

USS Washtenaw County Veterans Association

Quarterly Newsletter

Second Quarter 2022

Annual Dues. It's not too late! Our Treasurer will be happy to still receive your dues. Reminder, our annual dues were to be paid during March. The amount remains at \$25, payment of which qualifies one to be a Regular Member. Only Regular Members are allowed to vote during the association's Business Meetings.

Checks are to be made out to Washtenaw County Veterans Association, and mailed to our Treasurer – David Vicknair, 42472 Evangeline Drive, Hammond, LA 70403.

Reunion summary. Monday 9/26 – early check-in, free day. Per previous reunions, attendees at this point will probably gather for informal group dinners in town. Tuesday 9/27 – complete check-in, free day. Evening Meet-and-Greet. Wednesday 9/28 – Day trip via chartered bus to Colonial Williamsburg (options range from walking the grounds at no charge to a deluxe admission fee, currently \$46.99 adult, \$25.99 youth 6-12. There is a 25% discount for military retirees and veterans. Check the CW website for details). Evening free. Thursday 9/29 – Board meeting during afternoon. Early evening will feature Association Business Meeting and then traditional silent auction. Banquet and dancing will follow. Friday 9/30 – Hospitality Room secures at noon. Check-outs begin. Members remaining at hotel will have a free day.

A detailed "Plan of the Day" will be issued soon.

Tourist Sites. Here is a list of potential sites of interest around the Norfolk area. I pulled this info off of Google:

- MacArthur Center Mall – 70+ shops and restaurants. Eighteen-screen cinema.
- USS Wisconsin floating museum.
- Nauticus Museum (next to Wisconsin's berth)
- Hampton Roads Maritime Museum (with Nauticus)
- Mariners Museum and Park (Newport News, a drive from Norfolk)
- Chrysler Museum
- Norfolk Botanical Gardens
- Hermitage Museum and Gardens
- Hunter House
- Moses Myers House (weekends only)
- Fort Norfolk
- Yorktown Battlefield Visitors Center (a drive from Norfolk city)
- Art Gallery at York Hall (a drive).

Marriott's Courtyard Norfolk Downtown. Our reunion site in September (on Plume Street – not to be confused with the Waterside Marriott on East Main Street) features:

- 24 hour Business Center
- Free WIFI
- Gift Shop
- Laundry

- Lobby Starbucks.
- Lobby Bistro Restaurant
- Convenience Center
- Indoor swimming pool
- Whirlpool Spa
- Fitness Center

USS Wisconsin (BB-64). She is now the highlite of the Norfolk waterfront, a floating museum open to the public. Admission is \$15.95, but seniors 55+ receive a \$1.00 discount and veterans receive a \$3.00 discount.

Her WWII history was all too brief. Our last numbered battleship. Commissioned April 1944, Wisconsin reported to the Pacific Fleet on October 2 1944. Following a series of training maneuvers off California and Hawaii, she reported to the WESTPAC 3rd Fleet on December 9, 1944. From then BB-64 operated with the Aircraft Carrier task forces – as an anti-aircraft escort - against Japanese targets in the Philippines, Taiwan, Mainland China, Hong Kong, and Vietnam. These operations lasted throughout January 1945, and secured the South China Sea for the US Navy.

Starting in February the fleet turned its attention towards Japan itself. Wisconsin supported attacks on Mainland Japan, on Iwo Jima, and Okinawa. She was able to defend against kamikaze attacks near Okinawa. Fleet operations there ended in June.

Wisconsin’s final offensive operations against mainland Japan took place during July and August. Together with sister battleships she bombarded targets along the Japanese coastline.

Once Japan surrendered, Wisconsin joined sister ship Missouri at Tokyo Bay a few days after the famous signing ceremony, September 2. Remarkably BB-64 was unscathed during combat operations. Departing WESTPAC on September 23, she arrived in San Francisco on October 15. BB-64 finally arrived at her homeport Norfolk VA on January 18, 1946.

Light Amphibious Warship (LAWS). The Navy/Marine Corps team had planned to have this new warship under contract by now. But during the past two years the Navy’s budget restrictions have not allowed the program to advance. The earliest possible steps forward now appear to be FY2025. In the meantime, Marine units are employing similar size/capable commercial ships (surrogates) to test their proposed concepts and tactics.

Trivia. Most of us will remember the traditional Navy “watch system”. And probably not very fondly! Underway or inport, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

- From midnight to 0400, there was the **Midwatch**.
- 0400 – 0800, the **Morning Watch**.
- The **Forenoon Watch** was next, 0800 - noon.
- The **Afternoon Watch** ran from noon – 4 pm (1600).
- There were two watches between 4 and 8 pm (2000): the **First Dog Watch** 1600– 1800. The **Second Dog Watch** 1800 – 2000. This schedule permitted watch teams to eat their evening meal.
- Finally, the day was rounded out by the **Evening Watch**, 2000 – midnight.

Sincerely, Chris Nintzel, Secretary

