

GURKE NEWSLETTER

Volume 2 Issue 2

August 2008

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE USS GURKE (DD-783)



Special Points of Interest

- *We have your stories about leaving the Navy as our cover stories. A few had celebrations—most did not. If you didn't get your story in this time, send it in for the November issue. Thanks to all who participated!*
- *Welcome Mat is on page five with two new names for the roster.*
- *Mail Call beginning on page five has some news from your former shipmates. One of them needs your help for a VA claim.*
- *See page six for the announcement of the dates for the 2009 reunion. Mark your calendars now and plan to attend.*

TALES OF LEAVING THE NAVY

"What was the process of leaving the Navy like? Was there any kind of ceremony, or did you just pack your duffle bag and walk off the ship? Did you have any kind of celebration, either with your Navy buddies or back at home? How was your trip home?"

These questions were posed by e-mail to USS Gurke Shipmates and we are happy to publish the following responses:

Jim Frederick:

My retirement into the Fleet Reserve after 20+ years (among the first to be required to do twenty day for day) was very uneventful and just another day, other than being jobless.

The beginning of July 1978 I was transferred from my ship (not Gurke) to Naval Station San Diego where the ship was home ported and I lived with my family. I commuted daily from there to home and back until July 25, 1978, at which time the Navy

and I switched ID cards and I went home forever. No ceremony, no nothing. That was actually cool with me because the Navy had changed so much by then, I just wanted out. The next 30 years (July 25, 2008) I have given to my wife who earned them.

Ralph Jakwerth:

I can't remember anything dramatic or celebratory about my discharge. It seems that I went out the gates similar to the movie version of a guy serving his time in prison and leaving the gated area with a feeling of being free. (Although I didn't feel as though I was in a prison or anything of that sort, but just analogous to leaving the gate in a similar fashion.) Otherwise, no celebration or anything like that.

Robert (Bob) Hatcher:

Got on the plane from Yokosuka, Japan, separated in Seattle, went home into the

Naval Reserves. Absolutely "sucked"...the whole process of exiting the military and Navy. Got my G.I. Bill, went to university and now work as an Independent Petroleum Engineering Consultant for British Petroleum, BP-Norway. Never heard from any "Active-Duty" buddies ever again.

Now: Done quite well for myself without them, and can choose to work if I want. Thirty plus years experience in 28 foreign countries, 4 continents, and 5 major oil-gas companies, ie: 2 European, Shell and BP), 1 OPEC (Emirates National Oil Company), 1 major Texas Energy Consortium (Ward Companies), a major global Energy Service Company (Halliburton). Been employed as Sr. Technical Advisor to the Board, Sr. V.P.-Engineering, Sr. Advisor to the Royal Courts of 2 Sheiks, Regional Manager, Regional Director, Sr. Reservoir Engineer, Staff Reser-

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voir Engineer, and Well Data Analyst.

Consulted to two U.S. presidents, 2 U.S. Governors, 2 Persian Gulf Sheiks, 2 major 5-Star Petroleum Engineering Consulting Firms, and 3 Board of Directors/CEOs. Self employed and work to only keep busy—don't play golf—play blues harmonica. If you look at the '72-74 Cruise Book, I'm the one standing compartment inspection with the XO. Won the Gurke Talent Show, I believe in '73 or '74 after the Miss America USO show.

Lawrence Lewis:

I transferred off the ship in San Diego and checked in at OGU at the 5th St. Naval Station where they processed my discharge.

MEMORIES OF SHIPBOARD AND DEPARTURE

By Dewey L Robinson

June, 1946 was the month when Wayne and I, who are twins, were separated from the crew of the USS Gurke DD-783. We were only nineteen years of age and had been in the US Navy since November, 1944.

When we reported for boot training at Camp Downs-United States Naval Training Center in Chicago, Illinois, and assigned to Company 2205, boot camp lasted for ten weeks. In February 1945, when boot camp had ended, we were put on a train headed for Treasure Island, California where we began to train and prepare for an assignment to the USS Gurke. This ship was being constructed at Todd-Pacific shipyard near Bremerton, Washington. She was being equipped and prepared to become a part of "Operation Downfall," the Invasion of Japan. Equipment and supplies for the Invasion were already being stockpiled on the Island of Okinawa, and the date of the invasion was the nation's greatest secret. On May 12, 1945, Gurke was commissioned the "USS Gurke-DD-783". In late June of 1945, after she had finished her shakedown, the

Gurke was called back to Todd-Pacific shipyard for improvements in her anti-aircraft armament. On August 6, 1945, an atomic bomb was dropped on a city in Japan. On August 14, a second bomb was dropped on another city, and the Japanese sued for peace. The whole direction of the war changed.

Shortly after the bombs were dropped, the war ended. After the war ended, Gurke had orders to proceed to the Pacific and take her position with the Seventh Fleet. On August 27, 1945, Gurke headed for the Island of Hawaii. Her first WESPAC cruise lasted from September 2, 1945 to February 10, 1946. The stops included Pearl Harbor, crossing the 180th meridian, and the encounter with typhoon Louise which lasted four days, the bay of Tokyo, Buckner Bay at Okinawa, the island of Miyako Jima and Ishigake Jima in the islands of the Ryukyu. On January 23, 1946, the Gurke received orders to return to the United States. On February 10, 1946, the crew of the Gurke watched the western coast of the United States come into view. A ten day leave for us was granted and we left San Diego aboard a PBY Catalina for Tennessee. On March 1, 1946, I married Louise Hayes. By March 17, 1946, the boys were back aboard ship, scraping and painting.

Wayne and I had never been separated longer than a few days at a time at any time in our lives. We depended on each other for the stabilizing effect that family can have for one another. Now that the place that he has been occupying as my stabilizing assistant is about to be replaced with a wife, I had no fears of not being able to see him nor talk to him as frequently as before. Still I had questions that caused me to think back to the fear I had before the hostilities ended. His battle station assignment was the aft mount of the three five-inch twin guns that was just aft my general quarters assignment on a quad forty-mm anti-aircraft gun. I often feared what my reaction would be if he was threatened. Now, at home, marriage, the absence of wartime threat stilled my fears. It was a blessing to be free from that fear.

My separation from the US Navy came some six months after the separation of my brother Wayne. Early in my time of service aboard the USS Gurke the medical officer had diagnosed a condition at the end of my spine as a cyst. However, his decision was not to remove it while I was still aboard ship, but to send me to a naval hospital after I was released from duty.

On July 1, 1946, Wayne and I were separated from the crew of the USS Gurke and we began our journey east by train from San Diego to Memphis. While Wayne went on to Lenoir City, I was admitted to the naval hospital at Millington, Tennessee. Wayne didn't leave me alone down there. He saw our parents and drove down to Cleveland, Tennessee and picked up Louise and they came to Millington. After a much appreciated visit, they returned to east Tennessee and I remained there until November 7, 1946.

When I was discharged from the hospital, I returned to east Tennessee. Louise and her parents picked me up in Chattanooga, thirty miles from Cleveland where she lived with her parents. Louise had her job as a secretary to an attorney in Cleveland and I was drawing a small check from the Veterans Administration. We had no car, but the town of Cleveland was small, and Louise's father and a young clothing salesman from church transported us when we needed to travel out of town.

After a month of visiting friends and family all over East Tennessee, I got serious about finding a job. I thought about following my music and visited the radio station in Cleveland where I was permitted to stand in with a country music group broadcasting an early morning show. Some of the band members were cold to my being added to the group, and I didn't pursue that opportunity.

On one occasion, when it was coming close to the end of the month and the money for the house was not there, I was offered an af-

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ternoon of work playing guitar for a group entertaining in the show room of the local "Packard" dealership, who was introducing the latest model. That led to being offered a position on their sales force in the farm tool division. When "Brown Stove Works," the local manufacturer of cooking stoves accepted the G.I. Bill Training Program the government offered, I began working as an office clerk. This effort taught me that I would never be successful in a job where I was isolated for hours at an endless task. We parted as two in agreement that it was best to move on.

I had thought that my radio experience in the Navy might qualify me for a place in the station of the Southern Railway Company as a telegraph operator. I decided not to pursue that because of the experience at the stove company.

When Louise gave up her position with the attorney, she agreed that she would accept our relocation to another town, so I went to the offices of my pre-service employer at Oak Ridge and applied as a veteran and secured a position as a security guard at the same plant location that I had worked before entering the Navy. After securing the job, we applied for housing with the Atomic Energy Commission for the city of Oak Ridge and was assigned living space in the one bedroom unit they called a "Victory Cottage." After a few weeks we were qualified for a two bedroom apartment located in the city of Oak Ridge on the city bus route. We lived there until the job was cut as a "reduction-in-force" cost reduction move.

During the reduction-in-force notice period, I read the ads looking for a job. I saw where a newspaper company was starting publication in Oak Ridge. I applied for a position in advertising. The publisher didn't think I had the experience he was looking for and turned me away. I applied at another table who was interviewing for the circulation staff and he thought I could do the job. He recommended me to the publisher and he gave me the job.

In the month of November, 1947, I began working for The Oak Ridger and for forty-three years I have followed the work.

William (Bill) Beslow:

Leaving the Navy: December 1973—just another day. One day I was in the Navy; the next I was a civilian. There were a lot of little changes (probably due to maturing a little and life moving on). No welcome home. You kind of hid from people so you wouldn't be pointed out. It was really a rough time. I feel the same thing will happen to our military if this war continues.

Frank Hickam, RMC:

During my last days on the USS Gurke, the CO, XO, and others were trying to get me to re-enlist on board. This would have looked good for the ship, being that re-enlistment percentages in the fleet were very low for tin cans.

I departed the ship in May 1956, left San Diego with my wife (who we found was pregnant) and headed for mid-Missouri for a visit with my family. After a couple weeks, we returned to Denver to stay and get my old job back. This didn't work out. I didn't look forward to being in the Reserves and attending meetings. We decided to return to San Diego and re-enlist. This would take care of the remainder obligation at that time.

From there I received orders to Pearl Harbor as flag Radioman for ComCortRon 11. Later this assignment became ComDesFlot 5 with the USS John S. McCain, DL3 as our flagship. During my tour in Pearl, I learned that my old squadron, Des-Div 51 was returning to WestPac. Of course, I was on the dock to meet the ships as they arrived. What a surprise to the bridge personnel to see me on the dock. Needless to say, "shore duty" was better than another trip to WestPac. During this tour, two daughters were born at the Tripler USA Hospital there.

When the tour ended, I received orders to the Embassy in Copenhagen, Denmark. From there, back to

the states for a tour as an Instructor at RM "A" School, Bainbridge, MD. From there we traveled to NavCommSta Asmara, Ethiopia for four years. When that tour was completed, I returned to Bainbridge for another tour of instructor duty.

My final Honorable Discharge was presented by the O-in-C at Radioman "A" School Bainbridge. He and I served together during my tour at the Embassy in Copenhagen. What a shocking surprise to have him present me with my Fleet Reserve papers, and to be "piped over the side" by the Chiefs and staff. The ceremony was held at the school, and afterward we adjourned to the CPO Club for refreshments.

So, retiring on a Monday, a day's rest the next day, I then started my new career with my present company.

A very pleasurable naval career, including my longest shipboard stay was on the USS Gurke DD-783.

Mike Elliott:

When I left the Gurke she was still on a WestPac Cruise. Since my enlistment ended before the cruise did, they flew me home from Manila when we were in our "home away from home" in Subic Bay. I left my stuff on the ship and met it when it returned to San Diego and then took one of my shipmates to southern Arizona to pick up his car. No muss, no fuss.

Richard Bruno EM3:

My exit process was very subdued. I reported to the OGU (Outgoing Unit) barracks at the Naval Station with my seabag and paperwork. It took about 48 hours to process me out. I went on Liberty for one last time and when I came back they had my papers ready. As I was departing, I met Timo, an old shipmate who asked if he could ride home to Los Angeles with me. Enroute he told me that while in the OGU he had re-enlisted. I asked him if he needed any uniforms or other gear (we were the same size and build), so I gave

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him all of my uniforms except for 1 pair of dungarees and a pair of work shoes. Imagine my panic 30 days later when the Los Angeles Reserve Base sent me official orders to report for duty. I immediately called the recruiting center and asked if I had active reserve obligation and they assured me that I didn't. It turned out that their "Official Orders" were just a ploy to get me in so they could try to convince me to join their unit. I declined and received my official discharge 8 years later without having to serve in the reserves.

Bill Strauss HM1, USN, Retired:

I was getting transferred to shore duty and so the customary checking out was the order of the day. However, I did go back the few days later when the ship was leaving port to go to Yokohama, Japan for a change of home port. I had the distinction of being with the outgoing skipper, Commander Ron Berger, as he threw the last line off the deck chocks on the pier as they departed. Also with us was BT1 Russ Anderson. My family and I left shortly after our household effects were picked up. It was October and we left for our new assignment of NRTC, Green Bay, Wisconsin, from which I retired 44 months later. The Gurke was the best duty an HM could ask for and I thoroughly enjoyed it. I found out I was a pretty decent sailor for mixing with 320 guys for three years. I did have a retirement party here at what I called home. Great duty, great shipmates.

Lou Courtney:

I served on the Gurke from Jan. '56 to June of '57. After a WestPac cruise I was transferred to the USS Ramsden DER-382, and served the remainder of my tour on the radar picket out of Hawaii. When I went aboard the Gurke I was a boot fresh out of radar school, very green and full of anticipation. It didn't take long for me to get in the groove of ship-board life, as there was always something going on. I enjoyed my

time aboard because of the newness of everything. As I said, we shipped out on a WestPac Cruise and I couldn't wait to see all of the places we were to visit. To get to the original question, no, there was no fan fair, no bands playing for my departure. It was just a simple transfer from one ship to another. I was all of 20 when I left, but my buddies made sure I would never forget them. Good thing I didn't leave ship the next day, because my head was bursting, if you know what I mean. It was a good tour. I have a lot of fond memories and some not so great but all in all, well worth the investment of my time.

Nick Wiltz:

Your mentioning a short dissertation on what it was like to be leaving the Navy brought back some fine memories. I had the good fortune to join the Gurke's complement on Christmas Eve of 1953 and bid farewell to her in Kobe, Japan in November of 1955. My reason for leaving the Gurke was not by reason of discharge, but by a transfer to Washington D.C.

During this time in the 1950's it was a requirement that when a person was transferred to a shore station it was necessary that a year of duty was required for a transfer to be allowed. Now my enlistment date was November 5, 1952 and since I was officially being transferred on November 22, 1955 would mean that I had only a little less than a year to serve. This is pretty close to a year (I knew that close only counts in horseshoes and hand grenades). Also, I was quite sure that if the Navy found out this small discrepancy it probably wouldn't send me back to Japan. Feeling these were justifiable reasons and as I was leading Yeoman at the time, I proceeded to cut my orders.

Just prior to leaving the Gurke I found out that I would travel to Yokohama and then catch a MATS flight to Larson Air Force Base in Moses Lake, Washington. Now this was just too good to be true because I just happened to live in Moses Lake, Washington. So I immediately applied for and received 10 days leave

enroute to Washington D.C. and was able to spend Thanksgiving Day with my family (I arrived at Larson Air Force Base at 4:30 AM Thanksgiving Day).

I think if I hadn't applied for the 10 days leave everything would have gone as planned, but for some reason the duty station to which I was being transferred to in Washington D.C. didn't receive the change of orders which included the 10 days leave! So when I got to Washington D.C., there happened to be an AWOL stamp on their copy of my orders. That stamp, on top of having less than a year of duty remaining, and also notice that I had been promoted to 2nd class while enroute, really ticked off some people who knew darn well what I was doing! Also the billet I was to fill was for a third class and I now was a second class!

I think within a hour of clearing up the AWOL charge, I had orders in my hand to report to some LST somewhere in Hampton Roads, Virginia! Well, after some scratching, screaming, kicking and crying on my part some cooler heads prevailed and I was sent to a billet in ONI in the Pentagon, where I don't think they were to happy to see me either!

Now, to my discharge! In August I became aware of a directive that if an enlistment was up before the end of the year and an enlistee was interested or intended to enroll in college, an early discharge was possible. Well naturally this was right up my alley, so to college I was going. But it seems as if there were still some ill feelings remaining from back about 8 or 9 months earlier and my request for early discharge was disallowed. The request came back with the notation to the effect that my enlistment date was November 5, 1952 and my expiration date will be November 4, 1956 and not one-day sooner!

Anyway, on the night of November 3, 1956 a great party was held for me by my buddies and friends, some of which I never met! Somehow I broke my big toe and was not aware of it until the fog and haze lifted the next morning and I was go-

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ing through the ritual of being let out the door. I was really concerned that I wouldn't be discharged with my toe all swelled up and black and blue. I couldn't hide the limp and knew some Doctor or Corpsman would stumble on to my ailment, but everyone was too concerned about where my blanket and pillow was! Which caused me to make a trip back to Arlington, Virginia barracks where I retrieved them. Then I had to have my mustering out pay voucher changed because mileage was paid to Spokane, Washington rather to my hometown, which I had put down. It seems that the mileage is paid either to your place of enlistment or your hometown and mine was to my place of enlistment. Since the difference in this case was only a couple of dollars (in the Navy's favor) I was willing to overlook it and get on with it, but no it all had to be changed and a new voucher made out etc. In the end I was granted my "separation" (remember in those days we were obligated to 8 years of service) and since I had only served **EXACTLY** 4 years of active duty I still had 4 years of reserve duty to serve before I was officially discharged! Then and only then was I able to get into my little 1952 Chevrolet Deluxe Convertible and head for Moses Lake, Washington.

The trip back to Moses Lake is another story, maybe for another time!

Charles Karp:

When I separated from the Navy, there was no big deal made of it. Since I was on a surface ship, all of the papers and new ID were made on the ship.

Before separation, being a PO, I was able to have a lot of my belongings shipped home by a moving company. Before I left, I did a couple of favors for the Commissary lead, and in return, he filled a cooler with meats, fruits and that kind of thing for my trip home. I also packed a sleeping bag and a nylon hammock to use during the nights to sleep in. I did my driving in a VW bug and traveled up

the west coast and then east on US 2 through Glacier National Park, where I spent several days.

My dad met me at the door and shook my hand and congratulated me...something I know was hard for him, because he rarely does that kind of thing.

No one made a big deal of anything; the day after I got home, there was a Father's Day celebration at an uncle's house in the Twin Cities. The relatives really didn't say anything either.

All of my classmates from high school were long gone to other places, so I went ahead and enrolled at the University of Minnesota for the fall quarter. And life went on.

Phil Millhollon:

I was discharged in late June of 1972. When I was scheduled to be discharged we were on the Gun Line off of the coast of Viet Nam. This meant that I would have been transferred to a carrier at sea, and then flown off of the carrier. However, the ship needed some repairs done, so we pulled back into our home port in Yokosuka, Japan.

The night before I was to fly out, I finished cleaning out the Logroom (the engineering dept. office) and loaded up my seabag. I thought that I would go into town and have a couple of beers with some friends before turning in for the night. As I was walking down the street towards one of our favorite bars, a Shore Patrol van pulled up. I could see a sailor in the back pointing towards me. A Shore Patrol petty officer got out and said that I needed to go back to the base with them because the guy in the back said that I had started a fight at one of the clubs. Needless to say, I was shocked, and I could just envision myself being stuck in Japan because a drunk sailor said I had started a fight which apparently had damaged some bar and broke a few noses in the process.

After talking with the Shore Patrol for a few minutes, told him my story...showed him my hands which clearly did not show any signs of be-

ing in a fight, plus I had not been drinking, he sent me on my way. I took that as a sign that it just wasn't my night. I went back to the ship and got a good night's sleep. I don't remember much of the rest of the trip except for flying over San Francisco (my home), seeing the Golden Gate Bridge and then landing at SFO where my girl friend met me.

No big celebrations...no parades...just glad to be home.

Alan Rose:

In my year and a half on the Gurke I don't remember there being a celebration for anyone who was discharged from our division. There may have been private celebrations off base, but I was a minor and couldn't enter bars. In my case, when my discharge date was approaching I got transferred to a Naval training ship because the Gurke was preparing for another WestPac Cruise. I was on the USS Halsey Powell for a couple months and then it was time to go home. My celebration amounted to just saying goodbye to a few people. I wouldn't have wanted it any other way.

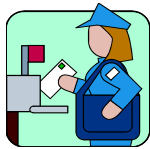
QUESTION FOR THE NEXT ISSUE

Who was one of your favorite officers when you served on the Gurke and why if you wish to elaborate.

Let's hear from all of you on this question for the next newsletter. Send responses to Karen at karen@mrlsinc.com or the mailing address on page eight.

DOG DAYS OF SUMMER

Hot summer days are called "dog days" because of the star Sirius, often called the "Dog Star." The Dog Star rises in early summer, and in the early 16th century, its heavenly ascent became the explanation behind the hot, sultry days of summer.



MAIL CALL

Dear Ms. Hoyle,

I have reunited by e-mail and one reunion with the wardroom officers of 1957-1959. One of them, Al Gauvin, is in your last newsletter. Dick Meaux, who was an Ensign with me when we boarded Gurke, retired from the Navy as Captain of a submarine. I knew he would be a great success and he is still a wonderful person. We lost our Captain of those days, CDR Norton, who surely was one of the finest gentlemen I have ever served under or would care to. He was sympathetic, but firm, and was concerned and interested in every crew member, from Mess Cook to XO. He is missed.

Continued success with your reunions. I am afraid my physical irritations will prevent my attending any, but I will be there in spirit.

Wishing you following seas, always,
Clark Wright, Supply Officer, USS Gurke 1957-59

Dear Karen,

Enclosed is notice of recent death of our shipmate (plank owner), Ivo John Hoemann, who passed away on April 24, 2008. He was also one of our Lifetime paid crewmembers. This notice was received from the family.

Submitted by **Frank Hickam**

Ivo John Hoemann

Ivo was born on a farm near New Haven, Missouri on August 16, 1922. He was baptized and confirmed at Ebenezer Lutheran Church, Leslie (Port Hudson), Missouri. Ivo died in Christ on April 24, 2008.

Ivo served in the US Navy from October 1944 through June 1946 as a plank owner on the USS Gurke.

Having lived in Maplewood for 50 years, Ivo was a member of Concordia Lutheran Church in Maplewood for 50 years, serving in many volunteer jobs. He was a 60 year member of the American Legion, serving in the local Post 103, District and Department. In

the community, Ivo received "the Maplewood Citizen of the Year Award." He served with Meals on Wheels and kept the American flag at the local schools, etc. He was a 45-year member of The Boy Scouts, Wood Badge Member who received scouting's "Silver Beaver" award.

Ivo retired from General Motors with 36 years as a Tool & Die maker.

Ivo married Nelda (Hoch) on January 17, 1947. He leaves a family of two sons, Darrell (Kathryn), Keith (Marilyn), three grandchildren: Neil, Stephanie, Craig Hoemann, one sister and one brother.

Ivo was a friend to many and will be greatly missed by all.

Attention Shipmates 1953 Korean Cruise,

Regards my VA claim for hearing loss, right ear and tinnitus in both ears. Anyone recall hearing about or observing this incident in 1953?

According to the USS Gurke DD 783 Cruise Log of 1953, in six months in Korea we expended 2,365 rounds of 5" shells and an uncounted number of 40 m/m shells and were fired on eight (8) times resulting in general quarters and manning and firing of all guns.

As we cruised up and down the coast of Korea for Call Fire Support of targets of opportunity and counter battery, we used 5" mount 53, the mount on the stern. If we got counter battery, we turned directly away from the shoreline providing the smallest target and commenced firing over the stern to suppress the counter battery.

I was going aft on the starboard side and mount 53 was trained forward. We kept the mount moving so the enemy would know we were manned and ready to return fire if required. As I got back to the ladder going up to the 40 M/M gun deck where the 3-quad 40 M/M were located.

Mount 53 salvoed—fired both guns—and this knocked me off the ladder. I went flat on my back and got the wind knocked out of me. I

was trying to get up and catch my breath and they fired again. Two of my shipmates helped me up and we went forward. I could not hear for a while and had ringing in my ears and I believe some hearing loss in my right ear. There was no report of this incident as it was business as usual on a 4 on—8 off Condition II schedule. There was no doctor on board, only pharmacist's mates.

I subsequently got discharged in 1954 and attempted to join the Naval Reserves at the US Naval Station, Alameda, CA in 1956 or 1957. I was rejected due to my hearing loss in both ears.

I have lived with my hearing loss and ringing in my right ear for all these years. I believe my hearing is getting worse and the ringing (tinnitus-like birds chirping) is always present, but I've become used to it.

Shipmates, if any of you have any info on this incident, please **call me at 509-736-3984**. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Vince Cortes GM2/c 1953

NOTE EXPIRATION DATE ON ADDRESS LABEL

Please check the address label on your envelope or the top of your e-mail for your dues expiration date. If it is past, this is the last issue of the newsletter you will receive until dues are paid again. **Send dues to Frank Hickam, 25 Harlech Dr, Wilmington, DE 19807. Make checks to USS Gurke DD-783 Reunion Assoc., Inc. Dues are \$10 for 1 yr or \$50 lifetime.**

USS GURKE (DD-783) REUNION

MAY 28-31, 2009

RAPID CITY, SD

HOTEL ALEX JOHNSON



WELCOME MAT

The USS GURKE takes great pleasure in announcing that the following shipmates have been located since the last newsletter. Welcome Aboard! We hope to see you at the next reunion and that you will become active in the association.

Francis Nichols
(1950-51) CS2 S Div
515 Elm St
Tehachapi, CA 93561
661-822-4092

Gary Jagels
(1974)STG3 W/D Div
1173 Park Ave
Alameda, CA 94501
510-522-1974
jagelsfam@almamedanet.net



TAPS

The Gurke Newsletter was informed of the deaths of the following former crewmembers since the last newsletter. The entire crew extends our deepest sympathy to the families and friends of the deceased.

Ivo Hoemann
(1944-46) WT3 Steam Eng
Died April 24, 2008

Clarence Cook
(1951-53) BM3 Deck
Date of death not reported

Anyone learning of the death of a former crewmember please notify the newsletter so their passing can be acknowledged in TAPS and on the Honor Roll at the reunion memorial service.

HOW TO SIMULATE BEING A SAILOR

1. Buy a steel dumpster, paint it gray inside and out, and live in it for six months.
2. Run all the pipes and wires in your house exposed on the walls.
3. Repaint your entire house every month.
4. Renovate your bathroom. Build a wall across the middle of the bathtub and move the shower head to chest level. When you take showers, make sure you turn off the water while you soap down.
5. Put lube oil in your humidifier and set it on high.
6. Once a week, blow compressed air up your chimney, making sure the wind carries the soot onto your neighbor's house. Ignore his complaints.
7. Raise the thresholds and lower the headers of your front and back doors so that you either trip or bang your head every time you pass through them.
8. Once a month, take all major appliances apart and then reassemble them.
9. Disassemble and inspect your lawn mower every week.
10. On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, turn your water heater temperature up to 200 degrees. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, turn the water heater off. On Saturdays and Sundays tell your family they used too much water during the week, so no bathing will be allowed.
11. Raise your bed to within 6 inches of the ceiling, so you can't turn over without getting out and then getting back in.
12. Sleep on the shelf in your closet. Replace the closet door with a curtain. Have your spouse whip open the curtain about 3 hours after you go to sleep, shine a flashlight in your eyes, and say, "Sorry, wrong rack."
13. Make your family qualify to operate each appliance in your house-dishwasher operator, blender technician, etc.
14. Have your neighbor come over each day at 5 am, blow a whistle so

loud Helen Keller could hear it, and shout, "Reveille!"

15. Have your mother-in-law write down everything she's going to do the following day, then have her make you stand in your backyard at 6 am while she reads it to you.

16. Submit a request chit to your father-in-law requesting permission to leave your house before 3 pm.

17. Empty all the garbage bins in your house and sweep the driveway three times a day, whether it needs it or not.

18. Have your neighbor collect all your mail for a month, read your magazines, and randomly lose every 5th item before delivering it to you.

19. Watch no TV except for movies played in the middle of the night. Have your family vote on which movie to watch, then show a different one.

20. When your children are in bed, run into their room with a megaphone shouting that your home is under attack and ordering them to their battle stations.

21. Make your family menu ahead of time without consulting the pantry or refrigerator.

22. Post a menu on the kitchen door informing your family that they are having steak for dinner. Then make them wait in line for an hour. When they finally get to the kitchen, tell them you are out of steak, but they can have dried ham or hot dogs. Repeat daily until they ignore the menu and just ask for hot dogs.

23. Bake a cake. Prop up one side of the pan so the cake bakes unevenly. Spread icing real thick to level it off.

24. Get up every night around midnight and have a peanut butter and jelly sandwich on stale bread.

25. Set your alarm clock to go off at random during the night. At the alarm, jump up and dress as fast as you can, making sure to button your top shirt button and tuck your

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pants into your socks. Run out into the backyard and uncoil the garden hose.

26. Every week or so, throw your cat or dog in the pool and shout, "Man overboard port side!" Rate your family members on how fast they respond.

27. Put the headphones from your stereo on your head, but don't plug them in. Hang a paper cup around your neck on a string. Stand in front of the stove, and speak into the paper cup, "Stove manned and ready." After an hour or so, speak into the cup again, "Stove secured." Roll up the headphones and paper cup and stow them in a shoebox.

28. Place a podium at the end of your driveway. Have your family stand watches at the podium, rotating at 4 hour intervals. This is best done when the weather is worst. January is a good time.

29. When there is a thunderstorm in your area, get a wobbly rocking chair, sit in it and rock as hard as you can until you become nauseous. Make sure to have a supply of stale crackers in your shirt pocket.

30. For former engineers: bring your lawn mower into the living room, and run it all day long.

31. Make coffee using eighteen scoops of budget priced coffee grounds per pot, and allow the pot to simmer for 5 hours before drinking.

32. Have someone under the age of ten give you a haircut with sheep shears.

33. Sew the back pockets of your jeans on the front.

34. Every couple of weeks, dress up in your best clothes and go to the scummiest part of town. Find the most run down, trashiest bar, and drink beer until you are hammered. Then walk all the way home.

35. Lock yourself and your family in the house for six weeks. Tell them that at the end of the 6th week you are going to take them to Disney World for "liberty." At the end of the 6th week, inform them the trip to Disney World has been canceled because they need to get ready for inspection, and it will be another week before they can leave the house.

COORDINATOR'S COLUMN BY ED ELLIS

I realize you have not heard from me lately in the newsletters, but I have been very busy getting a new prosthesis and taking Physical Therapy twice a week in Omaha which basically shoots the whole day. Some of you guys would get a kick out of my one therapist as she gets right up in the middle of my back and is trying to straighten up my shoulders and help my balance. They have taught me so much and I now can walk up and down steps and walk up and down ramps like a normal person. But I have been thinking of all of you and looking forward to next May in Rapid City. Our son went to college there so it will be great to go back and see everything again. Also, Rapid City has very interesting out of the way places to visit right in the city for those who wish to nose around the city. I hope everyone is well and Jan and I are really looking forward to seeing you all again.

Ed Ellis, President
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STATEMENT OF PUBLICATION

The Gurke Newsletter is the official publication of the *USS GURKE* Association. From now on it will be published quarterly in February, May, August and November, *subject to receiving sufficient funding*. The Newsletter is funded by voluntary contributions from the membership. All members are encouraged to support the voice of the *GURKE*. A financial statement appears in each issue of the newsletter. In the event there is insufficient funding for a regularly scheduled issue, all funds received will accumulate until the next regularly scheduled quarterly issue. Out of sequence issues will not be published merely to "catch-up."

The newsletter is intended to be a vehicle for the members to express opinions, make suggestions and **especially share experiences.**

Unless otherwise stated, the views and opinions printed in the newsletter are those of the article's writer, and do not necessarily represent the opinion of the Association leadership or the Editor of the Newsletter.

All letters and stories submitted will be considered for publication, except unsigned letters will not be published. Letters requesting the writer's name be withheld will be honored, but published on a space available basis. Signed letters with no restrictions will be given priority.

Letters demeaning to another shipmate will not be printed; letters espousing a political position will not be printed.

The editor reserves the right to edit letters to conform to space limitations and grammar.

ML&RS, Inc. is not responsible for the accuracy of articles submitted for publication. It would be a monumental task to check each story. Therefore, we rely on the author to research each article.

You are encouraged to actively participate in the newsletter family by submitting your stories and suggestions.