

# THE MESSENGER

Volume 16 Issue 3

July 2009

## OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF USS MARIAS, USS CADMUS, USS AMPHION, USS ARCADIA



USS MARIAS



USS CADMUS



USS AMPHION



USS ARCADIA

### Special Points of Interest

- See what your fellow shipmates wrote as the funniest thing that happened in the Navy. Our cover articles have their stories.
- Bill Crutchfield shares an incident from the 2009 reunion regarding Smokey, complete with a picture. See page 2.
- Eight new names appear in Welcome Mat on page three. If you recognize one of them, get in touch with him.
- Learn about our newest Navy ship, the USS George H. W. Bush CVN 77, on page four.
- Veteran's with Lou Gehrig's disease can now get help. See page four.
- Dates for the 2010 reunion are on page four. Make your plans now.

### HUMOROUS HAPPENINGS IN THE NAVY

*Editor's Note: Again we asked MCAAN shipmates for help with stories for the newsletter. This time we asked for funny stories that happened in the Navy. Here are the responses:*

#### MR3 Bill Thompson:

I had just purchased a new pair of boots from the Exchange and shortly thereafter, noticed that the whole front end—from the ball to toe tip was falling off! I was really annoyed, especially when you only made \$232/month or thereabouts. At the time, I had been working in the scullery aboard the Marias circa 1970 and was out at sea, when the front finally fell off. I was scraping a tray and noticed that a guy had not finished his steak. I

looked at my foot and looked at the steak—a perfect match. I tied the steak to the boot and polished the cord with black boot polish. I wore it that way for about a month when at Quarters one morning at sea, my Chief just happened to look at my shoes and made the comment, "Thompson, what the heck do you have on your feet!" So I told him and why—needless to say, he shook his head and ordered me to get another pair of boots. He did like my innovation but certainly wasn't regulation.

#### Dick Lemon BTCS USN (Ret):

I was aboard the USS Belknap DLG 26 in GITMO for underway

training, summer of 1970. During a "precision anchorage attempt," we dropped 60 fathoms (about 360 ft) of anchor chain exactly on the spot designated. Much "attaboys" going around the ship for doing exactly as we had been trained to do. That was short lived however, when attempting to bring the anchor back onboard. The anchor windless motor failed and would not operate. All hands were assembled on deck, including the Chiefs and Officers, to pull the anchor and chain aboard. A manila line was connected to the chain on deck and all hands pulled on the line for 6 hours before all the chain and anchor was aboard.

*(Continued on page 2)*

*(Continued from page 1)*

Never before, or after, in my Naval career, was I required to pull up an anchor.

### Francis Schmolke:

This happened one nice mid-summer day in 1960. The 1st Division was chipping and painting the side of the Cadmus while up on the quarter deck they beeped the Commander from Serveran Two aboard. Within less than a minute they beeped man-over-board. One of the seamen with poll in hand and 12 in roll was painting the side of the ship from the pier. The ship was bobbing up and down and he was right in step. The crew on the quarter deck was laughing, but the Commander said, "Get that man out of the drink." Oh, that nice and clean sea water in port!

The carrier Valley Forge tied up across from us at Pier 5. The Marines had it for helicopter exercises! They were chipping paint on the side of the ship one day. The next day they were painting it. There was a nice breeze coming in off the bay. They were smarter than the Navy. They spray painted it! So the cars on the pier were a nice dotted battleship GRAY!

Tied up at Pier 5 in New York City, the seaman was manning his watch at the head of the pier. Crews from Brooklyn Navy Yard were there to help casting off the lines while we were leaving port heading for Newport, RI. Well, the seaman on the pier was never relieved, so he got a nice ride to the Navy Yards, then a train ride up to Newport, RI.

### William (Bill) Heim, ETN3:

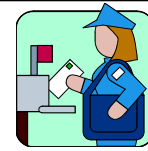
Back in 1959, the Albemarle was in Philadelphia Navy Yard for a reason which escapes me now. We were tied up across the pier from the USS Currituck AV-7, which was being decommissioned. During this time, we were receiving equipment and her stores. One of the items I

purchased from her through our ship's store was a carton of Lucky Strike "Greens" for \$1.00. For people who don't smoke, "Luckies" came in a white pack with the familiar red Bull's Eye, however, during WWII there was a shortage of quality white paper and Lucky Strikes were packed in dark green paper still with the red Bull's Eye. The American Tobacco Company advertised them as "Lucky Strike Goes to War." These cigarettes had been in Navy Ships Stores since World War III! I wish I had realized their potential collectors' value and never opened them, as they would be worth quite a bit of money today. I gave up smoking many years ago, but now and again I think of that carton of Luckies.

One other amusing story concerns that visit. The Albemarle had some amazing cooks, and the food on the ship was very good. I am a native Philadelphian and most nights I could get Liberty, however, I always waited until after evening chow. Mom's meals were good, but the ship's meals were better with a lot more variety! I never told my mother about that, instead telling her that I wanted to wait for rush hour traffic to dissipate and would just eat aboard.

### Barney Wolfson:

I was an electrician mate on the USS Arcadia and that is why I was high on the main mast to change a light bulb. While heading back down, I slipped and grabbed on to the closest thing I could find, which was a Radar antenna. When I finally was ready to find the steps again, a First Lieutenant saw me and screamed that I had better let go of the antenna. I yelled back that I was trying to save my life and that the antenna was not even turned on. He then called back that he was ready to turn it back on and if I continued to hold on to it, I would become sterile for life. I then found the fastest way down.



## MAIL CALL

**Bill Crutchfield, USS Cadmus AR14:**

### 2009 MCAAN Reunion

As I was walking through the Charleston Airport to meet my old friend Lou Demino, I spotted Francis "Smokey" Schmolke sitting with a young blond girl. As they were sitting close together "looking at pictures," my first impression was that Smokey was flirting with this young girl.

As Smokey spotted me watching them, he waved for me to come over to where they were sitting. When I got there, Smokey said, "Bill, I want you to meet Paul Ann Heih Bowlin." He said that Paul Ann's dad, Robert Bowlin, served on the USS Cadmus AD 23 and had passed away just before the San Antonio reunion. So now Paul Ann and her family come to the reunions when they can, in remembrance of her dad.

I asked Smokey why they were at the airport and he said they were there to meet Lou Demino and drive him to the Sheraton Hotel.

As I was driving back to the hotel, I was thinking that it was nice of Paul Ann to meet Lou and Smokey at the airport and drive them to the hotel. Also I was thinking maybe Smokey will get lucky next year at the reunion and meet another cute little blond girl, Good luck, Smokey. Here's a picture of Paul Ann and Smokey at the Charleston Airport.





## WELCOME MAT

The MCAAN Group proudly welcomes these recently located shipmates. Welcome aboard! We hope you will become an active member in the association by contributing both financially and with stories for the newsletter. We look forward to seeing you at a reunion.

### USS ARCADIA

**Joseph Kocik** (1963-66) SN S4 Div  
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607-723-6630  
jkocik3@stny.rr.com

### USS AMPHION

**Larry Martin** (1966-68) Fireman  
batt.chief@yahoo.com

### USS CADMUS

**William Hardifer** (1952) E-3 Fireman  
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Hamilton Sq, NJ 08690  
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**George Fitzhenry** (1969-71) SK3 S-1 Div  
2 Essex Terr  
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sk2fitz@yahoo.com

**Paul Hoskins**  
13944 US Rt 25  
Bleton, KY 41094

**USS MARIAS**  
**Charles Willbanks**  
(1957-61) Radarman 3rd Div  
616 Hooper Dr  
Ringgold, GA 30736  
706-965-3447

**Frederick Grady** (1962-65) E-3 G Div  
117 Skylark Dr  
Northford, CT 06472  
203-484-0629

**Charles Smokey**  
1465 Bryram Dr  
Clearwater, FL 33755



## TAPS

*The Messenger* learned of the following shipmates' deaths since the last newsletter. The death may not have been recent, but we just learned of it. Every member of the Association sends his heartfelt sympathy to the families and friends of the deceased.

**Larry Stauffer** (USS *Cadmus*)  
(1948-52) BM3 2nd Div  
Died October 10, 2008

**R. Gerald McAfee** (USS *Amphion*)  
Died January 20, 2009

## FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Balance from 04/09 **\$1421.10**  
Funds received since 04/09 **\$40.00**  
Funds available for 07/09 **\$1461.10**  
Funds expended for 07/09 **\$92.99**  
Balance remaining for 10/09  
**\$1368.11**

The Messenger is being mailed by USPS only to contributors and reunion attendees who do not have e-mail. All other contributors and reunion attendees will receive it by e-mail, so be sure we have your current e-mail address. You are considered a contributor if you have donated money within the last calendar year from the time of the current newsletter. Please continue to support the newsletter. Send contributions to ML&RS, Inc. at the address below.

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"Our Reunions Work So You Don't Have To"

## STATEMENT OF PUBLICATION

*The Messenger* is the official publication of the MCAAN Association. From now on it will be published quarterly in January, April, July, October, *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 Messenger*. A financial statement appears in each issue of the newsletter.

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.

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 submitter to research each article.

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

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

*A sailor was training to swim in the Olympics. He started out at the Santa Monica piers and 23 hours later he got to the Catalina Islands! It took him only 15 minutes to get back to the Santa Monica piers. His jockstrap was hung up on the pier!*

## USS GEORGE H. W. BUSH CVN 77



The first aircraft carrier to be commissioned since the USS Ronald Reagan in July 2003, the new USS George H. W. Bush CVN 77 officially joined the fleet on January 10, 2009. Named for the 41st president, the 97,000-ton aircraft carrier was commissioned into the U.S. Navy in Norfolk, Virginia. At a cost of \$6.2 billion the vessel is the 10th and last Nimitz-

class nuclear carrier.

Dorothy Bush-Koch, the former president's daughter, is the ship's sponsor. She ordered the crew to "man our ship and bring her to life." As the band played "Anchors Aweigh" the crew members ran up the gangplanks, and lined the rails as military aircraft flew overhead, including an Avenger torpedo bomber like the one the former president flew during WWII.

President George W. Bush made his last scheduled trip as president one Air Force One to attend the commissioning.

"What do you give a guy who's been blessed and has just about everything he has ever needed? Well, an aircraft carrier," the younger Bush said at the commissioning.

The warship will be permanently based in Norfolk once sea trials are complete.

Former President Bush told reporters, "My going into the Navy at a young age was probably the best thing I ever did in my life."

The USS George H. W. Bush will be home to about 6,000 Navy personnel. As of now, eleven of the Navy's thirteen aircraft carriers are nuclear powered. The ship can operate for 20 years without refueling and is capable of carrying more than 80 aircraft and can reach top speeds of 30 knots. It is estimated that the service life of the vessel will be 50 years.

Present at the ceremony also were then first lady Laura Bush, former first lady Barbara Bush, former Florida Governor Jeb Bush, then Vice President Dick Cheney, then Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, as well as other dignitaries.

The ship's commanding officer is Captain Kevin O'Flaherty and Master Chief Petty Officer Jon Port is the senior enlisted crew member.

### SHIP FACTS

- Towers 20 stories above the waterline with a 4.5-acre flight deck
- 1,092 feet long; nearly as long as the Empire State Building is tall
- Home to about 6,000 Navy personnel
- Four bronze propellers; each 21 feet across weighing more than 30 tons
- Steering accomplished by two rudders, each 29 feet by 22 feet and weighing more than 50 tons
- Four high speed aircraft elevators, each more than 4,000 square feet, bring planes to the flight deck from the hangar below
- Enough food and supplies to operate for 90 days: 18,150 meals served daily
- Distillation plants providing 400,000 gallons of fresh water from sea water daily, enough for 2,000 homes
- Nearly 30,000 light fixtures and 1,600 miles of cable and wiring
- 1,400 telephones, 14,000 pillowcases and 28,000 sheets

## HELP FOR VETERANS WITH LOU GEHRIG'S DISEASE

On September 23, 2008, Lou Gehrig's disease, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, was made a presumptive condition for all veterans who served in our armed forces for at least 90 days.

This means that widows of those veterans who died of Lou Gehrig's disease in years past are eligible for the VA widow's monthly benefit, which is very substantial. Many people are not aware that a veteran's death due to this disease is now considered service-connected. One claim recently involved an ALS death 46 years ago, in 1963.

Fred Campbell, American Ex-Prisoners of War

## 2010 MCAAN REUNION

APRIL 29—MAY 2

PHILADELPHIA, PA

MARRIOTT PHILADELPHIA AIRPORT HOTEL

- Top speed exceeds 30 knots
- Powered by two nuclear reactors that can operate for more than 20 years without refueling
- Expected to operate as Navy warship for about 50 years
- Typical *Nimitz*-class ship carries 80-plus combat aircraft
- Three two-inch diameter arresting wires on the deck bring an airplane going 150 miles per hour to a stop in less than 400 feet
- Motto: *Freedom at Work*