

FALL 2013



## IT TAKES A FIRST CLASS FIGHTING MAN TO MAN A SHIP THAT IS CALLED BATAAN

*God Bless America*

### JOHN MCCAIN'S REMARKS ABOUT THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE!

In light of the recent appeals court ruling in California, with respect to the Pledge of Allegiance, the following recollection from Senator John McCain is very appropriate:

As you may know, I spent five and one half years as a prisoner of war during the Vietnam War. In the early years of our imprisonment, the NVA kept us in solitary confinement, or two or three to a cell. In 1971 the NVA moved us from these conditions of isolation into large rooms with as many as 30 to 40 men to a room.

This was, as you can imagine, a wonderful change and was a direct result of the efforts of millions of Americans on behalf of a few hundred POWs 10,000 miles from home.

One of the men who moved into my room was a young man named Mike Christian. Mike came from a small town near Selma, Alabama. He didn't wear a pair of shoes until he was 13 years old. At 17, he enlisted in the US Navy. He later earned a commission by going to Officer Training School. Then he became a Naval Flight Officer and was shot down and captured in 1967. Mike had a keen and deep appreciation of the opportunities this country and our military provide for people who want to work and want to succeed.

As part of the change in treatment, the Vietnamese allowed some prisoners to receive packages from home. In some of these packages were handkerchiefs, scarves and other items of clothing. Mike got himself a bamboo needle.

Over a period of a couple of months, he created an American flag and sewed on the inside of his shirt. Every afternoon, before we had a bowl of soup, we would hang Mike's shirt on the wall of the cell and say the Pledge of Allegiance.

I know the Pledge of Allegiance may not seem the most important part of our day now, but I can assure you that in that dark cell it was indeed a most important and meaningful event.

One day the Vietnamese searched our cell, as they did periodically, and discovered Mike's shirt with the flag sewn inside, and removed it.

That evening they returned, opened the door of the cell, and for the benefit of all of us, beat Mike Christian severely for the next couple of hours. Then they opened the door of the cell and threw him in. We cleaned him up as well as we could.

The cell in which we lived had a concrete slab in the middle on which we slept. Four naked light bulbs hung in each corner of the room.

As I said, we tried to clean up Mike as well as we could. After the excitement had died down, I looked in the corner of the room, and sitting there beneath that dim light bulb with a piece of red cloth, another shirt and his bamboo needle, was my friend, Mike Christian. He was sitting there with his eyes almost shut from the beating he had received, making another American flag. He was not making the flag because it made Mike Christian feel better. He was making that flag because he knew how important it was to us to be able to pledge our allegiance to our flag and our country.

So the next time you say the Pledge of Allegiance, you must never forget the sacrifice and courage that thousands of Americans have made to build our nation and promote freedom around the world. You must remember our duty, our honor, and our country.

"I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

Why was the above placed in this newsletter — well, I had received a few e-mails from members of our organization with this identical "PLEDGE" from Senator John McCain of Arizona and a survivor of years of imprisonment by the Vietnamese. Regardless of what your political affiliations are, this man was and still is, along with every RED BLOODY AMERICAN SERVICE PERSON, a HERO. Crazy things are happening in our public schools today as well as with our elected government officials. Gone is the "Pledge Of Allegiance" in many schools, Prayer before the start of Congressional Meetings, Removal of the word "GOD" in many public places, Removal of the "TEN COMMANDMENTS" on the public buildings, etc, etc.

What can we, as a military organization, do to maintain the style that we fought and died for? If you have suggestions — please let me know and I will put as many as possible in our next newsletter.

THE FOLLOWING IS WHAT HAD HAPPENED THAT NEARLY COST ME MY TEACHING CAREER:



IN THE BEGINNING OF THE SCHOOL YEAR, THE TEACHERS PASS TO THE STUDENTS LUNCH CARDS. THESE CARDS ALLOW FOR FREE, OR PARTIAL PAID LUNCHES. TO START THE DAY, WE STAND AND PLEDGE TO OUR FLAG AND STAND FOR A MOMENT OF SILENT MEDITATION. IT HAPPENED THAT TWO YOUNG GIRLS WOULD NOT STAND NOR WOULD THEY PLEDGE TO THE FLAG. . I MUST HAVE RAVED FOR TWO PLUS MINUTES -- THAT WAS THE LAST TIME I SAW THE TWO GIRLS UNTIL I WAS CALLED TO THE PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE AND TOLD THAT THE GIRLS REFUSED TO COME TO SCHOOL BECAUSE OF ME AND THAT I MUST ALLOW THEM THE "RIGHT" TO REFRAME FROM PLEDGING OUR FLAG. I REFUSED AND SAID THAT THIS WILL GO TO THE NEWSPAPER AND I WILL GET LEGAL HELP FROM THE AMERICAN LEGION.

(cont on page 3)

Little did I know that this was going to become a problem -- all that I expected was that the two girls stand, recite the pledge, and bow their heads for a moment of silent meditation. I was wrong -- the next day I was again called to the office and told that I must allow the girls their constitutional rights and that I should not frighten them to the point that they refused to go to school. I told the principal that I would not allow the girls in my room during the opening exercises, and that I would contact the American Legion and ask for their legal advice. Next day, same thing -- called to the office and told that I had to allow the girls into my room -- I told him that I will "stick to my guns" -- (I did talk to a friend who was an officer in the American Legion Post that I was a member -- he told me that upon discussion with the legion legal council, I was 100% wrong, and that I had to allow the girls back into my room and that they, the girls did not have to stand and say the pledge to our flag -- all this said, they will still send a legal representative to represent me).

Next day another visit to the office -- this time things were different -- I was told that the girls must be allowed back into my room, and, they will stand for the pledge to the flag, but, they do not have to say the words; this is all that I wanted. I was not fired from my job, and to make things on a happier note, the girls stayed about one month and then transferred to another school.

### **The secretary of the Navy takes pleasure in commending**

**CLARENCE LINWOOD DECKER  
BOATSWAIN'S MATE SECOND CLASS  
UNITED STATES NAVY**

### **For service set forth in the following**

#### **CITATION:**

**"For heroism in assisting in the rescue of a shipmate from a bomb storage compartment on board the U.S.S. BATAAN on 22 November 1950. Learning that a gunner's mate was overcome by anoxemia upon entering an unventilated bomb storage compartment and, losing consciousness, was in danger of being asphyxiated, DECKER unhesitatingly rushed to the scene without stopping to obtain rescue breathing apparatus for his own protection, aware of the need for prompt action, he entered the contaminated space and assisted by a shipmate, succeeded in removing his stricken comrade to safety. By his quick initiative and courage in risking his life to help save that of another, DECKER upheld the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service.**

**A copy of this citation has been made a part of DECKER'S official record and he is hereby authorized to wear the Commendation Ribbon.**

#### **Copy to:**

**PubInfo, BuPers (2)  
Pers-B421  
All Hands**

**/s/ Dan A. Kimball  
Secretary of the Navy**



Clarence L. Decker Receiving Heroism Commendation, 1951



Heroism Medal

The award that was given to Clancy is difficult to read, but, with a little time and a good hand lens, it is easily distinguishable. The Commanding Officer that is pinning the Heroism Medal onto Clancy is Captain William Miller.

(If anyone knows of a former CREW member of the USS BATAAN CVL29 that has received a commendation for a feat that was done while aboard the Bataan -- please let me know and I will add same to our newsletters -- please include story and photographs if available).

## "Bravo Zulu

The term originates from the Allied Signals Book (ATP 1), which in the aggregate is for official use only. Signals are sent as letters and/or numbers, which have meanings by themselves sometimes or in certain combinations. A single table in ATP 1 is called "governing groups," that is, the entire signal that follows the governing group is to be performed according to the "governor." The letter "B" indicates this table, and the second letter (A through Z) gives more specific information. For example, "BA" might mean "You have permission to . . . (do whatever the rest of the flashing light, flag hoist or radio transmission says)" "BZ" happens to be the last item in the governing groups table. It means "well done".

**And so -- a BRAVO ZULU to the USS BATAAN LHD5 AND TO IT'S CREW !!**



NAVY UNIT COMMENDATION -- THREE AWARDS  
 MERITORIOUS UNIT COMMENDATION  
 BATTLE EFFICIENCY AWARD -- FOUR AWARDS  
 NAVY EXPEDITIONARY MEDAL -- TWO AWARDS  
 ARMED FORCES EXPEDITIONARY MEDAL  
 GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM EXPEDITIONARY MEDAL  
 HUMANITARIAN SERVICE MEDAL  
 SEA SERVICE DEPLOYMENT -- FIVE AWARDS



Sweepers - "Sweepers, Sweepers, man your brooms. Give the ship a good clean sweep down both fore and aft! Sweep down all lower decks, ladder backs and passageways!"





HOTEL -- **THE GRAND PLAZA** ; 245 NORTH WILDWOOD DRIVE; CALL FOR RESERVATION @ - 1-800-850-6646 (MUST MENTION USS BATAAN REUNION IN ORDER TO GET SPECIAL ROOM RATE OF \$84.00 PLUS TAX)

RV & TRAILER PARKING --CLOSEST PARK IS **MUSICLAND KAMPGROUND'** IT IS ONE-HALF MILE FROM THE HOTEL -- 417-334-0848; **KOA** WOULD BE THE NEXT CLOSEST 417-334-4414, TWO MILES FROM HOTEL.

AIRPORTS -- **BRANSON AIRPORT, BKG** -- FLIES FRONTIER AND SOUTHWEST AIRLINES --GO TO [www.flybranson.com](http://www.flybranson.com) AND THAT WILL TELL YOU EVERYTHING ABOUT THE AIRPORT AND THE SHUTTLE SERVICES.

**SPRINGFIELD BRANSON AIRPORT** IS SERVICED BY UNITED, AMERICAN, DELTA, CHECK WITH THE HOTEL TO FIND OUT SHUTTLE SERVICE FROM THIS AIRPORT.

THE HOTEL HAS HANDICAP ROOMS -- WHEN YOU MAKE RESERVATIONS, LET THEM KNOW IF YOU WISH TO HAVE A HANDICAP ROOM. THE SHOWS AND RESTAURANTS ARE ALSO HANDICAP ACCESSIBLE.

**UNLIKE OTHER YEARS, OUR BANQUET MEAL HAS BEEN PLANNED**

**NOW HEAR THIS** ---It's a "**COMBO**" plate of beef tenderloin and parmesan chicken, tossed salad, baked potato, steamed veggies, rolls, dessert, coffee, tea.



That's why we don't need a menu selection on the registration form. Everyone gets the same thing.....unless we have need for gluten free, vegan or vegetarian and we will give them a special plate.

Remember, if you or your guest require a special plate -- this request **MUST** be made attached to the registration form.

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**HOTEL : THE GRAND PLAZA, 245 NORTH WILDWOOD DRIVE. FOR HOTEL RESERVATIONS CALL DIRECT TO: 1-800-850-6646; BE SURE AND MENTION YOU ARE WITH THE USS BATAAN CVL29 REUNION TO GET THE SPECIAL RATE OF \$ 84.00 PLUS TAX. THE RATE IS GOOD FOR 3 DAYS PRIOR AND 3 DAYS AFTER THE REUNION, BASED ON HOTEL AVAILABILITY. ROOMS NOT RESERVED BY APRIL 15, 2014, WILL BE RELEASED FROM THE GROUP BLOCK, SO -- MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS EARLY!!!!**



**WE NEED SOMEONE TO PROPOSE THE 2015 REUNION !!! WILL IT BE YOU?**



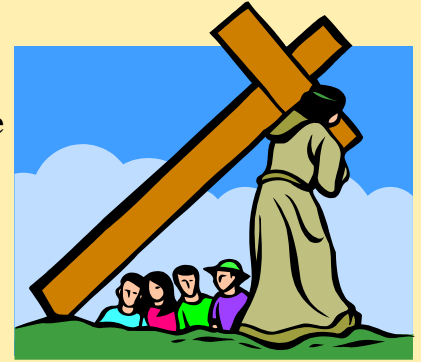
# USS BATAAN CVL-29 Branson, Missouri Reunion May 14-18, 2014




WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
 <b>Check in at THE GRAND PLAZA HOTEL</b> <b>\$84.00 per room per night plus tax, including breakfast</b>	<b>7:00-10:00 Hot Buffet Breakfast</b>	<b>7:00-10:00 Hot Buffet Breakfast</b>	<b>7:00-10:00 Hot Buffet Breakfast</b>	<b>7:00-10:00 Hot Buffet Breakfast</b>
<b>12:00 p.m. Hospitality Room Open...Light Snacks Provided</b>	 <b>10:00 a.m. THE CLAY COOPER MUSIC EXPRESS LUNCH AND SHOW</b>	 <b>10:00 a.m. SHOPPING SHUTTLE</b>	<b>9:00 a.m. BUSINESS MEETING</b>  	<b>Depart</b>  <b>ACTIVITY PACKAGE: \$199.00 per person</b>
 <b>5:30 p.m. "WELCOME ABOARD" Deli Buffet In Hospitality Room</b>	<b>Hospitality Room Open</b>  <b>Afternoon and Evening Free</b>	<b>Lunch on your own</b>  <b>1:00 p.m. AREA TOUR Followed by</b>  	<b>Afternoon Free</b>  <b>6:00 p.m. GROUP PHOTO (not part of package price)</b>	<b>INCLUDES:</b> Hospitality Room Welcome Packet with Name Badges Welcome Deli Buffet Clay Cooper Show and Lunch Shopping Shuttle Area Tour Memorial Service Showboat Branson Belle Dinner, Show and Cruise Final Evening Banquet with Entertainment All Taxes and Most Gratuities Transportation to Group Activities Reunion Website
		<b>MEMORIAL SERVICE &amp; THE SHOWBOAT BRANSON BELLE Dinner Cruise and Show</b>	 <b>7:00 p.m. FINAL EVENING BANQUET At Hotel With Entertainment</b>	



**This will probably be the last newsletter for the year, so, from the Board of Directors , we would like to extend to the crews of the USS BATAAN CVL29 and the USS BATAAN LHD 5, A MOST BLESSED, HEALTHFUL, SAFE , AND EVERLASTING PEACE.**



**ATTENTION -- In examining our roster, it was found that many of our former dues payers have been delinquent in keeping up their membership responsibilities and have not kept up their membership yearly dues. The BOD have decided, in accordance to our By Laws, that anyone who is delinquent in dues payment for a period of two (2) or more years, will be placed in the inactive file and not receive our newsletter. To let you know what year you have been credited for, that year is placed on the mailing label of this newsletter. An example -- Able BAKER (May 04) -- this means that member Able BAKER has paid up to year 2004 and is therefore delinquent. What we have decided to do, is to place a  on the first page of this newsletter to indicate that this is your last Newsletter. To be reinstated -- 2 years dues (\$30.00) will do it, so, please keep up your membership!**



This medal was sent to me by Clancy Decker. Clancy signed me up for the Korean War Veterans after I told him that the chapter that I was a member of dissolved. I then received a letter from Colonel David J. Clark informing me of the 60th Korean War Armistice that was to be held in Washington, D.C. and a medal was to be given to Veterans of the Korean War. I wrote a letter to Colonel Clark explaining that I was living in Arizona and could not attend the ceremony. Clancy got the medal from the Colonel and sent it to me.

I think that ALL Chapters of the Veterans of the Korean War were notified of the ceremony, and that a medal would be given. If any of you are members and did not receive or hear of the medal , I would request information from the Chapter Commander.

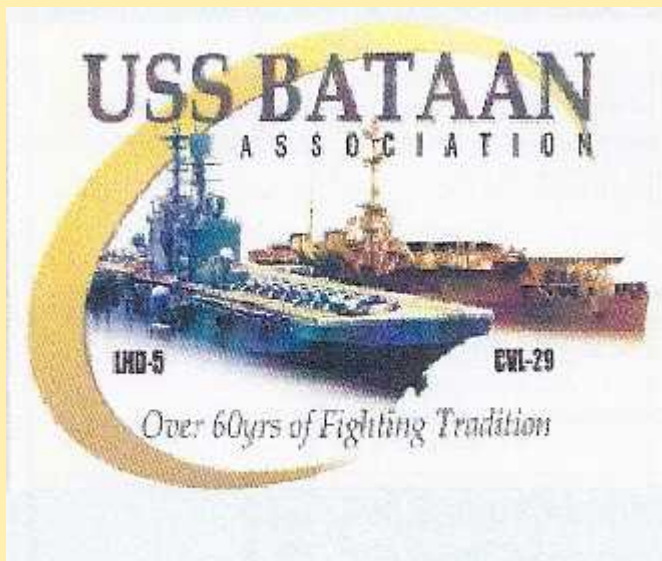
This medal is a token designed by the Korean Informational Association to repay the sacrifices made by the Korean War veterans. With the support of POSCO , the medal is made with actual rusted pieces of barbed-wired fence at the Korean DMZ embracing the spirit and faithfulness of every Korean citizen.

The Department of Defense 60th Anniversary of the Korean War Commemoration Committee has designed this medal as the official medal of the 60th Anniversary of the Korean War Armistice commemoration ceremony to be held at the Korean War Memorial, Washington, D.C. on July 27, 2013. In recognition of the medal's authenticity, we hereby present you this certificate of authentication.

Signed on the 15th Day of July in the City of Washington D.C. in the Two Hundred Twenty Seventh Year of the Republic.

**David J. Clark  
Colonel, Army General Staff  
Executive Director, DoD 60th Anniversary of the  
Korean War Commemoration Committee**

Sando Cosenza -- Secretary  
 USS BATAAN CVL29/LHD5 ASSOCIATION  
 4448 East Cheyenne Drive  
 Phoenix, AZ 85044-1619



**IT TAKES A FIRST CLASS FIGHTING MAN TO MAN A SHIP THAT IS CALLED BATAAN**

**COMPLETE FORM AND CUT ALONG THE BORDER AND MAIL TO THE ADDRESS BELOW**

BRANSON, MISSOURI REUNION FORM; MAY 14 - 18, 2014

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse \_\_\_\_\_

Guest (1) \_\_\_\_\_ (2) \_\_\_\_\_ (3) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ -Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please register me for the Activity Package Total \_\_\_\_\_ # of Attendees'

Total # Attendees X \$ 199.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Due ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

A 50% deposit is requested by March 15, 2014 with final payment due by April 15, 2014. Refunds after May 8 will be on a case by case basis. QUESTIONS??? CALL this number 417-338-4048 and we will be happy to assist you . For ticketing to additional Branson Shows , call us at 417-338-4048. Mail Registration form and check to:

**Gathering Plus**  
**P.O. Box 1023, Branson West, MO 65737**