



# Fleet Fox Report

## ASSOCIATION OFFICERS 2018-2019

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### DIRECTORS

|         |               |
|---------|---------------|
| 4 years | Jerry Halfman |
|         | Lee Merta     |
| 2 years | Bob Wilson    |
|         | Ray Pack      |

### Chief-Master-At-Arms

Bill Pine

### Ship's Store

Larry Knisell

### Chaplain

Bill Parker

### Webmaster

Ray Berilla

### Past President

Rod Keith

### President Emeritus

Bart Bartholomew

## U.S.S. JOSEPH STRAUSS (DDG-16) ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER Spring 2018

### 2018 Joseph Strauss Reunion *Annapolis, Maryland*

Wednesday, October 24 – Sunday, October 28, 2018



**Shipmates, Spouses and Guests---**Get set to join us this October for another spectacular reunion. Our destination is Annapolis --- Home of the US Naval Academy. Our hosts, Bob and Leona Wilson, have put together an exciting reunion plan and have negotiated an outstanding hotel rate in an area noted for very high costs. Our hotel rate is good 3 days before and after the reunion dates. Bob says "Come Early – Stay Late". It is expected that many shipmates will make use of the hotel to do some site-seeing in the DC area as there are so many things to see and do. Some suggestions include:

- Visit the Udvar Hazy Center Air & Space Museum in Chantilly VA near the Dulles Airport with exhibits including the Space Shuttle Discovery, the Enola Gay, an SR-71 Blackbird, SST Concorde, and a Wright Brothers replica, tons of other airplanes from all of the wars and commercial aviation, and a replica of the Standard Missile-3 that shot down the satellite in 2008
- Visit the U.S. Navy Memorial, the National Mall area or Arlington National Cemetery.
- Visit the National Aquarium at the Baltimore Inner Harbor
- Visit the Smithsonian

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## **TRANSPORTATION**

**Baltimore Washington International Airport (BWI)** – BWI is the suggested airport to arrive at this reunion as it is only 3 miles to the hotel. You might consider Reagan and Dulles airports and renting a car if you find better air fares into those locations. Free shuttle services at BWI are provided to and from the reunion hotel, just call the hotel.

## **HOTEL**

We are staying at The Westin at BWI Airport. The Westin Hotel is located at 1110 Old Elkridge Landing Rd, Linthicum Heights, MD 21090. Their Phone number is: (443) 577-2300. Check in time is at 3 pm & Check out time is at 12pm. Our reunion rate is \$115 per night plus tax. The rate includes Breakfast every morning (6 to 9 am) with an Omelet station on Thursday and Friday. The Hotel will be providing a 1 hour bar food, beer, wine & soda Welcome Reception on October 24 for all registered Strauss guests. Hotel reservations must be made by the cut off date of Sep 26, 2018. The Website for reservations is: <https://starwoodmeeting.com/events/start.action?id=1704205773&key=2225A691> (use link on web or our Facebook page) or call the hotel and ask for Joseph Strauss booking and rate. The reunion rate is good for 3 days before the reunion and 3 days after the reunion.



## **REUNION TOURS**

### **Thursday, October 25, 0745-1530 – US Naval Academy Day**

Book Early! – This tour is limited to maximum of 94 guests; so first-come, first-served for this one! Meet in the Lobby at 0745. Buses depart The Westin at 0800 for the U.S. Naval Academy where we will enter the gate through **metal detectors** and enjoy about one half hour for shopping at the Academy Gift Shop. Then we will see a movie about the Academy followed by about an hour and a half walking tour that will include John Paul Jones' Crypt; Admiral Strauss' Academy Class Ring; the Capt John Ripley's diorama of his destruction of the bridge at Dong



Ha where the Strauss provided naval gunfire support; the Noon Formation at Bancroft Hall and many other things. For those who don't want to take the walking tour, you will be able to wait at the reception building and take a virtual tour and then walk to the Noon

Formation and rejoin the group. At 1230 we will leave the Academy and go to the Annapolis harbor (about 2 blocks) and board the Annapolis Harbor Queen. The ship will depart at 1300 (1 pm) and we will enjoy lunch on the Harbor Queen. Lunch will be catered by the Mission BBQ which is veteran owned, has outstanding BBQ and a part of their profits go to the Wounded Warrior Project. Aboard the Harbor Queen we will see the outside of the Naval Academy, Annapolis Harbor and the surrounding Severn River area. The buses will pick us up at 1500 (3 pm) and return us to the Westin Hotel.

### **Thursday, October 25 – Evening (Joan's Dinner)**

This is an impromptu no host group dinner at a local eatery arranged by Joan Halfman. Each year Joan continues to surprise us with the choice of restaurant. THANK YOU Joan from all of us for doing this. Please indicate on the registration form if you plan to attend.

**Friday, October 26, 0845-1630 – Fort McHenry and Baltimore Inner Harbor Day**

Meet in the Lobby at 0730. Buses depart The Westin at 0745 for Fort McHenry where we will see a movie about the battle of Baltimore, the flag and the National Anthem. ***Ft. McHenry is a National Park and as such charges admission. Please bring your National Parks Pass if you have one and we can save some money here.*** We will watch the flag ceremony and possibly the firing of the canon. At 1130 we'll board the buses for the Baltimore Inner Harbor. Here you will be on your own for lunch, shopping or touring the Historic Ships in Baltimore. The ship tours are separate and you buy your tickets at the kiosk at the Harbor. The ships include: USS Constellation, launched in 1854, the last all sail ship built by the Navy and still afloat that saw service in the Civil War; US Coast Guard Cutter Taney, launched in 1936, she is the last surviving warship afloat today from the December 7, 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor; USS Torsk, who sunk the last enemy warship torpedoed at the end of World War II on August 14, 1945; and Lightship 116 Chesapeake, commissioned in 1930, served in the Chesapeake Bay as a navigation aid. The buses will pick us up at 1600 (4 pm) at the Inner Harbor and return us to The Westin. Lunch is on your own. This tour will be limited to the first 94 persons to sign up.



**Friday Night Theme Dinner**

This evening we will have our casual dress Friday night Theme Dinner starting at 1800. The theme for this year is to wear something representing your state flag. The dinner will be a buffet featuring Herb Roasted Chicken, Seared Flat Iron Steak, Penne Pasta with Marinara or Bolognese sauces with salad and vegetables. There will be a cash bar. ***Note: The annual Saturday night raffle and auction will follow the Friday Night's dinner to allow more time for the Saturday night banquet activities.***

**Saturday, October 27 – Business Meeting, Ladies Silent Auction, and Formal Banquet**

The Association Business meeting and the Ladies Silent Auction will start at 0900. At the conclusion of the Auction, the ladies will join the men for information on the 2019 Reunion in Nashville and the selection of the sites for the following reunions. That evening we will have our traditional Formal Banquet starting at 1900. Couples pictures will start at 1700 and group shots at 1800. Bill/Beth would very much appreciate your timely attention for the picture taking. Cash bar opens at 1800. Please be sure to indicate your meal choices on the sign up form.

**Sunday October 28: Departure Breakfast from 0600 to 0900**

**LADIES CORNER**

Hi Ladies!! Reunion time is coming...are you looking around for those special items that you might donate to the Ladies Auction? You know what is fought over – jewelry, handmade items, books, little purses, ornaments, etc. Also, this year we will be collecting items to send to military people serving away from home. Packages from home were always valued by our men so let's "give back/pay it forward". More details with suggested items to be used to fill the boxes will be coming directly to your emails in the summer. See you in Annapolis!

**PRESIDENTS CORNER**

Please join us in Annapolis for our 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Joseph Strauss Reunion. Our hosts, Bob and Leona Wilson, have planned an exciting reunion that you will not want to miss. Two great tours are planned but don't feel compelled to attend each one. The hospitality room will be open during tours for shipmates and friends to gather. Larry Knisell will have Ship's Store items for sale in or near the hospitality room. We look forward to seeing what new items Larry will have this year. THANKS Gracie and Larry! Our 2019 reunion location is Nashville, TN, and 2020 is

being planned for the Vancouver, WA area. We will decide on where the 2021 East Coast reunion will be held at the Saturday Business meeting. Please let me know if you would like to host a reunion and come prepared with your suggestions for a reunion city. I would like to remind you that:

- ❖ 2018 Association dues of \$20 are now due and can be paid via pay pal on our website, or you can include them with your reunion sign-up sheet.
- ❖ Please remember to send me a **change of address** when you move. Returned postage costs for newsletters are adding up.
- ❖ Ralph Durham will host a 1/96 scale model remote controlled ship regatta in Ennis, Montana this July 7th. The regatta features two RC Strauss models as well as several other ships from Ralph's collection. It's a fun gathering and includes a free BBQ. Also note that Yellowstone National Park is located about a 45 minute drive south of Ennis and would make a great sightseeing trip before or after the regatta. Contact Ralph (406-581-9466) if you are interested in attending the regatta.

### **IN TRIBUTE---By Past President, Rod Keith**

It is always difficult to say goodbye to shipmates. This past year our Strauss family lost several members. Two of them were well known by many of us as they were the original founders of the USS Joseph Strauss Association. Lawrence Layman (The Admiral) and Orlo Bartholomew (Chief Bart) made things happen. Both of these men were seasoned, old-school professional Navy men. Coming of age in the Korean war, they had served on combat surface ships and knew of the potential dangers facing their ship and crew. My first encounter with them took place in 1968 when I reported for duty as a 19 year old RDSN (E3). Chief Bart was my new boss, and Commander Layman was our CO. They had similar beliefs in that knowledge, teamwork and endurance were the keys to success, and perhaps survival. Both pushed their young charges to be better every single time a duty was performed. I remember going to general quarters six times in one 24 hour period. The Captain wanted his crew to be ready for the REAL thing and the Chief was his right-hand man. We repeated the exercise over and over again until every member of the crew knew his job and what was expected. Many of us boarded the Strauss as boot camp sailors, but returned safely as real Navy men thanks to the dedication and leadership of these incredible men and others like them.

My service connection to Admiral Layman and Chief Bart lasted a little over a year and a half, but the lessons I learned under their mentorship have lasted a lifetime. Many years had passed,



and by chance in 1991 a customer mentioned to me that he noticed a small posting in the Navy Times of an upcoming Strauss reunion planned in Ludington, Michigan. Had it not been for two free tickets (that were about to expire) on Southwest Airlines my destiny in this Association would have been vastly different than reality. I had no idea what I was walking into, who would be there and if I would know anyone at all. Imagine my shock when my wife, Brenda, and I found ourselves with 5 other Strauss sailors...one of which was

Admiral Layman and another Chief Bart. Being the junior man there, I was pretty sure I would soon be doing a fire watch at the hotel or worse. That did not happen. We were greeted with the warmest handshakes and smiles. In addition to reminiscing about Strauss events, the Admiral and Chief Bart put into motion the formation of our Association. It is because of their actions that we have been



able to renew old friendships and bonds, as well as lifelong connections. I have been fortunate enough to attend all 20 plus reunions, and like most of our members, count this Association as one of the biggest blessings in my life.

Even though it is tough saying goodbye to Admiral Layman and Chief Bart, they will always be a part of each of us. Both remarked many times of their pride in this Association and its members. Thank you both for a job well done. We will strive to make you proud. Rest in peace shipmates. We have the watch!

### **A Special Thank You**

As most of you already know our Webmaster, Ray Berilla, is confined to a wheelchair. In 1970 he was a vibrant and hustling Boatswain Mate aboard Strauss. Over the years some of the atrocities of life have caught up with many of us but Ray has had to deal with Muscular Dystrophy. Ray also received nerve damage from a brain tumor and a spinal cord tumor. This damage is painful especially in his hands which makes typing an ordeal.

Ray has fought hard for his shipmates by researching the Strauss deck logs and making them available via our website for shipmates that need them. Ray fills each deck log request by going to his computer, building a CD, and packing and mailing that CD. He keeps abreast of Agent Orange related developments and reports to his shipmates' actions taken that help provide proof to the VA for filing claims. Ray is the one responsible for getting the Strauss listed on the VA Agent Orange ship register.

Ray has attended many of our reunions. It is not easy for a person confined to a 200 pound wheelchair to transit airports, airplanes, shuttle buses, and tour buses. Ray has been stranded in airport concourses because his wheelchair battery has gone dead. There are many more examples of how hard life is when you are confined to a wheel chair.

Ray lives in Florida, a state with many wonderful beaches---beaches that are not accessible by wheelchair. Ray has dreamed about going to the beach just like he did many years ago in Hawaii. He dreams of traveling nature trails and fishing for the big one. He also wanted to get a drone but was concerned that "I might not be able to get it if it went down in an area that I couldn't get to..." Ray's life is about to change.

Late last year Kimberly Box called to discuss an idea that she had. I think a lot of you know Kim from Facebook but many don't know that Kim was a former MM3 on the USS Pyro and was married to Rick Engels---a deceased Strauss shipmate. Kim wanted to do something for Ray---she wanted to get him a tracked wheelchair. Kim had discussed this with her mother, Delores. Delores decided to make a generous donation to the *Independence Fund* with the stipulation that they would provide a chair for Ray. Kim says that "Making this kind of donation is always an honor, but it meant even more, knowing it's going to someone we know and a part of the Strauss family". Ray received his new chair on Feb 21, 2018. These chairs can be fitted with different options. Note here that Ray chose a fishing pole holder.



**Delores, all of the Strauss Sailors want to tell you Thank You from the bottom of our hearts!!!!**

## ITINERARY OF EVENTS

### Wednesday, October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2018

- 1300 -1700 Hospitality Room Opens - Executive Boardroom
- 1700-1800 Complimentary Welcome Reception (Free Beer, Wine, Soda and bar food appetizers in the White Oak Room
- 1800-2100 Cash bar – White Oak Room

### Thursday, October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2018

- 0745 USN Academy tour group gathers in the hotel lobby
- 0800 Tour bus departs Westin hotel for Naval Academy tour
- 0900-1230 Tour Naval Academy
- 1300-1445 Lunch on the Annapolis Harbor Queen with tour of Academy water side
- 1500-1530 Return to Westin Hotel
- 1600-1800 Hospitality Rooms Open
- 1830 Dinner gathering to be arranged by Joan Halfman
- 2030-2230 Hospitality room and Ship's Store opens

### Friday, October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2018

- 0730 Fort McHenry tour gathers in the Hotel
- 0745 Bus departs Hotel for Ft McHenry tour
- 0845 Bus arrives Fort McHenry
- 0900 Ft McHenry tour starts in the flag room
- 1115 Flag raising
- 1130 Board bus for inner harbor tour
- 1145 Bus Departs Fort McHenry for Baltimore Inner Harbor
- 1215-1530 Lunch, ship tours, and shopping on your own
- 1600 Bus departs Baltimore Inner Harbor for Westin BWI
- 1630-1730 Hospitality Room open

#### State Night – Wear Something Representing Your State

- 1800-2200 Theme night party in the White Oak Room (represent your state)
- 1800 No Host Bar open, White Oak Room
- 1830-2030 Buffet Dinner – White Oak Room
- 2030-2300 Raffle and Auction following dinner

### Saturday, October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2018

- 0700 Hospitality Room open
- 0900-1130 Business Meeting in Salon 1
- 0900-1030 Ladies' Silent Auction, Salon 3A/B (1030 Join Men's Meeting)
- 1200 Lunch is on your own
- 1400-1700 Hospitality Room Open
- 1700-1900 Photos adjacent to Crossland Ballroom
  - 1700-1745 Couples photos
  - 1800-1845 Group photos
- 1800 No Host Bar opens
- 1900-2200 Formal Banquet – Crossland Ballroom

### Sunday, October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2018

- 0600-0900 Breakfast ... Gather to say "Goodbyes" in White Oak Room

## 2018 Reunion, Annapolis, Maryland Registration Form

**The Westin Hotel**  
**1110 Old Elkridge Landing Rd.**  
**Linthicum Heights, MD 21090**  
**443-577-2300**

***IMPORTANT:** You must make your own hotel reservations: Call the Westin hotel at (443) 577-2300 for room reservations and mention that you are requesting the Joseph Strauss booking and rate. The room rate is \$115.00 per night (plus tax). The rate includes Breakfast every morning (6 to 9am) with an Omelet station on Thursday and Friday. You may also make reservations on line at: <https://starwoodmeeting.com/events/start.action?id=1704205773&key=2225A691>. The room rate is available 3 days prior and 3 days after the reunion based on availability. Check in is at 3 pm & Check out is at 12pm. Reservations must be made by **Sep 26, 2018***

### Wednesday, October 24 – Sunday, October 28, 2018

|   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Reunion Fee</b> (required per person)                              | \$15.00 x ____ Person(s) = \$ _____ |
| <b>Wednesday, Oct 24</b>  |                                     |
| Welcome Reception   | \$ Free x ____ Person(s) = \$ _____ |
| <b>Thursday, Oct 25</b>   |                                     |
| US Naval Academy Tour   | \$69.00 x ____ Person(s) = \$ _____ |
| <b>Friday, Oct 26</b>   |                                     |
| Ft McHenry/Inner Harbor Tour  | \$33.00 x ____ Person(s) = \$ _____ |
| State Night Theme Buffet Dinner                                       | \$56.00 x ____ Person(s) = \$ _____ |
| <b>Saturday, Oct 27 - Evening Banquet</b>                             |                                     |
| Grilled Salmon with Dill Vinaigrette                                  | \$54.00 x ____ Person(s) = \$ _____ |
| Pan Seared Chicken Breast with Smokey Mustard Sauce                   | \$54.00 x ____ Person(s) = \$ _____ |
| Citrus Marinated Skirt Steak with Grilled Red Onions                  | \$54.00 x ____ Person(s) = \$ _____ |
| Fall Vegetable Strudel  | \$54.00 x ____ Person(s) = \$ _____ |
| <b>Sunday, Oct 28 – Breakfast</b>                                     |                                     |
| <b>\$ No Cost</b>   |                                     |
| <b>Reunion Memory Book</b>  | \$30.00 x ____ Book(s) = \$ _____   |
| <b>2018 Association Dues</b> (or you may pay at the business meeting) | \$20.00 = \$ _____                  |
| <b>ID Badge</b> (Shipmates and spouse/guest, or for replacement)      | \$10.00 x ____ Person(s) = \$ _____ |
| <b>Grand Total:</b> \$ _____  |                                     |

Name on Shipmate ID Badge: \_\_\_\_\_

Division (s): \_\_\_\_\_ Years 19\_\_ to 19 \_\_

Name on Spouse/Guest ID Badge: \_\_\_\_\_

**Do you plan to attend Joan's Thursday group dinner (location TBD)** Yes  No

Expected date of arrival at the reunion: \_\_\_\_\_

Registrant's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ (Spouse/Guest): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**PERSON TO CONTACT IN CASE OF EMERGENCY:** \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone No: (\_\_\_\_) - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

I am interested in holding a reunion in: \_\_\_\_\_

To register for the reunion activities please complete this form and mail it before **September 26, 2018** along with your check or money order payable to the *USS Joseph Strauss Association*.

**Mail to:** Robert Wilson  
 12202 Castle Pines Dr.  
 Beltsville, MD 20705

**Questions:** Phone: 301-931-1211  
 E-Mail: bob.leona@verizon.net  
 Wilson\_bob@bectech.com



“I liked the tempo of the band blaring Hawaii Five-O through the topside speakers as we pulled away from the USS Pyro after rearming at sea.”

### **CONTACT US WITH ANY QUESTIONS OR CONTRIBUTIONS**

Please send address and email corrections/updates to [jazhansen@msn.com](mailto:jazhansen@msn.com)

We welcome any questions or topics that you would like to have presented in your newsletter.

You may contact any of the shipmates listed below by mail, phone, or e-mail, as follows:

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