

The Navy Yard Association Newsletter



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NYA Bulletin Board

If you wish to reach more than 400 of your fellow NYA members, this bulletin board is available for your use to post information. **Send an e-mail to Veronica Laird at vcullum@hotmail.com (use the subject line "NYA Bulletin Board")**

Shop 64 Breakfast Meeting

Rotating between Vallejo, Suisun, Fairfield, Vacaville, & Napa
Third Friday each month at 9:00am
POC: Jim Davis; (707) 226-1119

Shop 38 Breakfast

Denny's, 1701 E. Monte Vista Ave., Vacaville
Second Monday of even months at 9am
POC: Bill Cruz (916) 716-4661

Vallejo Chapter of NARFE Meeting

Florence Douglas Senior Center, 333 Amador St., Vallejo
Second Tuesday of each month at 1:15pm
POC: Robin Leong; robin_leong@netzero.net

Napa Chapter of NARFE Meeting

Napa Senior Center, 1500 Jefferson St., Napa
Last Wednesday of each month at 1:30pm
POC: Dotty Mufich; (707) 226-3642

Delta Chapter of NARFE Meeting

Denny's at Hwy 4/Somerville, Antioch
First Monday of each month at 12pm (Feb, Apr, Jun, Sep)
POC: Bob Martin, (925) 458-1260

Mare Island Historic Park Foundation

Mare Island Museum Whitthorne Room
Last Monday of odd months at 9:00am
POC: Ken Wright (707) 557-4646

Nuclear Inspectors' Luncheon

The Sardine Can, Vallejo
First Tuesday of each month at 11:30am
POC: Lea Zajac; ldzajac@aol.com

Ocean Engineering Luncheon

Sports Bar inside the Marriott Hotel, Napa
Last Wednesday of each month at 11:30am
No POC at this time

Nuclear Engineering Luncheon

Locations vary each month
Each Friday at 11:30am
POC: Allen Green; aalgreen@napanet.net

President's Corner

Ralph McComb

Season's Greetings and welcome to our Holiday Newsletter!

Instead of coupons and advertisements, this issue includes some news about what is happening around Mare Island from Bruce (who will be 80 soon!), and some very important information about what is happening around our dental plans from Robin. And, my only job is to thank you all very much for taking us into our 99th year, and recognize the selfless efforts of Veronica Laird, James Porter, Robin Leong, Lloyd Mahan, and Bruce Christensen, along with Directors Howard Fitzpatrick, Gordon and Jan Triemert, Rich Wright, and Carmen Merriman for making us work so well.

May the season bring you happiness and joy.



Around Mare Island...

Bruce Christensen

Following are some of the current goings-on around Mare Island:

Mare Island Celebrates the ex-USS Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo (SSBN 658)

On Friday, October 25, 2019, more than 300 attendees, including more than 125 former USS VALLEJO crewmembers, celebrated the dedication of the ship's sail at Mare Island's Shipbuilding Ways

Number 2—the same Ways in which the VALLEJO was built.

The Save Our Sail (SOS) project was sponsored by the Mare Island Historic Park Foundation (MIHPF) under the direction of former VALLEJO crewmember and retired Master Chief Bill Linné. Celebration guests included officials from the City of Vallejo, Solano County, State, and Federal government, as well as active and retired military personnel and local businesspeople.



The assembled audience at the Save-our-Sail Dedication Ceremony outside the Mare Island Museum.



Mayor Bob Sampayan poses with representatives from California Maritime Academy in front of the USS VALLEJO Sail.



NYA Past President Dennis Kelly provides history of USS VALLEJO and events leading to obtaining ship's sail.



Ribbon Cutting Ceremony: Vallejo Mayor, Bob Sampayan; Nimitz Group, Stacy Madigan; MIHPF Executive Director, Ken Wright; Savage and Cook, Kim Phinney; SOS Project

Manager, Bill Linné; Major Donors, Paula and Roger Salquist; and Vice Admiral (retired), Al Konetzni

Among the featured speakers during the sail dedication ceremonies were the Mayor of Vallejo, Bob Sampayan; Tom Bartee (representing State Senator Bill Dodd); Mel Orpillia (representing Congressman Mike Thompson); Retired Vice Admiral Al Konetzni (former officer assigned to the VALLEJO); and Dennis Kelly, Past President of the Mare Island Navy Yard Association. Before the ceremony, Mayor Sampayan welcomed a contingent of students from Vallejo's State University at the California Maritime Academy.



MIHPF Vice President, Bruce Christensen, Retired Vice Admiral Al Konetzni, and SOS Project Manager Bill Linné celebrating with a brew; compliments of

the Mare Island Brewing Company



Travis Air Force Base Band at the head of Building Ways 2

The celebration started with the National Anthem; following the guest speakers, the Tolling of the Bell honored lost submariners. The official sail dedication included a ribbon-cutting ceremony featuring several of the dignitaries present for the event. Complimentary refreshments were served in the Mare Island Museum, including light and dark beer on tap, hosted by the Mare Island Brewing Company.

Mare Island Dry Dock Completes another Successful Year

Christina Snyder, the Executive Vice President of Mare Island Dry Dock (MIDD) LLC, reports the MIDD is wrapping up 2019 on a positive note, with two new contracts awarded at the end of the year. The MIDD has operated Dry Docks 2 and 3 and the adjacent waterfront facilities since 2013.

Throughout 2019, 19 vessels were repaired, refitted, and/or overhauled by MIDD—totaling more than 36 months of shipyard work. Customers bringing ships to the MIDD during 2019 included the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the United States Coast Guard (USCG), Lindblad Expeditions (National Geographic Vessels), Military Sealift Command (MSC), Hornbeck Offshore, and others. The types of vessels that were worked on include research vessels, survey ships, exploration vessels, a submarine support ship, an icebreaker, cruise ships, supply ships, patrol boats, tug boats, and barges.

The MIDD is looking forward to another successful year in 2020, with specific focus on assisting the U.S. Department of the Navy in resolving their lack of necessary capacity to keep their U.S. Navy ships operational.

U.S. Congressman Mike Thompson Keynote Speaker at Mare Island Cemetery

On Monday, November 11, 2019, at 9am, the Navy League Council #1 and the Mare Island Historic Park Foundation (MIHPF) hosted the annual Veteran's Day Ceremony at the Mare Island

Cemetery. A record crowd of more than 75 attendees gathered for this moving event, which commenced with the O'Kane Sea Cadet Color Guard entering the cemetery, followed by the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

Congressman Mike Thompson, who is currently in the process of gaining Federal funding for the preservation of the Mare Island Cemetery, was the keynote speaker. City of Vallejo Councilwomen Rozzana Verder-Aliga and Katie Meissner presented a Proclamation to the MIHPF for their ongoing effort in helping preserve this Veteran's Day Celebration—a tradition that has continued since the Shipyard closed in 1996.

The ceremony ended with the laying of a wreath at the USS BOSTON monument, where 15 crewmembers who died in an explosion on Mare Island in 1892 are entombed. The wreath laying was followed by the playing of Taps by Bugler Ronald Acquistapace, a member of Bugles Across America. After the ceremony, the Mare Island Cemetery returned to quiet serenity.



O'Kane Color Guard preparing to enter Mare Island Cemetery

Building Demolition in Full Swing at North End of Mare Island

On November 21, 2019, the Vallejo Times Herald reported the City of Vallejo has begun Phase II building demolition at the north end of the island, beginning with Buildings 571, 641, 791, 793, and 1001. All of these buildings have been empty for several years, and one (Building 1001) suffered fire damage in September 2019.

Demolition work is scheduled to complete by January 2020. Vallejo City Manager Greg Nyhoff indicated that removing these dilapidated buildings on the north end of the island would enable the City to recruit new businesses and accelerate economic development on the island.

Benefit Officer's Column

Robin Leong

Dental Plans Closing Down

Recently, there have been many changes in the number one NYA benefit still left: the NAONE dental trust. These changes have caused a lot of confusion for those affected. Hopefully, this column will help remove that confusion.

Dental plan administrator, Integrity Administrators Incorporated (IAI), notified the NAONE Trust board they received notice that both Parkside Dental Team (PDT) and Smile Care Dental Group/Vallejo were cancelling their agreement to serve NYA members enrolled in their pre-paid plans. This was bad news because PDT was the biggest pre-paid plan provider. No matter what IAI tried to negotiate with PDT, they refused to continue. Subsequently, we found out the dentist who founded PDT retired, and a new group of dentists was brought in. Your NAONE Trust board directed IAI to write letters those who belonged to Smile Care Dental Group/Vallejo and PDT notifying them of the when the plans were being terminated and providing some options. They were told there were still some other pre-paid plan dentists available. Many, who liked the affordability of the pre-paid plan, chose that alternative. At the same time, other pre-paid dental offices were also bought out—resulting in name changes and thereby adding to the confusion.

To sum up the changes in the NAONE Prepaid plan: Parkside Dental Team and Smile Care Dental Group/Vallejo are no longer in the NAONE Trust pre-paid plan. Vallejo Dental Association is now North Bay Dentist; Tri-City Dental Service Inc., is now DeOcampo &

Associates; Smile Care Dental is now Golden State Smile; and Sorrento Valley Dental Associates is now Gentle Dental Sorrento Valley

The NAONE Trust still offers the Blue Shield of California and DentAssure Dental Program. One of the best elements of our plans is that you can join at any time, unlike Federal dental plans—where there is an open season or where you can only join if there is an event that allows you to join.

For those who quit participation in any of our plans, please remember that your monthly dental allotment included \$1.25 per month for your NYA membership. If you would like to continue your NYA membership, please send a check for \$7.50 made payable to NYA of Mare Island to PO Box 849, Vallejo, CA 94590, to make up for dues to be collected through the end of the membership year ending on April 30, 2020. So far, only eight members have done that.

We are very sorry about these developments. If you want to select another dentist from the existing pre-paid plan dental offices, please contact Melissa Nelson at IAI via e-mail to mnelson@integrityadmin.com, or call her at (800) 562-9383 or (916) 562-9383. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to call me at our NYA cell (707) 562-1812 or e-mail me at robin_leong@netzero.net.

On another matter, if you have a Facebook account and are interested in learning a lot about Mare Island History, there is a private Facebook page, "NYA of Mare Island." You will need to request permission to join the group (this keeps out those annoying ad-robots), and answer three simple questions that can be answered easily by NYA members. Unfortunately, we recently had to bounce one member for posting messages that were not in line with this Facebook group.

I wish all NYA members and their significant others a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year—not just Happy Holidays.