

# USS Caliente (AO-53) Association



# PIPELINE

March 2017

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## Portland Reunion preview

By Jeff Sturgis

I hope that this issue of the Pipeline finds you all well. As I write this on Presidents' Day, we here in Maine are still digging out from a series of February snowstorms that dumped more than three feet of snow in just a week's time. The snow piles around my driveway are over my head in some places.

I've noticed that the West Coast is also having severe weather with devastating rainstorms which are causing flooding and mudslides. It's a tough way for that part of the country to end a long period of drought! Even Portland, Oregon, had an epic snowfall of nearly a foot in January.

Speaking of Portland, most of the details for the Sept. 7-10, 2017 reunion are now set. We will be staying at the Portland Marriott Downtown Waterfront in the heart of the city. We obtained a great rate of \$150.00 per night with the rate good for two days before and after the reunion days.

Reservations can be made by calling 1-877-901-6632 and mentioning the Caliente or online at <https://aws.passkey.com/go/USSCalienteAO53Reunion2017>. There is a 15.3 percent room tax, but Oregon has no sales or meal taxes. The cutoff for getting the reunion rates is Aug. 10, 2017.

For information and views of the hotel you can visit <http://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/pdxor-portland-marriott-downtown-waterfront/> The airport being nine miles away, a taxi will cost \$35.00 or a shuttle will cost \$14.00 for the trip to the hotel. Valet parking is available at the hotel, but most people use the nearby public parking garages.

The agenda for the reunion will be similar to those of past reunions. Pat Hurton has done a great job in lining up a tour for Friday. There are two parts to the tour: a morning tour of the city and an afternoon ride up the Columbia River. Here's a short description of the tour:



photo by Cacophany, Wikimedia Commons

Downtown Portland from east side of Willamette River south of Hawthorne Bridge.

### City highlights portion of tour

Experts rate Portland as one of the best places to live and visit in North America. This enlightened city is rich with artwork, parks, fountains, bridges, downtown light-rail, and streetcars. See some of the most fascinating characteristics of the city, from its free downtown rail system to its unique collection of public art and urban piazzas that make Portland one of the best places to visit in North America.

Our tour will visit Portland's most notable neighborhoods including the Cultural District, Old Town/Chinatown, and the hip Pearl District,

Our tour includes a guided off-coach stop at the International Rose Test Garden, the oldest public garden of its kind in the United States with over 500 varieties of roses on display. Guests can see and smell why Portland is called the "City of Roses."

### Columbia River Gorge and waterfall portion of tour

Vista House on Crown Point is perhaps the most beautiful travelers' rest station ever built. Perched ominously atop sheer cliffs hundreds of feet above the Columbia River. Multnomah Falls, at 620 feet, is the largest and most picturesque of the 77 waterfalls lining the Oregon side of the gorge.

Bonneville Dam, one of the gorge's man-made wonders, generates electricity for thousands of residents and businesses while protecting the native Northwest salmon swimming upstream to spawn .



Photo by Kelvin Kay, Wikimedia Commons

The tour will include discussions of the region's history, including the Lewis and Clark journey, the story of the historic highway, tales from the once-dangerous Oregon Trail, and Native American life and lore.

Spectacular views of the Columbia Gorge from above and up-close, provide different and spectacular photo opportunities of the area's natural splendor, its many accessible waterfalls, and the snow-capped Cascade Mountains.

For those who would like more information about Portland attractions you can visit [www.purelyportland.com](http://www.purelyportland.com) for more information.

We have booked a three-piece jazz band, "Jazz Interlude" for the Saturday banquet and the "JGs" might be available to sing a few songs. On Saturday morning we will hold our annual business meeting at which we will select the site for the 2018 reunion. We will be looking at

cities in the center of the country as we move the reunion around to make it easier for shipmates in different parts of the country to attend. So, be thinking of possible sites.

So, mark the dates on your calendar and get in your reservations and the registration form early. Plan to bring family members and stay a few extra days before or after the reunion to see the sights that the Portland-Vancouver area has to offer. We hope that this will be an opportunity for those shipmates who live on the West Coast and who couldn't travel to the East Coast last year to join us.

Having served on the Cal from 1970 to 1972, my wife and I got to see a lot of California, but we never got up north of San Francisco. So, we are looking forward to seeing this part of the country and to renewing old acquaintances and making new ones.

In the meantime, if anyone has any questions or needs more information, I can be reached by phone at 207-782-8323 or via email at [jandssturgis@roadrunner.com](mailto:jandssturgis@roadrunner.com).

We hope to see you in Portland!



**Good public transit system**

The Portland Streetcar at left passes within about four blocks of our hotel. But buses travel in front of and behind the hotel. With a system-wide day pass that lets you travel by streetcar, bus and/or light rail, you can easily get around the city without a car.



USS Caliente Association  
 Chairman: Jeff Sturgis  
 Executive Committee: Mike Copeland, Dave Ludemann, Greg Perett, Tom Rawlinson and Steve Selzer  
 Treasurer: Pat Hurton  
 Pipeline Editor: Karl Seitz



The Pipeline is the official quarterly newsletter of the USS Caliente Association. It is a place to share your memories and pictures. Please send them via e-mail to [seitzao53@gmail.com](mailto:seitzao53@gmail.com) or by regular mail to Karl Seitz, 1212 30th St. South, Birmingham, AL 35205-1910.

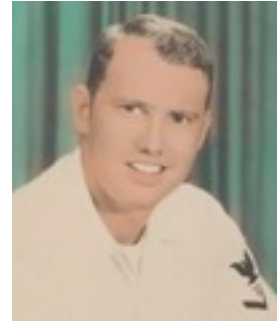
Association dues are \$10 per year due Jan. 1, payable by Jan. 15. Checks should be made out to The USS Caliente Association and mailed to treasurer Pat Hurton, 156 Greenfield Drive, Chico, CA 95973-0185.

Chairman Jeff Sturgis can be reached via email at [jandssturgis@roadrunner.com](mailto:jandssturgis@roadrunner.com) or by mail at 84 Old Woodman Hill Rd, Minot, ME 04258

Masthead picture of USS Caliente (AO-53) used with permission of Dan Davis.

## Taps

James Fred Briggs Jr. died 9 Aug 2015 in Texas at age 71. Jim served on the Caliente from 1966 to 1967 as a RD3. Born 23 June 1944 in San Angelo, Texas, Jim discovered a love of music in high school. His talent with the saxophone earned him an offer to join the Navy Band when he enlisted. He declined and later served on the Cal. After his discharge, he graduated from Angelo State University, where he did join the band. Moving to Houston where he worked in computer operations for several years, Jim met Arlene Krajcik whom he married 24 June 1972. During the 40 years before her death, they traveled to 48 of the 50 states as well as Canada, Mexico and islands in the Caribbean. Survivors include sister Jean Woods (Kenny), brother Robert Briggs, a niece, two nephews and seven great nieces and nephews. He is buried at Grandview Memorial Park, Pasadena, Texas.



Verlon Eugene Dolihite died 13 Oct. 2016 at home in Castleberry, AL at age 67. Verlon served on the Caliente from 1970 to 1972 as an EM3. A native of Brewton, AL Verlon graduated from Escondido High School in California in 1968 before moving to Castleberry. He retired from Container Corporation of America with 37 years of service. Verlon is survived by his mother, Mary Dolihite; his wife Linda Crispin Dolihite; sons Steven (Stephanie), Alabama Cris (Kristy); sister Toni Dolihite Tate and four grandchildren. He is buried in Cedar Creek Cemetery, Castleberry.



We have belatedly learned of the death Kenneth Duane Fronk on 12 Nov 2009 in Washakie County, WY at age 63. Ken served on the Caliente from 1969 to 1970 as an FN. Ken was born 19 Aug 1948 in Sharon, ND. After graduating from high school, he moved to Worland, WY, where he enlisted in the Navy. After his service, he returned to Worland and married Stacie Snider on 7 Dec. 1971 Ken worked for Halliburton for 25 years before retiring. He was survived by his wife, Stacie; son Brian (Jodie); daughter Julie Nemyo (Todd); brothers Larry (Nancy), Virgil (Pam) and Dale; sisters Peggy Salzman, Linda Yzaguirre and Sandra Coates (Mike) and an extended family. He is buried in Riverview Memorial Gardens, Worland, WY.



A reminder if you are on Facebook, Jack Hughes has created a Facebook group for former crew members of the USS Caliente (AO-53) and their families.

Larry G. Lottman died 25 July 2016 at his home in Wymore, NE at age 69. Larry served on the Caliente from 1966 to 1967 as a BM3. He was born 16 May 1947 in Beatrice, NE. After his time in the Navy, Larry married Rachel Martinez on 12 Apr 1969. Larry was a mechanic for the Northern Natural Gas Co. for 36 years. He coached Little League baseball for his son, girl's softball for one daughter and elementary basketball for another. An avid and successful bow hunter, he was a member and sometimes officer in several archery and hunting organizations. A trustee at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Wymore, he was a member of the Knights of Columbus. Larry is survived by his wife, Rachel; daughters Rita Thompson (Lee) and Tina Andreasen (Travis); son Ricky Lottman; three grandchildren and several brothers, sisters-in-law, nieces, nephews and friends. He is buried in Calary Cemetery in Wymore.



Gordon Lyle Peterson died 26 Oct 2016 at the Veterans Home in Fergus Falls, MN at age 69. Gordie served on the Caliente from 1968 to 1972 as an EM2. Gordie was born 11 Aug 1947 in Alexandria, MN. While on leave from his Navy duties, Gordie married Susan Syverson 20 Sept. 1969. They lived in California during his enlistment before moving back to Moe Township, MN. Gordie worked at various jobs including being a journeyman electrician, warehouse manager and maintenance engineer supervisor for Knute Nelson for 18 years. He had a reputation for being able to fix just about anything. Camping, hunting, fishing, other outdoor activities and NASCAR were among his hobbies. Gordie is survived by his wife, Susan; son Aaron Peterson (Benita); daughters Kelly Helmbrecht (Ryan) and Kimberly Fuchs (Brian); four grandchildren, sisters, Judy Grove (Dewey), Wendy Peterson and Kathy Drexler (Brian) and a large extended family. He is buried in the West Moe Lutheran Church Cemetery



Roger Clay Weast died at Hospice House in Forest City, NC at age 67. Roger served on the Caliente from 1968 to 1970 as an FN. He was born 9 May 1949 in Rutherford County, NC. Roger was employed by Duke Power Co. at its Cliffside Steam Station for 42 years and served as an electrical supervisor until he became disabled in 2004. In his youth he was a pitcher for the Shelby Comets and later coached Little League for both boys and girls. Roger is survived by his wife, Patsy; sons Brian W. Weast (Tracy) and Joey C. Weast (Jessica), daughter Melissa Hooker (Tony) 10 grandchildren; brother Harold Weast (Evelyn) and sister Slvia Lem. He is buried at Salem United Methodist Church Cemetery.



## Editor's message

By Karl Seitz

Some recipients of the December Pipeline deserve an apology, although I'm not sure how many of you there are or from whom the apology should come. If you were asked to pay 21 cents postage due by your postal carrier, you are one of those I am talking about.

If your envelope said postage due but your carrier didn't ask for it, you are the beneficiary of a second misstep in the delivery of your Pipeline that offset the first incident.

Those who get their Pipeline via email or whose paper version was not marked as postage due were not affected by whatever happened at the Birmingham Post Office.

As part of my mailing procedure, I first take a single Pipeline to a branch Post Office to have it weighed and to obtain the proper postage. Most of the time, there is no problem.

There was an occasion a couple years ago when the main post office returned the entire mailing to me saying the individual pieces exceeded the one ounce limit for the postage I had attached. Apparently the branch PO scale and the scales at the sorting facility disagreed.

But that's not what happened this time. I did get a handful of Pipelines back immediately, but most of them were sent on their way. It was when I began to get back the undeliverable Pipelines that I discovered only some of the Pipelines were considered overweight.

What I think happened is only one of the probably multiple machines used to process the Pipelines found them overweight. Or one operator read the weight slightly differently from his peers. The Pipelines were printed on the same paper and placed in identical envelopes.

Whatever the reason, I'm sorry it happened.

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It's hard to see if you don't know it's there, but the picture of downtown Portland on page 1 contains our hotel. It is the second building from the left. I didn't know it myself when I selected the picture. It was only later when checking on transit options that I realized the map I was looking at included the bridge in the picture and looked closer at the picture..

### Customer arriving



The late Steve Hammer captured the approach of USS Mullany (DD-528) in 1968.



**Riding the highline**

Herb Dorsey sent along this picture of an officer or chief crossing on the highline in the summer of 1963. Ship recognition research says the ship alongside is either the USS Castor (AK-1) or USS Pollux (AK-4), both of which operated in WestPac. Extensive Internet research found an apparent match for the shield on the ship's stack. The Pollux lighter to right was found for sale on e-Bay.



**Mt. Hood and beaches waiting for you**

Portland has plenty to see and do during the reunion, but if you want to expand your horizons further, consider Mt. Hood about 50 miles to the east southeast or the Pacific Ocean beaches slightly farther to the west. Mt Hood, with year-round skiing, is often visible from downtown Portland. The beaches aren't visible but have such sights as Haystack Rock at Cannon Beach.



**USS CALIENTE (AO-53)  
Portland Reunion  
Sept. 7-10, 2017**



**PORTLAND MARRIOTT DOWNTOWN WATERFRONT  
1401 SW Naito Parkway, Portland OR 97201**

Reservations may be made by calling 1-877-901-6632 and identifying yourself as a part of the USS Caliente reunion or online at <https://aws.passkey.com/go/USSCalienteAO53Reunion2017>.

The room rates are good for 2 days prior and 2 days after the reunion dates. The group rate is \$150.00 per room plus a 15.3 percent tax. The cutoff date for reservations is Thursday, Aug. 10, 2017. Valet parking is available for \$39.00 per night or you may park in one of the nearby municipal facilities.

**Reunion Agenda**

**Thursday, 7 Sept.**

- a) Hotel check-in
- b) 3:00-6:00 PM—Reception

**Friday, 8 Sept.**

- a) 7:00-9:00 AM—Breakfast
- b) 9:00 AM-4:30 PM—Tour

**Saturday, 9 Sept.**

- a) 7:00-9:00 AM—Breakfast
- b) 9:00 AM—Business Meeting
- c) 6:30 PM—Reception
- d) 7:00 PM— Banquet

**Sunday, 10 Sept.**

- a) 7:00-9:00 AM—Breakfast
- b) 9:00-Noon—Farewells



# Portland Reunion Registration Form

Shipmate's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse or Guest Name \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Guests: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Years on Cal 19\_\_ to 19\_\_      Rate/Rank while aboard \_\_\_\_\_

Registration Fee: \$180.00 per person X \_\_\_\_\_ persons = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Registration fee includes receptions, three breakfasts and the banquet.

Banquet meal choices:

Roasted chicken breast \_\_\_\_\_

Braised beef short ribs \_\_\_\_\_

Pan-seared salmon \_\_\_\_\_

Farmer's Feast (vegan) \_\_\_\_\_

Friday Guided Tour \$35.00 per person x \_\_\_\_\_ persons = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Registrations \$ \_\_\_\_\_ plus tour \$ \_\_\_\_\_ = Grand Total \_\_\_\_\_

Please return with check to: USS Caliente Association, c/o Pat Hurton, 156  
Greenfield Drive, Chico, CA 95973-0185