to veterans who are enrolled in the VA healthcare system but are not eligible for VA-provided dental care. The request would allow administrative staff in VA medical facilities to educate veterans about their options in the community and to coordinate the dental care, as needed. Oral health is an important component of overall health. Connecting veterans, who cannot get dental care in VA facilities, with free or low-cost dental care would allow veterans to live better, healthier lives.

### Wierd Stuff You Didn't Know!

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO LICK YOUR ELBOW. WHY WOULD YOU WANT TO?

•  
THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE AIRBORNE OVER THE US. IN ANY GIVEN HOUR: 61,000

## IRS Free File Offers Free Tax Prep Options for Military Personnel

The Internal Revenue Service wants active duty military personnel to know that IRS Free File offers them multiple options for free federal tax preparation.

Free File is for individuals or families whose adjusted gross income was \$69,000 or less in 2019. Free File is a private-public partnership between the IRS and the Free File Inc.

"The IRS takes special steps to help military members and their families with their taxes, and the Free File program is part of that effort," said IRS Commissioner Chuck Rettig. "Almost 10% of the IRS workforce are veterans. We greatly appreciate the service to the nation of every veteran and their supportive families, and we will do all we can to assist them."

For active duty military and their spouses, Free File has a special offer. Individuals and their families who meet the income limitation may choose from nine companies, without regard to additional eligibility requirements.

The nine special offers are from: 1040Now, Inc.; FileYourTaxes.com; Free tax Returns.com; H&R Block; On-Line Taxes, Inc.; Tax ACT; TaxHawk, Inc.; TaxSlayer (English and Spanish) and TurboTax.

Active duty military who are stationed in combat zones, have more time to file their tax returns. However, those with spouses and families may opt to file as soon as they can to claim various tax benefits for which they may be eligible. If only one spouse is present to file a joint return, they must have proper authorization to file a joint tax return on behalf of their spouse.

The IRS will begin processing tax returns on January 27. With Free File, you can use any digital device, personal computer, tablet or smart phone. Free File products are mobile enabled so you can do your taxes on your smart phone or tablet and e-file with your mobile device.

How it works: Go online for all Free File options. Military personnel who meet the income requirement can select from any of the nine providers that have "Free for Active Military for Adjusted Gross Income of \$69,000 or less" in their offer. Nine of the 10 partners are making the offer. One product is in Spanish. Select a provider and follow the links to their web page to begin your tax return.

Complete and e-file your tax return only if you have all the income and deduction records you need. The fastest way to get a refund is by filing electronically and

selecting direct deposit. If you owe, use direct pay or electronic options.

Generally, each Free File partner sets additional eligibility requirements that civilian taxpayers must meet. Non-military personnel should use the "look up" tool online to find the best match. Military members can get more information on their special tax benefits online. Free File is available now through October to accommodate taxpayers who file for an extension.

## **Anchors Aweigh! Historic Warship Heads To Florida Museum**

LAKE CHARLES, La. — The Gearing-class destroyer Orleck has made its home in Lake Charles for the past decade but will soon make a 16-hour trip to Port Arthur, Texas, then trek for a week to Jacksonville, Florida, to join the Jacksonville Naval Museum.

The Jacksonville Historic Naval Ship Association intends to have the Orleck as its main attraction for museum-goers and ship enthusiasts everywhere.

The ship came to Lake Charles in May of 2010, and was open to the public by April of 2011.

"We're very excited about it, about the effort to save the ship," said Ron Williams with the USS Orleck Naval Museum. "I'm sad to see the ship leave Lake Charles and Louisiana, but in order to save it ... we're happy in that regard that we're able to do that. It's a positive story ... in the fact we can continue the odyssey and save it for future generations.

"The important thing to know is we plan (to have) the ship remain open for tours and visits through March 1," he said. "I encourage people to come out and see the ship before we have to close it to finish doing what we need to do."

Orleck will remain open to the public through March 1. After that, only museum members and volunteers will be allowed on certain areas of the ships. Marine surveyors and members of the Coast Guard have visited the ship to prepare for repairs. Most of the work will be done externally to ensure the safety of everything inside the ship while it is being moved.

Orleck will be towed to Port Arthur where it will be dry-docked for a good cleaning, some hull repairs, other minor repairs, a fresh coat of haze gray paint and whatever other superficial needs necessary to be berthed in Jacksonville. The ship is being prepared internally by volunteers that are packaging artifacts and securing documents among other things.

According to the Jacksonville Naval Museum website, the Coast Guard will require the ship to be water

tight for sea. The issues lie in covering the cost for river pilots and the tug boats on both phases of the tow. A GoFundMe was set up. By helping with the tow package, it frees up funds for additional work in the yards.

The Naval Museum's website also stated that if the Jacksonville Historic Naval Ship Association does not take possession of Orleck, all donations raised from the GoFundMe for the tow will be used to save historical items such as documents, equipment and displays from the ship for use by other museum ships.

"We will, by act of donation, donate the ship to the other organization," Williams said. "It'll be good for the support of the ship, going there, especially the resources they have as a naval town."

The Orleck website will remain active after the transfer. Challenges of keeping this historic ship in Lake Charles include the costs of dredging, the exposure to storms in its current location, and the fact it has no permanent dock on the lakefront.

"It's hard to raise money for the ship if you don't have a permanent dock to raise against — to say 'this is where it's gonna go'," Williams said.

If everything goes according to plan, the projection is Orleck will be in Jacksonville's Naval Museum by late April.

"You plan, and you execute, but if you have issues you adjust," said Williams when asked about the uncertainty of this timeline. Such instances as bad weather could cause the date to be pushed back.

"Please continue to support the ship ... by making donations to take care of the operation expenses. Although we're a nonprofit and we have volunteers, we have things we need to cover as we go through this insurance and supplies to get ready for dry-dock," implored Williams. He encourages people to contact about volunteer opportunities, questions about the ship, or applying for membership.

## **Former US defense official: We know UFOs are real - why that's concerning!**

After a bombshell report detailing near-daily interactions with unidentified flying objects by Navy pilots in 2014 and 2015, Christopher Mellon has argued that this information is nothing new, and the government needs to do something about it.

Mellon, former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Intelligence, is involved with a new History Channel series, 'Unidentified,' which will expand on topics discussed in a recent New York Times article. In numerous interviews, Navy pilots revealed that they saw UFOs moving at hypersonic speeds, performing acts "beyond the physical limits of a human crew," and emitting "no visible engine or infrared exhaust plumes."

In a Wednesday morning interview with "Fox & Friends," Mellon, who has written extensively on the topic before, outlined the reasons the Navy is concerned about these sightings.

"We know that UFOs exist. This is no longer an issue," he said. "The issue is why are they here? Where are they coming from and what is the technology behind these devices that we are observing?"

There are indications, Mellon said, that the objects reported by Navy pilots in 2014 and 2015 were doing things that aren't possible in this physical realm.

The speeds being reported (about 5,000 miles per hour, according to Mellon) were only sustainable for about an hour by an aircraft in the air, and these objects would be flying around all day long, the pilots said.

"Pilots observing these craft are absolutely mystified and that comes through clearly in their public statements," Mellon continued.

### **UFO 'SIGHTINGS' EXPLODE AS SPACEX STARLINK 'TRAIN' APPEARS**

Fascination turned to fear one day, however, when a Super Hornet pilot said he almost collided with one of the objects — which he described as a sphere encasing a cube. An official report was filed, and the incident shattered the previous theory by Navy pilots that the objects were a part of some sort of extremely classified drone operation.

"These are reactions between intelligently controlled vehicles operating in and around U.S. military facilities, hence the concern," Mellon explained.

"One: there have been near mid-air collisions so there is a safety issue. Two, there is a vital national security issue which is that our sovereignty is being violated by vehicles of unknown origin," he continued.

Although all of this information is old news to Mellon, it's taken America by storm, and he says we're hardly the only country to have interactions with these objects. Having written extensively about UFO sightings before, Mellon said he's frustrated with the lack of action being taken by the government, as are the Navy pilots who experienced the sightings.

### **NEW SATELLITES COULD SAVE AMERICANS \$30B ON MONTHLY INTERNET BILLS, REPORT SAYS**

He decided that the only way to make progress was to release this information to the public in the form of his new show, and television interviews.

"We are giving military personnel on the front line a voice," he said. "We are helping them get out the message of what it is they are encountering and why they are so concerned about it."

The New York Post contributed to the reporting of this story. Anna Hopkins is a Freelance Reporter with Fox News Digital based in New York City. Follow her on Twitter at @AnnaHopkins94.

## **Countdown 2020: New Boss, New Uniforms, New Boots**

Navy Times annually looks to the future in late December, not the past. We want to arm sailors and their families with insight into what we think might be the top trends or news events in the coming year. We chose stories we think you should watch for in 2020.

1. A new SECNAV On Nov. 24, Defense Secretary Mark Esper canned the Navy's top civilian, Richard V. Spencer. Esper and President Donald J. Trump turned to retired Rear Adm. Kenneth "K.J." Braithwaite, the U.S. ambassador to Norway. Before his 2011 retirement, Braithwaite served as the Navy's vice chief of information.

2. Navy gets to \$pend! Capitol Hill approved a compromise defense policy bill on Dec. 17 that creates a new Space Force in exchange for establishing paid parental leave for federal workers, as part of \$738 billion for the Pentagon for 2020. The Senate overwhelmingly approved the bill, sending it to the White House for President Donald J. Trump's signature. The \$738 billion bill averts a federal government shutdown and is roughly a \$20 billion increase over 2019. The Navy gets a slice of the \$1.87 billion earmarked for aviation programs, including 24 F/A-18E/F Super Hornets and nine P-8A aircraft.

3. Troops will see their largest pay raise in almost a decade on Jan. 1, and they could see almost as large of a boost in 2021, too.

4. Spending it on new uniforms? As part of a larger effort to introduce what officials are calling "flexibility" to the clothes sailors wear, Naval Personnel Command released uniform reforms on Dec. 9 designed to address everything from the way a shirt looks on a pregnant sailor to what you're going to don for your next swimming test.

5. Better boots Naval Personnel Command officials continued winter weather testing through December for the "I-Boot 5," an effort by the Navy to upgrade the standard 9-inch NWU boot, issued safety footwear maligned for being unsafe, poor fitting, uncomfortable, untrustworthy on some surfaces, difficult to break in and plagued by durability problems.

Officials said they don't have an estimated price tag for the boots or a tentative date for when pairs will hit store shelves.

## **Australia Joins U.S. Ships In South China Sea Amid Rising Tension**

KUALA LUMPUR -- An Australian frigate has

joined three U.S. warships in the South China Sea near an area where a Chinese vessel is suspected to be exploring for oil, near waters also claimed by Vietnam and Malaysia, officials said on Wednesday.

The warships arrived this week close to where the Chinese government survey ship Haiyang Dizhi 8 has been operating, which is in turn near where a vessel operated by Malaysia's Petronas state oil company is conducting exploratory drilling, regional security sources have said. The U.S. Navy said on Tuesday the USS America amphibious assault ship and the USS Bunker Hill, a guided missile cruiser, were operating in the South China Sea.

They were joined by Australia's frigate HMAS Parramatta and a third U.S. vessel, the destroyer USS Barry, as part of a joint exercise, the Australian defense department said.

"During the passage exercises, the ships honed interoperability between Australian and US navies, including replenishment-at-sea, aviation operations, maritime manoeuvres and communications drills," it said in a statement to Reuters.

The Haiyang Dizhi 8 was 325 km (202 miles) off the Malaysian coast, within its exclusive economic zone, data from ship-tracking website Marine Traffic showed on Wednesday.

The ship, accompanied by a Chinese coastguard vessel, has been moving in a hash-shaped pattern consistent with a seismic survey for nearly a week, the data showed. The area is near waters claimed by both Vietnam and Malaysia as well as China.

China claims most of the energy-rich South China Sea, within a U-shaped "nine-dash line" on its maps, which is not recognized by its neighbors.

Petronas and Malaysia's foreign ministry have not commented on the situation but the United States has called on China to stop its "bullying behaviour" in the South China Sea. China, however, has denied reports of a standoff, saying the Haiyang Dizhi 8 was conducting normal activities.

Last year, Vietnamese vessels spent months shadowing the Haiyang Dizhi 8.

It appeared off Vietnam again last week, within Vietnam's exclusive economic zone. Vietnam said it was closely monitoring the situation.

The United States has accused China of pushing its presence in the South China Sea while other claimants are pre-occupied with the coronavirus.

At the same time, China has been donating medical aid to Southeast Asian countries to help them tackle the virus, which emerged in central China late last year. A team of Chinese medical experts arrived this week in Malaysia, which has reported more than 5,400 corona-

virus infections.

On Sunday, Vietnam protested after China said it had established two administrative districts on the Paracel and Spratly islands in the disputed waters. China has called Vietnam's claims illegal.

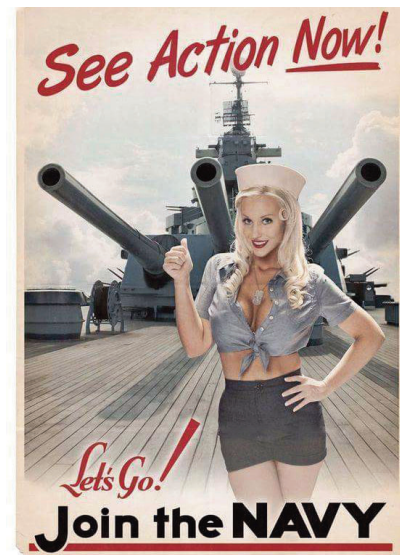
## Disabled Veterans eligible for free National Park Service Lifetime Access Pass

The Access Pass admits the pass owner and any passengers in a single, private vehicle (non-commercial) at per-vehicle entrance and day use fee areas; or, the pass owner plus three additional adults where per-person fees are charged. In addition to free entry at participating sites, the Access Pass includes discounts on some expanded amenity fees such as camping. Sites recommend that pass owners check with each site before visiting for details about Access Pass entry and discounts.

Veterans who have been medically determined to have a disability are eligible for the Lifetime Access Pass—with three options for obtaining the pass: First, Veterans with disability documentation can order the Access Pass online for a \$10 processing fee which includes standard shipping. Documentation required includes:

- Proof of residency
- VA disability award letter, VA summary of benefits, or proof of SSDI income.

Second, the Access Pass may be obtained through the mail. Download a paper application from <https://store.usgs.gov/access-pass>. Follow the instructions on the website and pay the document processing fee of \$10. Once the application package is received by USGS, the documentation will be verified and a pass imprinted with the pass owner's name will be mailed to them.



# KEARSAGA

## U.S.S. KEARSARGE ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

First  
Class  
U. S.  
Postage

### U.S.S. KEARSARGE ASSN.

% Bill Hollywood  
3059 Crest Ave.  
Ketchikan, AK 99901

**ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED**



**CHECK MAILING LABEL FOR YOUR MEMBERSHIP EXPIRATION DATE**  
*If it has been highlighted in yellow please renew immediately.*

*You can now check your membership details on the website roster to determine your expiration date, the date by which your dues are due.*



## U.S.S. Kearsarge

### DUES and MEMBERSHIP

Annual membership dues are \$15.00  
Check payable to the: **Kearsarge Association**  
Mail to: **Bill Hollywood**  
**3059 Crest Ave.**  
**Ketchikan, AK 99901**

New members, send your information including:  
Name, Address, Phone Number, E-Mail Address,  
Rate, Rank, Division, and years serving aboard.

If you are interested in receiving your Kearsaga via E-Mail, go to our website and leave a message stating: "Send KEARSAGA via E-Mail"

If you do not have a computer, we will continue to send it via U. S. Postal Service.

### Association Office Holders

**President:** C. V. Lindley, 9729 Shadow Wood Dr., Pensacola, FL 32514 • (850) 712-4664 • cvjan78@gmail.com  
**Vice President:** Barry Rittle, 10 Valley Dr., Annville, PA 17003 • (717) 673-6189 • rittleskokomo@aol.com  
**Secretary / Treasurer:** Bill Hollywood, 3059 Crest Ave., Ketchikan, AK 99901 • (907) 225-6556 • aknos@outlook.com  
**Webmaster:** Dale Maddy, 4409 Hastings Dr., Marion, IA 52302 • (608) 444-1783 • dmaddy47@outlook.com  
**Editor:** Jack De Merit, 4112 W. 161st Street, Lawndale, CA 90260 • (310) 367-3259 • abcusa@earthlink.net  
**Ship's Store:** Charles Patton, 9125 Live Oak Ave., Ocean Springs, MS 39564 • (228) 324-7174 • charlotteap@bellsouth.net

Honorary President Kenneth McDaniel (Deceased) Association Founder  
John Bennett "President Emeritus," John Starnes Past President

[www.kearsargeassociation.com](http://www.kearsargeassociation.com)