

September 2019



# Lake Charles Times

## **PRESIDENT'S NEWSLETTER**

Dear USS Savage Reunion Association members, families and friends:

My name is Mike Burkhart. My father, John J. Burkhart, GM1c, served proudly aboard the USS Savage from 1943-1946 and I am honored to celebrate his service in the United States Coast Guard by being a member of your distinguished group. I am married to Kimberly and have four children, Adam, Chelsea, Macie and Noelle and three siblings, Kathleen, Patrick and John. My wife, and each of my siblings and children share my passion for preserving the history of the USS Savage and the friendships we have formed. I am pleased to have served for the past two years as the Vice President of the USS Savage Reunion Group and am excited to now serve as President. I serve alongside some amazing USS Savage Reunion Group leaders and am excited about what we can do in the future to bring even more information to you about the history of the USS Savage and our reunion events in the future.

In service to you, I am joined by a wonderful team of people who will be working to bring more news and information to you through this newsletter and other means of communication. The leadership team for 2019-2020 consists of Pat Rego, Vice President, Wendy Vanderburg, Secretary, Tom Hendricks, Treasurer, Ray Ewing, Historian and Dan Dykstra, Chaplain.



I want to thank all the people who worked so hard to assure that the reunion in Hawaii was such a memorable experience. Specifically, great appreciation goes to Ed and Ginny Stone as well as

Dick and Linda Geiermann. These four people worked tirelessly to make sure every detail of the trip was amazing, and it was! More information is included below.

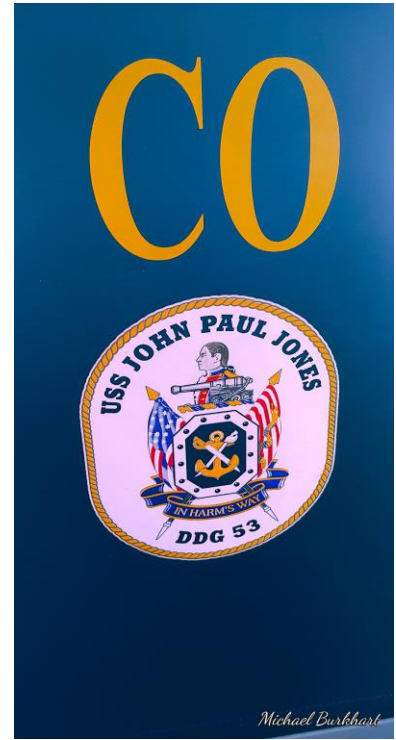
As we begin this new year of working for you, all of us on the team will be looking for additional and innovative ways to bring interesting information to you about the USS Savage, our members and veterans issues. We hope to hear from you and to field your suggestions and questions. Also, we look forward to seeing you next year at the 2020 Reunion in Columbus, Georgia!

## **USS Savage Reunion in Hawaii**

What an amazing time everyone had in Hawaii! The 2019 USS Savage Reunion was held in Honolulu, Hawaii in August and was attended by over 30 people, including USS Savage members and their families. The activities and meals planned were wonderful and provided numerous opportunities for bonding, remembrance of our members who could not attend this year as well as those who have gone before us. The attendees enjoyed an authentic Hawaiian Luau, a tour of the beautiful island of Oahu, a tour of the USS Missouri as well as the USS John Paul Jones and a private boat tour of Pearl Harbor and the USS Arizona. A very personal and moving ceremony was led by our Chaplain Dan Dykstra for the dearly departed members of the USS Savage at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (informally known as Punchbowl Cemetery). Each name from WWII, The Cold War and Vietnam was read aloud and reflected upon by all present. The ceremony was adorned by a truly elegant wreath that symbolized everyone's pride in the service of all who have served aboard the USS Savage. The week wrapped up with our annual meeting and celebration dinner. Numerous great memories were made and everyone left the island even closer as a group than when we arrived. Many thanks to Ed and Ginny Stone as well as Dick and Linda Geiermann who coordinated such a wonderful week. Here are just a few pictures of the week that you may enjoy. Be sure to visit this link, generously provided by Ed Stone to view even more pictures of the reunion: <https://flic.kr/s/aHsmGonC7x>







## **USS Savage Reunion in Columbus Georgia, July 2020**

We are pleased to announce that a site has been selected for the 2020 USS Savage Reunion. Thanks to the ongoing work of Jim and Gail Murphey, our 2020 Reunion Hosts, we will be gathering and enjoying the sights and events of Columbus, Georgia. The week of July 13, 2020 has been selected for reunion activities and our meeting. As the team works with Jim and Gail to assist in the planning, we will be sharing additional information about the trip and how you can make your reservations. Please mark this week off on your calendar as your next opportunity to gather with us and share remembrances of your time on the Savage!

## News to Share...

### **Diane Day Awarded**

For anyone who has been part of the USS Savage group for a while, you most likely know the amazing work Ms. Diane Day has done and shared with each of us through her development and maintenance of the [www.usssavage.org](http://www.usssavage.org) website. The website is how I, and probably many of you became aware of the existence of our reunion group. Diane has been working on this site for many years and it now contains over 400 hundred pages of information and historical references about the Savage, her journeys and crew. It was a great honor to be present in Hawaii while Ernie Velez, USS Savage Reunion Group President shared with us a plaque and commemorative coin that was to be sent to Diane celebrating her unmatched contributions to the preservation of the USS Savage's history. So Diane, again from all of us who have enjoyed the collection of information you have assembled and admire your passion to preserve the memory of your father, Gerald Day, QM1c, we thank you and appreciate you.

### **Commemorative Coin for 2019 Reunion**

Finally, a word of thanks to Ernie Velez for his hard work and leadership during his time as President of the USS Savage Reunion Group. Ernie is a great friend and I admire him for his shared insight and wisdom with me about the role, but mostly for his friendship. Ernie had a wonderful idea for this year's reunion, a commemorative coin memorializing our trip to Hawaii. I thought I would share a photo of the coin with you.

