

# KEAR SAGA<sup>II</sup>

## The Newsletter of the KEARSARGE Association

ISSUE 44

CV, CVA, CVS-33, LHD-3

December 2010

### *Season's Greetings From Highland Village, Texas*

Perhaps I should have titled this seasons greetings since it is not yet Thanksgiving and you probably won't receive it until after the New Year. Nevertheless, we sincerely hope all of you have a wonderful and blessed holiday season.

When Paul gave me the opportunity to submit an article for the KearSaga I didn't have a clue as to what I would write about, or say. I at least have half of that figured out in that I know what I want to write about. I am just not sure what I will say but it will at least come from the heart.

First the Kearsarge. I checked aboard as a 17 year old scared to death airman apprentice and left four years later a very confident petty officer (thanks to a wonderful Chief). I literally went from being a boy to a man during that period. Now the Kearsarge Association. What an organization! We will forever owe the founding members a huge debt of gratitude.

To me personally our reunions are like, or perhaps better than, family reunions. For example, not long after our last reunion in Branson Paula and I were in Ashville, NC for a family reunion. Following the reunion we took a side trip to Highland, NC for a visit with Kearsarge association members Dick and Jane Bullis. It was like being with family members and shipmates at the same time!

I have pondered this closeness ever since. I am not sure that I have it figured out totally but I believe I am close. It doesn't matter when we served, whether we were officer or enlisted, ship's company or air wing, severed a hitch or made it a career. There is a common and lasting bond. It is called SHIPMATE.

My promise to each and every one of you is simply this. I will do everything I can to help keep our association alive and well and ask that you do the same.

Happy Holidays.

John Starnes, Vice President

And President Ed McKee writes....

Lois and I would like to extend a warm greeting to everyone from wintery Wyoming. We're hoping that you had a happy and healthy 2010.

The Branson reunion was one of the highlights of our year. We enjoyed meeting many new attendees and visiting with members from past reunions. It was reassuring to know that the association can continue to grow with reunion interest. If anyone is interested in reviewing the highlights of the reunion, I will have a CD available after the first of the year for \$15.00. Just mail a check, made out to me, to my address on your Kearsaga.

As none of us are getting any younger, the faster the years go by, the more precious they seem to become. I know many of you feel the same way as I do. The years spent aboard the USS Kearsarge were some of the most formative years of my life. I felt it was a time when I left my boyhood and stepped into manhood. Perhaps that is why I fondly cherish the memories. We were a family. Joined together with a common bond. Pride! We had a great sense of pride in who we were and why we were there. We mattered! We made a difference! Those years seem so long ago. Yet, I remember much of it like it was yesterday. Some of the pictures are sharp and clear, while others have faded a bit and seem a little fuzzy. (Does that come with age?)

Staying in contact with shipmates, attending the reunions, reading articles and viewing pictures of the Kearsarge, and sharing our experiences, help me to relive those unforgettable, formative years.

With that said, I will tell you that I'm looking forward to working on the 2012 reunion in Pensacola, Florida. We're thinking that mid spring might be a good time of the year again. So keep that time in mind as you make your distant plans.

So until then, stay well and have a blessed 2011!

Ed McKee, President

## TAPS

### **George A. Smallwood, AE1- V6 Div**

Dear John,

This is to inform you that George passed away on June 16, 2009. He was very proud to have served on the USS KEARSARGE CVA 33 from 1-52 to 4-54 during the Korean War. He retired with 30 year's service. He was 79 years young.

We shared 58 years of marriage. He is missed very much. I would like to continue to receive the Kear Sage Newsletter, and am enclosing our dues.

Thanks

Mrs. George Smallwood

### **Lloyd LeRoy Lewis, AN VF-112**

Dear John,

Lloyd died of melanoma cancer on Nov 2, 2009 at our home, after 52 years of marriage. His family was at his side.

Sorry we will miss the reunion this year. We always had such a good time. Our family enjoyed 3 of them with us.

Sincerely,

Mae Lewis

36758Weld Co. Rd. 15, Windsor, CO 80550

970-686-6195

### **Cecil Joe Dillon**

Howard W. Ray sent in the following information from the Register Herald, Beckley, WV

On Good Friday, April 2, 2010, our beloved Cecil Joe Dillon passed away at Raleigh General Hospital, following a sudden illness. He was 77 years of age.

Joe, as he was affectionately known all his life, was born on November 3, 1932, at East Gulf. Joe spent his early years at Stephenson, graduating from Mullens High School, Class of 1951. With the outbreak of the Korean War, he entered the U.S. Navy, where he served on the USS Kearsarge. He was a member of the Trusty Shellbacks of the Ancient Order of the Deep (crossing the equator) - Joe was a recipient of the National Defense Medal, Korean Service Medal, the United Nations Medal, the Good Conduct Medal and the China Service Medal.

After his stint in service he enrolled at Moms Harvey College, graduating in 1961. Joe began a career with N&W Railroad as a brakeman, retiring as a conductor with over 20 years of service. On the railroad, he was fondly known as "Jose." In his leisure time he enjoyed fishing and watching sports.

### **Don Hageman**

Paul

Darlene Hageman called to tell us her husband passed away. I didn't get a date, but she wants to be taken off the mailing list. Paul, would you put it in the KearSaga?

Lois McKee

### **Billy Dean Francisco UDT 1963**

Charles Chenoweth sent the following to John Work:

This is from a clipping in the Joplin Globe 9-16-10

"Billy first enlisted in the Navy at the age of 17. After marrying in 1956, Billy reenlisted continuing what would become a 20 year. Billy's favorite carrier was the USS KEARSARGE. He was part of a crew of Navy Frogmen on the whaleboat that secured astronaut Gordon Cooper's space capsule in 1963. The capsule, Faith 7, was the last flight in the Mercury program. Billy's whaleboat towed the capsule to the KEARSARGE and welcomed Cooper aboard. After his honorable



discharge in 1974, Billy attended Crowder College. He was proud to have served his country. Billy passed away on July 2, 2009, in Grand Junction Co. He is remembered by family and friends as a true hero."

Dear Paul,

This letter is to let you and the members of the USS KEARSAGE Association that Noel J. Binder passed away on July 19, 2010. He and I attended every reunion except the last two due to his illness. He and I always helped with the registration and the Hospitality Room at all of the reunions. He served on the USS KEARSAGE from 1952 to 1956 in the mess hall as a baker and cook. I have listened to many of his stories about his four years on the USS KEARSAGE and especially the one when the RAISIN JACK that they were making (secretly) in the oven and it blew up!!! Noel & I always enjoyed reading the Kearsaga and the stories each of you shared. May everyone continue to enjoy the reunions and the Kearsaga. May God Bless each of you for your service to the United States of America.

With Love to all

Joyce Binder (Wife of Noel J Binder for 52 lovely years.)

### LETTERS

Hi John,

Sorry about being late with the dues payment so here are the two year dues. Also I would like to say how much I liked the Branson reunion! After 55 years It was great to see people from the Kearsage. I expected to see some of the shipmates that were on the ship at the same time I was, but was pleasantly surprised to meet some shipmate's that I actually worked with! Hopefully I will see them again and others in Florida.

Seeing those guys made the old ship and V-1 Division more like I remember. Thank You for Everything.

Don Littrell, V-1 Division 1955-56

P.S. I would like to say what a great job Ed McKee and his lovely wife Lois has done.

Dear John:

August 16, 2010

Those letters were not uncommon during the WW2 but in another vein, I am sorry for not getting on with the dues, getting very forgetful about a lot of things but my memory is good about the mighty Kearsarge. The letter from Kenneth Wright about the man over board is quite vivid in my mind also. I was in the tool room on the hanger deck when I heard the commotion, like everyone I ran to the port to look down and back to see our shipmate going rapidly out of sight. The DE which was usually nearby under maneuvers was headed for him. When he was retrieved the DE crew expected and received the ration of ice cream due them. Small price for a job well done. Reflecting on post Shake Down, we were in dry dock at Brooklyn NY so we finally got to see the "screws", cast metal and larger than anything this old farm boy could imagine. A thing like that sticks with you. Thank you and the other dedicated personnel who keep this thing going. I am a little bit over the hill for travel but I do remember some of the past reunions. Keep up the good work.

Eugene Allen AMMC V2

August 16, 2010

To the Kearsaga

Some of the "newer" shipmates may not be aware of the history behind the name Kearsarge. I myself do not know all the details but I do know that the first Kearsarge was named after a mountain in Warner, New Hampshire just a few miles above where I live. Not a big mountain or a high one but in New Hampshire it's still a mountain. Anyway, the first Kearsarge was a sloop built during the Civil War. Originally when carriers were named after great battles and the sloop Kearsarge was in one of the greatest when she went up against the Confederate ship Alabama who's record numbered sinking 55 Yankee ships. The Kearsarge encountered the Alabama outside of Cherbourg, France on June 19, 1864 and literally cut her to pieces.

If we jump ahead 80 years to the time that the carrier Franklin was so badly damaged in the Pacific that she was counted as lost by the Japanese. Instead she was towed through the Panama Canal and up to Brooklyn where the Kearsarge CV-33 was under construction. The whole superstructure (island to us) was taken off the Kearsarge to replace the damaged one on the Franklin to hasten her repairs and get her back to the Pacific. One local sailor came home and spoke to help Defense Bond Raising. Another Franklin sailor from a nearby town was among those lost.

I went aboard the Kearsarge in Brooklyn, November '47, right out of boot camp and assigned to E Division. We spent the next six months putting finishing touches on the ship. New York was great liberty for an 18 year old.



One of our KearSaga members wrote about leaving Brooklyn for Bayonne, NJ in May of '48. He didn't mention that in order to clear the Brooklyn Bridge we had to remove our Radar and that morning was so foggy that we dropped the hook in the middle of the East River. Everyone who could be was topside when something big and white loomed up in front of us. I later heard that it was the Queen Elizabeth and she missed us by only two feet. I also heard that the young actress, Margaret O'Brian, was aboard. Don't ask me where the tug boats were during this but I was there.

Our home port was Quonset Point, RI but we were in Norfolk, VA Memorial Day of '48 when tragedy struck. The Kearsarge was anchored out in Hampton Roads ready to take off for the "Med" the next day. It had rained late in the day and we were all on a Cinderella liberty. Arriving at the fleet landing to catch a liberty boat out the ship around 10 PM I found out the boat ahead had swamped. We lost 36 guys that day. We had some great times on the CV-33 up and down the East coast, the Caribbean, the Med. I did want to mention getting stuck in the locks in the Panama Canal. One "more" gun tub had to be remove before we could continue through. Oh, you should have seen the hanger deck with 110 private owned cars instead of planes that they let us take with us to Bremerton in '50. I left the Kearsarge in May of '50 before the conversion and later went on the Block Island CVE-106, more Caribbean duty till Spring of '53.

I'm unable to travel but I love your newsletter. Glad to be a member!

C.G. Hall EMP3

As a convert to Murphy's Law, I was unaware of its implications, or the depth to which it might take me. This was the final day of our shakedown cruise aboard the Kearsarge, and we were on our way back to home port. Flight operations had ended early, noon chow was over, and we were allowed a sun-bathing break from duty. An occasion like this was rare, though greatly appreciated.

I was looking for a convenient place to recline, when a buddy called my name. He was positioned on top of a forward 5" twin-gun turret. He'd acquired a mattress cover to lie on so I gladly joined him. We skinned down to our shorts, laid back and relaxed. Life was good, for a while at least.

I awoke from a deep sleep to the sound of horns, bells and whistles. It was so surprising that I quickly sat up and looked around. We were moving ahead at slow speed with ships and boats saluting us on all sides. I could see Lady Liberty off the port bow not far distant. Wow, we were in New York Harbor!

I was taking in the grand spectacle when I heard someone shouting overhead. Looking up, I saw the Officer of the Deck on a bridge wing, pointing at me and hollering, "Who is that man? I want his name! Get that man's name!" over and over. For a moment I was stunned with shock. Then fear animated by adrenaline took over. I knew I had to move and move fast! I slipped on my shoes, rolled my clothes in the mattress cover, and jumped to the flight deck. A few steps to the starboard catwalk and I was away. I said a quick prayer as I fled, "Lord, help me out of this and I'll never screw up again." He must have heard because somehow I made it to my compartment.

Our section was scheduled for liberty, so I grabbed a towel and headed for the shower. In half an hour I was in uniform and ready to go. As we waited for our ship to dock, I had time to think. The O.D. had been really angry but I didn't blame him. He was conning a great new warship, just returning from a successful maiden voyage, and cruising into New York Harbor to salutes from vessels along the way. Then a half-naked "swabbie" intruded on his show. How could he not be angry?

When our party approached the quarterdeck for leave passes, I was relieved to see the watch had changed and another officer was serving as OOD. On leaving, we saluted the flag and strolled down the gangway. I suddenly felt a sense of freedom like I'd never known before. Life was indeed good!

Kenneth Wright, SN V-1 Div 1946

08-14-2010 Saturday

Hi John

Just received Issue 43 of the KEAR SAGA magazine and noticed my # PI 209 expires on 10/15. Enclosed is a check for \$30.00 which I believe should expire on 10/15/2013. Thanks for everything.

Your April 24<sup>th</sup> article "TAPS" was written by my 3<sup>rd</sup> division officer LT. Edward Leech, of CV 33. I was discharged July 8 1946 but do remember conversation while on watch one night concerning a mutual friend while Lt. Leech was at Springfield College in MA, He was a Great officer and hope he is in good health.

Thanks again John.

Henry C Earle, GM 3/c Division /plank owner.

122 Main Street APT. A, Agawam, MA. 01001-1816

413 786-3386



## Possible Association Web Site

President Emeritus John Bennett sent the following e-mail regarding having an Association web site:

"I was talking to a fellow at our HOG Club Meeting (Harley Owners Group) tonight about our web site. He just set one up for our club and it's the sort of thing he does for his day job. I think that he will do it for very little but he wanted to know what we want on it. So my question is what do we want on it? To look at the site he did for our HOG Club go to [motorsportshog.com](http://motorsportshog.com).

President Ed McKee

Fellow Shipmates,

I think a USS Kearsarge web site would be wonderful. However, once it is designed, how much work would it take to maintain it and who would do it? Also, besides the initial costs, what would the monthly costs be? I looked over the HOG web site and thought it was very good and quite comprehensive. It seems to include everything that a Kearsarge web site would require. An attractive home page with links leading to officers, how to join, reunions, privacy information, membership list (for members only), and an email address for contacts.

The only thing I can think to add would be the history of the USS Kearsarge and/or a link to several military sites. I studied the USS Kitty Hawk web site which included the ships store and a message board, among other things. It is very comprehensive and would require a great amount of work to fashion our web site after it.

However, I'm sure it would pay off in the end to help keep the association active and alive.

Ed McKee

## Postal Returns with No Forwarding Addresses

Attention All Hands! If you know any of the following shipmates please contact them and ask them to contact Treasurer John Work to furnish their current addresses and phone numbers.

Angelo, James B	R Div	FN	'61-62	Casassa, Lewis	VB153	ENs	'45-46
Curran, James H	MD	CPL	'53-55	Curtis, V. Edward	VF114	LTJG	'53-55
Dickinson, Kyle	V1	AN1	'52-54	Dinkelacker, Robert	MD	CPL	'54-55
Ernst, Bernard G	GM3		'45-46	Gartner, Laverne	OI	RD3	'55-59
Herron, James	R	SFFN	'62-65	Johnson, Willie S1			'64-68
Ledford, B. Chadwick	VA55	AE2	'58-58	Lee, John W	N	ENS	'47-50
Lewis, Harvey E	S	LCDR	'59-62	Matthews, Paul S	E	IC2	'59-62
McCallister, Paul	OA	AF2	'52-53	Moyle, Dan	V4		'58-59
Mulder, Paul W 7TH	BM2		'52-54	Murphy, Charles	ENG	CDR	'65
Murry, Oliver	OI	RDSN	'52-53	Nixon, Arthur	B	BT2	'52-57
Pederson, Norman E	3RD	E4	'57-58	Rasmussen, Don J	B	BT3	
Rehmeier, Fred MD	SGT		'46-48	Rome, Clarence A	X	YN3	'53-55
Schattle, Lee R VF884	AE1		'51-56	Schreiber, Michael C	OR	C2	'60-63
Schule, Walter	E	F2C	'45-64	Seder, Ronald G	OS	SM2	'67-70
Shackleford, John S	VS21	AE3	'66-69	Shanks, Alva Ray	VF112	AO3	'52-54
Sherrod, Stafford G	B	BTM	'65-67	Shepard, Raymond E	A	MR3	'65-67
Shipman, Doyle R		MM3	'54-57	Shirley, James R	3RD	SN	'57-58
Shults, James R.	B	BT3	'56-60	Singdale, Stewart	VF33	ADC	'50
Smart, Larry		OI		Snyder, Norman	MD	CPL	'62-63
Taiman, Burton VF42	A3C		'46-49	Thornberry, Cleve	E	EM1	'51-55
Tucker, Thomas	OI	RD2	'60-64	Unkraut, Richard	VA702	ADAN	
Vitanza, John E CR	CYN3		'65-66	Walker, Frank	V3	ARM2	'46
Walker, John	S3	SHSN	'59-62	Whelan, Leonard	MD		'52-53
Whitson, Karl R	AG	AN	'53-54	Whittaker, Arthur M	VT153	ARM2	'46
Williams, Robert H	FC	S1	'47	Williams, Harry A	H	HM2	'52-53
Wilson, William E	VF112	AD1	'52-55	Wischman, Harold	S2	CS1	'57-59
Wright, George	SN1		'46				



**All Hands Please Note:**

Occasionally I receive information from a member that he is not getting his copies of the Kear Saga Newsletter. To assure that you continue to receive the newsletter make sure that you keep Treasurer John Work, 24611 Sandy Springs Rd., Minerva, OH 44657-9442. Phone: 330-894-2660, Cel phones: 1-330-205-8056 and 1-330-205-0129. Email: [strogerwiper@verizon.net](mailto:strogerwiper@verizon.net). Also, notify John if your phone number changes.

**Cavanaugh Flight Museum F9F-2**

Kevin Raulie of the Cavanaugh Flight Museum has an F-9F-2 completely restored to original, including paint scheme and markings, in their collection. The plane operated from the flight deck of the Kearsarge in 1952 and 1953. After sustaining damage in Korea, the F-9F-2 later operated off the Philippine Sea. The aircraft was part of Air Group 9 Squadron VF721, BUNO 123078 tail #112. Kevin is hunting for any articles related to this aircraft. The aircraft is located in Addison, Texas at the Cavanaugh Flight Museum. Kearsarge Association VP John Starnes has offered to assist if information is needed. You can see pictures of the F-9F-2 by going to the Museum's website, [cavanaughflightmuseum.com](http://cavanaughflightmuseum.com)

**The following message exchange dated 16 December 1953 was discovered by Treasurer John Work**

From KEARSARGE TO ORISKANY

I HOPE THAT I WILL NEVER SEE  
A SHIP LIKE THE ORISKANY

A SHIP THAT STAYS IN PORT A YEAR  
LIKE IT'S GLUED TO PIEDMONT PIER

THEY EVEN USE OUR HUMBLE SCOW  
TO LAUNCH THEIR PLANES ...THEY DON'T KNOW HOW

AN OSCAR MUST HAVE BEEN THEIR GOAL  
BUT WERE THE ONES WHO PLAYED THE ROLE

IS OUR SHIP PERFECT? HEAVENS NO  
BUT HERE'S A THOUGHT BEFORE WE GO

BUILD ANOTHER THIRTY THREE  
AND SCUTTLE THE ORISKANY

FROM ORISKANY TO KEARSARGE

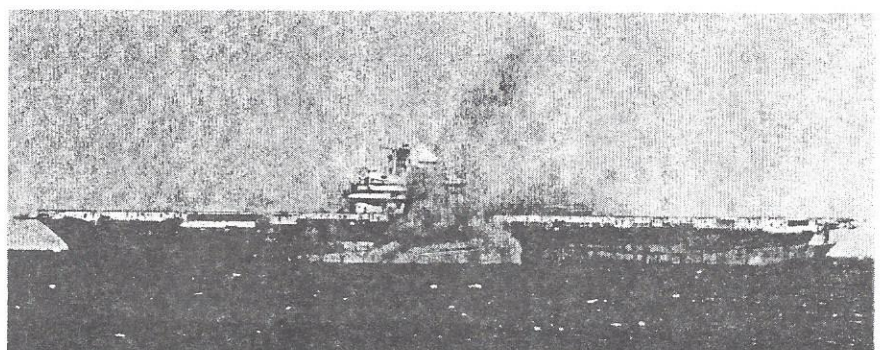
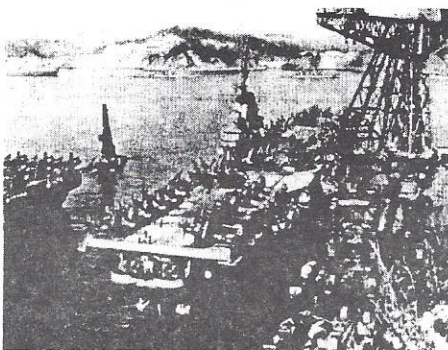
DISPATCH RECEIVED AND CONTENTS SCANNED  
APPARENTLY WE ARE BEING PANNED

COME NOW, FRIENDS, DON'T LOSE YOUR GRIP  
YOU'RE STAND-IN FOR A FIGHTING SHIP

FAR AWAY FROM HOMES AND MOTHERS  
WE'VE CAST YOU KEARSARGE BOYS AS LOVERS

The ORISKANY is picture below left at Piedmont  
Pier, Yokosuka, Japan in 1953

Below right is the ORISKANY being sunk as a fish reef  
about 25 miles off Pensacola, Florida



### SHIP'S STORE LIST

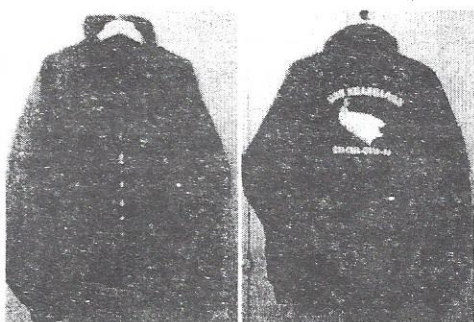
Golf Shirts			
CV,CVA,CVS 33	Navy or White	Med, Large, X large, 2X large	29.00
Sweat Shirts			
CV,CVA,CVS 33	Navy or White	Med, Large, X large, 2X large	\$36.00
Hats			
CV,CVA,CVS 33	Navy		\$14.00
Marine	Red		\$14.00
LHD 3	Navy		\$ 7.00
Watch Caps	Navy	CV,CVA,CVA 33	\$11.00
Ship's Crest	Cloth		\$ 5.00
	Magnetic		\$ 2.50
Zappo Lighters			
CV,CVS,CVS 33	Chrome	Ship's Crest or Ship	\$ 15.00
LHD 3	Chrome	Ship	\$ 15.00
	Brass	Ship and Crest	\$ 15.00
50th Anniversary 1st Day Cover envelope			\$ 1.50
"Dawn of Glory" print	LHD 3 with inserts of previous ships		\$ 20.00

ALL PRICES INCLUDE SHIPPING AND HANDLING

Make checks payable to the Kearsarge Association and order from  
Charles Patton

9125 Live Oak Ave

Ocean Springs, MS 39564    Phone # 228-875-7572    e-mail [charlotteap@bellsouth.net](mailto:charlotteap@bellsouth.net)



**Now available**

The Port Authority Challenger jacket has a Teklon 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 and the USS KEARSARGE name and insignia on the back. Sizes available are medium, large and 1X large for \$55.00 and 2X large for \$59.00. It is a special order item only and all sales are final. When I have 7 orders I will place the order with the supplier. We need a minimum of 7 to be eligible for the above mentioned prices. Those who were at the Branson Reunion and saw the one Gerald Urban had were greatly impressed with the quality of the jacket and stitching on the back.



# KEAR SAGA II

*The Newsletter of the Kearsarge Association*

USS Kearsarge Association  
24611 Sandy Springs Rd  
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## CHECK YOUR MAILING LABEL FOR YOUR DUES EXPIRATION DATE

### Dues and Membership

The yearly dues for the Kearsarge Association is \$10.

Check your label to see when your dues expire.

To pay dues, send a check payable to the **The Kearsarge Association** to John Work.

To sign up a new member, send information to John work, including  
**name, rate/rank, Division, years aboard, address and phone number**

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### Membership-Vacant

Ship's Store Charles Patton, 9125 Live Oak Ave., Ocean Springs, MS 39564, Ph228-875=7572, Email: charlotteap@bellsouth.net

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