



NAAV NEWS

Members' Publication of the National Association of Atomic Veterans

VOLUME 1

DECEMBER 2014

ISSUE 1

Change of Address, Membership or Renewal Write or E-Mail

National Commander NAAV

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WELCOME TERRY T. BRADY

Great news. Alaska, which has been without a state commander now has one. Not only one, but an individual with a great deal of experience with NAAV. Terry T. Brady. His address is 3842 Wesleyan Drive, Anchorage, Alaska 99508, phone 907-333-9462. Young veterans, which we define as those aged 20 to 34, have congregated in Alaska, where they account for 17 percent of the population. Almost half — 47 percent — of the veterans living in Alaska served in the Gulf War era. Women account for 14 percent of the veteran population in Alaska.

Published quarterly by the NAAV

Deadlines are the 1st of every 4th month and any material submitted after that time may be delayed until next quarter. All submissions are to be e-mailed to newsboynaav@gmail.com or mail to Darryl Hirst - Managing Editor. All photos must be sent in JPEG format preferably at 300dpi or mail us an original and we will copy it and get it back to you.

WHAT IS THE VALUE OF A NEWSLETTER AND

WHO ARE THE NEW GROUP OF ATOMIC VETS?

If you're not a member of the National Association of Atomic Veterans and you are a military veteran during and after the first Gulf War this may be you. "*Jump right to paragraph five, you'll be surprised.*"

Shortly after I received my notification that I was a member of NAAV, my newsletter showed up. I was anxious to read it and learn about what others might be doing, what events might be happening and what was this stuff I had recently heard of called the Ionizing Radiation Registry (IRR)? I can't remember exactly when I saw a small two paragraph, insert in the AARP magazine, maybe eight or ten years ago. It said that people who had been involved in atomic testing were being looked for to join the NAAV and become affiliated with the IRR, operated by the Veterans Administration. You didn't have to be a member of the VA.

I had never been in touch with the VA before. I received a letter from the Dept. of Navy in 1972 and then again in the early 1980s. Nothing special, in the desk, they rested, until the AARP's article showed up in the mail. During all that time, I knew several veterans who were friends of mine. If the topic of VA came up our general consensus was something like, "Well, I'm not going to the VA, there are a heck of a lot military people that need the attention. I don't need to get in their way." Then the topic just "went away".

Until, being surprised by the new acquired information I made an appointment with the C&P officer at our local VA, for an examination. I thought sure I'm an atomic veteran, so maybe I'll sign up for the IRR, but I don't think I'll join the VA medical care. I was surprised when the C&P medical doctor, after I told him my feelings, looked me right in the eye and leaned up toward me. Mr. newsboynaav, there is a difference between those who cared for others, like I suppose you did, and those who seemed to sprout from a peaceful flower into an individual who cares only for "me". If you don't want to find the benefits that are owed to you, just as much as they owe to someone else, then do it for your family.

Hence, why care for a newsletter? What is the value of a newsletter? Comfortably, this newsletter isn't just for you. I trust that you have noted that we are trying to find new members to join the NAAV. You are important. Well, you might not be my age (78), but I would imagine many of you are "in the ball park". What occurs when we don't bring the word out? What happens in ten or whatever years deal with you and myself? In my lifetime, I have had a lot of people help me in so many different ways and I would guess you have also. Many of you hopefully will help now in drawing new members. Well, many of you may not agree. Here is a quote from our NAAV mission, purpose, updated 2014.

NEWSLETTER VALUE

.. continued from page 1 ..

Who is an Atomic Veteran?

Atomic Veterans are members of the United States Armed Forces who participated in atmospheric and underwater nuclear weapons tests from 16 July, 1945 to 30 October, 1962. (This will include the majority of NAAV members at this time. NOW THERE IS A SECOND GROUP OF VETERANS WHO MAY HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN RADIATION EXPOSURE EVENTS. If you are a veteran who was assigned to participate in a nuclear device detonation event or who may have been involved in post event assignments associated with the U. S. Nuclear Weapons Testing Program from 16 July, 1945 to 23 September, 1992, or any veteran who's assigned duties included association with nuclear reactors on Aircraft Carriers and Submarines, or the assembly, storage and deployment of nuclear weapon devices, or who may have been involved with Depleted Uranium (DU) www.naav.com/ DU munitions events during and after the first Gulf War, or the surviving (spouse, or child) of a deceased Atomic Veteran.

These veterans fit the VA's "official" description as Occupational radiation exposed veterans. Now because of the potential exposure to (DU) DEPLETED URANIUM RADIATION EXPOSURE. There are two main medical health issue areas, important to vets of the Gulf War, Somalia, Afghanistan and the war in Iraq, that were not adequately addressed before the Gulf War. These areas of extreme urgency and interest are:

1. The medical implications of embedded DU fragments.
2. Exposure estimates for friendly fire incidents, recovery activities, and incidental DU contact scenarios.



IMPORTANT MESSAGE!

From now on all newsletters will be sent to commanders via e-mail, and all commanders are responsible for forwarding the most recent newsletter to their constituents who have a valid e-mail address. Those who do not have access to e-mail will be sent a physical copy of the newsletter via USPS by NAAV.

A note from our National Commander –



We have a number of members who need to get their dues in. Your support is terribly important, especially at this juncture of our organization. Newsboynaav spoke of our need to bring in new members to assist our getting the word to the second group of eligible veterans. These veterans will, most likely, will not be our age, they are those that will be 30, 40, ... , or younger. You and I can not let them down. You and I must not let them down.

You and I must keep our addresses current, our e-Mails current and we must keep our dues current.

A GIFT FOR THE HOLIDAYS!



Really need to get everyone ordering a shirt and helping out the organization. Order one for the HOLIDAYS, BIRTHDAYS or WHATEVER, but please send name, address, phone number, size and which shirt. You can see what is on the two shirts in the pictures on the right. One a T-SHIRT with ATOMIC VETERAN on the front, the other with Atomic Veteran on a Polo Shirt and your name on the left side. One shirt is \$30.00 and one of each is \$55.00. Send all of your info to Gillie Jenkins, 10500 Dakins Drive, North chesterfield, VA 23236-2016. You deserve one, as does any Atomic Veteran.

1956 - MY THERMONUCLEAR SUMMER



by Darryl Hirst

On Veteran's Day last year a lady walked up to me with an outstretched hand and said "Thank you for your service." Glanced at my cap seeing the words Atomic Veteran said "Interesting, I've not caught wind of that." She just moved around and walked away.

On December 29th 1955 I was just a teenager from Tonasket, a small community of about 900 in Washington State. I was now a Navy Radioman (RM3) and had transferred to the USS Crook County LST-611 as part of a new crew assembled to take part in Operation Redwing in the Marshall Islands (Bikini and Eniwetok). The following represents some five months of my life. The primary aim of Operation Redwing was to test 17 high-yield thermonuclear (hydrogen) devices that were not able to be examined at the Nevada test site. These tests were magnitude 13.7 kt to 5 mt. The purpose of this operation was principally a demonstration of the power of the United States to present large-yield nuclear devices. This has been the first trial in the Pacific since the Operation Crossroads detonations ten years before in 1946.

During 1954, Operation Castle, the fifth nuclear test series conducted in the Marshall Islands, a serious fallout contamination incident from Shot Bravo had affected not only U.S. personnel, but Marshall Island residents and Japanese fishermen as well. On 27 April 1956, 8 days before the first Redwing detonation, a joint Department of Defense Atomic Energy Commission press release identified the safety precautions in effect for the series. It described the improved fallout predictions, fallout capability available and the extensive monitoring that was to be performed both in the Pacific Proving Grounds and beyond. ... The release stated that "... the yields of the devices to be tested were expected to be less than the greatest of those detonated as part of Operation Castle."

The "611" was refitted with a specially designed room in the tank deck. The design of the ship, in part, was to pick up radioactive fallout into special deck dosimeters and extensive instrumentation for fallout

sampling and was gone for prolonged performance in heavy fallout areas.

The "611" was part of TG 7.3.6 Radiological Support Unit of three ships. Our ship normally had fewer than 100 personnel. During the point of time we were sailing straight into the track of radioactive fallout known as the "hot line", which was the lineal line of fallout prediction, there were 12-14 people on the ship. I was 19 years old and one of those sailors. Early in 1956, after leaving the USS Guadalupe AO-32, an ocean going tanker, I came at the Hunters Point Naval Station in San Francisco and was one of the new crew to contain over the functioning of the ship preparing for the voyage to the Bikini Atoll. During the next couple of months new personnel came on board. Many of these were scarcely out of boot camp. This afforded them the time needed to become seasoned salts by having plied the "Dog patch" streets of San Francisco, perhaps a tattoo, and walking with their white cap tipped to the position of their head. For some, the real indoctrination came when we got the first shakedown cruise. By the time we had sailed under the Golden Gate Bridge, engaging our first swells, the newbies were over the rail. They had found respite from the cook's hot dogs and fruit salad. We met the ship's complement at Long Beach.

The sail from Long Beach to Bikini was memorable. I am sure that most of us had not been on an LST before. The LST was classified by the Navy as a Landing Ship Tank but it was more likely to be affected, by the ship's crew, as a Long Slow Target. It had reason for its name. The draft is shallow, the ship is flat and it took in a tendency to wander from side to side. Speed is not what it was noted for, however, one could expect 10-12 knots. It seemed that nothing was too serious for us as the Navy had provided the most novel in motion picture innovation known then as Cinemascope, first showing in 1953. The beauty of this was the wide screen. We watched the movies, many over and over, because of the limited number we could receive. Our machinists were able to put together a large screen on the main deck which was made with metal poles and canvas stretched across.

.. continued on Page 4 column 1 ..

MY THERMONUCLEAR SUMMER - CONTINUED

The first and last struggle was when our sharp eyed ship's machinist mate and our "up through the ranks" Captain Lewis took note that we were only able to get to 7 or 8 nautical miles. No headwind, no mechanical troubles, however recognition of our problem became clear and orders were quickly given "Cut down that movie screen!" The concave screen dropped and again we quickly were rolling along at 9 or 10 miles.



The radio room on the 611 was more like pulling off along the Interstate Highway, to allow traffic to pass, as it provided the main passageway to the wheel house. It was not unusual for people to walk past you, making the reception of fleet broadcasts difficult to hold. We worked with only two radiomen and only one on duty at a time. We regularly monitored broadcasts listening for messages that may have been directed to our ship. When we heard our call sign NFDH, we carefully tuned the Collins radio and prepared to copy using the old #5 Underwood typewriter. A great deal of the messages were coded, meaning that they would consist of blocks of five mixed characters, which were copied in Morse, then later decoded. Other broadcasts were most often weather and of general unclassified information. The coded information was generally and primarily headed for the Skipper's eyes. Copying was difficult when days were filled with crashing static, interferences from other transmitting stations and the like. An example might be gaining accurate data on say the letter h, which has four dots and the number 5 which is five dots. If not then, the best you can get from the skipper was general glare (period). Messages could be sent a second time, all the same, there could be hours in between and it would be best that you hope for no interference. My skill was well tested having spent over a year on a fleet oiler working under all types of conditions. Once working International Morse Code while refueling ships near Saigon, French Indochina, which was later known as Vietnam. This all prepared me for the goal of the USS Crook County in which I was to be a member of an 11 man crew that was involved in live thermonuclear tests during the summer of 1956.

Time at sea can seem drawn out between duty periods. Time was spent reading or perhaps enjoying the South Pacific sun. There are always the exceptions. On a one-time affair, I had found a cyst inside my left armpit. The corpsman indicated it needed to be lanced and directed an assistant to prep (shave) beneath my arm. The next thing I recall was being on the floor with the two standing over me. The assistant accidentally did the work.

And then there was a time when the refrigerated coolers were out of power and a number of chubs of meat thrown overboard. I never had seen such a gathering of sharks. We'd apparently try anything to surpass the time and find a reason for a wager. After a short layover in Honolulu, and an opportunity for the newbies to rediscover their experience as a veteran sailor. Hawaii is the main spot for U S ships heading east. We were only passing time away to be in that location for a few days. A challenge presenting itself was to visualize how much could we do in such a little period of time. I tipped my hat back a bit, a good signal that I was pretty cool and headed away. Memory is a fickle companion. I remember, while off the ship of seeing hillsides that were filled with pineapples, Waikiki Beach, King Street and the USO clubs which were always open. The clubs were free, which worked for my pocket book just fine. Free coffee and donuts. I remember best the singing group of the 40s and 50s, the Mills Brothers. Dancing, of course, of which I had little experience, was difficult while the sailor to girl ratio must have been 10 to 1.

We were off to Bikini. I say that no one had brought up that they had to (and others, including myself) endure the frustrating of crossing the equator. On board there were a number of officers and seamen who had never until now passed south of the Tropics. Consequently, they were inducted into the mysteries of crossing the Equinoctial line. In Navy terms the advancement of a Slimy Pollywog to the Trusty Shellback. The day was preceded by stories told by the older hands of tales past when they were initiated such as "Kissing the Royal Baby" which in real life meant kissing the stomach of some fat Boson Mate." Wog Day brought forth King Neptune and his courtroom. This ceremony dates back to the Dutch during which the Pollywogs undergo a number of increasingly embarrassing ordeals. Introducing the arrival was the "King" adorned with a beard, tin top, and a trident. Later on, his inspection of the Shellbacks began the initiation the like of such had been wrapped in silence and speculation for several days. Then salt water, ropes, shaving cream, the barber, the paint brush well, I think your mind's view is justified. As I envision, the few "Shellbacks" tired quickly with their innovative shenanigans. These memorable experiences lead to a Crossing of the Equator Certificate.

.. TO BE CONTINUED ..

WITH MY EYES CLOSED



A Veterans Day Remembrance November 11, 2014

Image by Darryl Hirst - newsboynaav

Veterans' day on the 11th of November was an absolutely wonderful day. In my community, I was overwhelmed by the show of support for our veterans. I spent the day exchanging greetings with other veterans. I attended a wonderful Veterans Day Program and this evening I'm trying to share my thoughts for the newsletter. All of a sudden, I found myself in so many different programs. I saw myself in the cemeteries as I quietly read their description. I saw Boy and Girl Scouts nearby. I heard the crisp snap of the ensign and heard the trumpet.

I knew that I was, with eyes closed, living with a vision of a Norman Rockwell painting. The painting allowed me to see so many of the same events all over our great country. None really different and all unique.

One last look at the computer before the end of day. On Facebook, there was Hazel Green, Ky. I had never known of Hazel Green before but now I will not forget this because when Hazel Green uses words like "be you the lowest rank" it speaks from Norman's podium to you and me.

Hazel Green, Ky - here is what was written.

"To all Veterans, living, or deceased, named or bright, buried on family farm or on foreign shore, alone or with families, caretaker or the cared for, YOU are the rock, the centerpiece of this great United States of America! We owe you our undying gratefulness as a Nation. To NEVER forget, not one of you, be you the lowest rank, never forget your service, your life you put forth for each of us ! And that flag that flies so swiftly or gently at times, reminds us of each of YOU, that we owe our freedom to your sacrifices and though it seems that the cold blast of winter lingers when we think of your passing, we know that in the springtime, the newness of life shall bloom again! Thank to each of you."

BRING IT ON!

Last newsletter I told you of a lady, on Veterans Day, asked about my hat "Atomic Veteran". She answered, "Never got wind of that." Turned and walked off.

Now "get a load of this". A little time ago, I was asked, by a well-meaning man, the question after seeing my hat. What was the name of the submarine you were on? Of course, he was drawing the conclusion that there must be only Atomic Submarines or Atomic bombs.

And then, yesterday, while in an elevator, with a man and woman I was asked, "What is an Atomic Veteran?". Now even though being gun shy about this question, I explained about the atomic testing in Bikini. She responded that her father-in-law had been at Bikini the same time I was. She thought I might have heard of him. In any case, she didn't simply move around and walk out. I was completely "blown out of the water" by her tale. She told me he was a "down winder" in Nevada. Her father lived and worked there on nuclear projects. That he had spent a week at Bikini in 1956. Later, she told me that he was one of the designers of the moon rover and that he was an assistant (scientist) with von Braun.

I really would like to hear from you. When someone saw or they heard you were an Atomic Veteran for the first time what did they say? Be careful, it might end up next quarter in our newsletter. E-Mail or USPS, I'll take it.

Have something to say, "Bring it on."

ON MY HONOR I WILL...



Did you keep your oath or did you obey the law? Are they the same? I have yet to learn of any Atomic Veteran not living up to their oath of secrecy. Fifty plus years. Did you write an article about what you experienced? Did you write a book?

To swear is a verb used to describe the taking of an oath, to making a solemn vow.

Nowadays, even when there's no notion of sanctity involved, certain promises said out loud in ceremonial or juridical purpose are referred to as oaths.

There is an old saying that 'all are equal before the law.'

NAAV Supports the Honor Flight Program



Our National Commander Fred Schafer and Director/Treasurer H. Frank Farmer attending the Linn County, Albany, Oregon. They would like to get the word out and ask for your support, along with NAAV for the Honor Flight Program

The Largest Veterans Day Parade West of the Mississippi

Veteran's – Heroes at Home This year's theme salutes our veterans who have come back home and made our communities a better place for all.



Standing above the rest, "The Greatest Generation" our World War II veterans will be highlighted as the Grand Marshals in the 2014 Albany Veterans Day parade. They went off to fight and then came home., settling back into our communities, rolling up their sleeves and getting to work. If you would like to make a donation to the Honor Flight Program. You may make a donation through <http://www.honorflight.org/donate-now/> .

PUBLICATIONS ON RADIATION EXPOSURE

The Ionizing Radiation Review provides information to Veterans and their families concerned about the health risks of exposure to ionizing radiation in military service and about VA's programs to respond to these risks.

Are YOU An Atomic Veteran? brochure (1.2 MB, PDF) provides information on presumptive service-connected health conditions, health registry, benefits and claims, and Veterans' Advisory Board on Dose Reconstruction.

The Environmental Health Registry Programs brochure (495 KB, PDF) provides an overview of five VA health registry programs that track the health of Veterans exposed to environmental hazards during military service: Ionizing Radiation, Agent Orange, Gulf War, Depleted Uranium, and Toxic Embedded Fragments.

Clinical Education Guide (Veterans Health Initiative) Veterans and Radiation, a Veterans Health Initiative independent study guide, provides clinicians an overview of issues facing Veteran patients who may have been exposed to ionizing and non-ionizing radiation during military service.

See more at: <http://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/radiation/publications/index.asp#sthash.F73Ot376.dpuf>

If you do not have Internet access, your local VA center should be able to get these material for you.

ANYTHING STICKING?

"I pulled down my sea-bag out of the attic.(Yep, still have it) As I pulled out discolored whites and the moth eaten blues, bits and pieces of those four years emerged. The stencil from the first days of boot, seaman stripes, third-class patch, the blue jacket manual that the silver fish have been enjoying. Then I unfolded the white jumper that was still white. I crawled down from the attic and with my wife's assistance I put it on. 45 years later and it still fits...well lets just say I got it on...couldn't take a deep breath, but I got it on. Was just going to throw it back in the sea-bag, but something made me fold it properly. Didn't even have to use the manual to do it right. Funny how some things stick with you."



-by permission of Frank Gilbreath, USN RM2

DEPLETED URANIUM RADIATION INFORMATION

"is dedicated to those veterans of the Gulf War and all conflicts which resulted in exposure to Depleted Uranium munitions and armor fragmentation events...

If you are a Veteran of the Gulf War or any conflict since the Gulf War, or if you are currently on Active Duty in the Military and were engaged in activities that caused you to be exposed to Depleted Uranium radiation particles, you are eligible to become a member of the National Association of Atomic Veterans, Inc. We welcome your participation in our quest to assist our fellow Atomic Veterans in their quest to obtain proper recognition and compensation for health issues precipitated by their exposure to radiation while serving their country in an honorable and unselfish fashion. Should you choose to join our group, can download an application form from this website.

During and after the Gulf War, personnel awareness of the hazards posed by battlefield depleted uranium contamination was generally low. As a result, many personnel did not practice field-expedient measures that would have prevented or mitigated possible exposure to depleted uranium radiation.

There are two main medical health issue areas, important to veterans of the Gulf War, Somalia, Afghanistan and the war in Iraq, that were not adequately addressed before the Gulf War.

These areas of extreme urgency and interest are: 11/8/2014 DU Rad Info: http://naav.com/html/du_rad_info.htm 3/9

1. The medical implications of embedded DU fragments.

2. Exposure estimates for friendly fire incidents, recovery activities, and incidental DU contact scenarios. Current estimates of the number of Veterans exposed to Depleted Uranium radiation, since the Gulf War may exceed 36% of those who were deployed to areas where DU munitions were actively engaged, or where residues of DU are still present. This would suggest that the total number of future illnesses attributed to exposure to DU residual radiation will increase sharply within in the next several years.

GET CASH FAST!

In the October, Special addition, I had the following two line insert.

If you have a "letter to the editor" (oops, newsboy) and it is less than 100, now between 75 and 200 words, and we can find newsletter room, I'll try to get it in. Nothing inappropriate – stick to the point.

Way to go gang! No one replied. I'm pretty sure you were just leaning back and dreaming up something, but all the time thinking I'm not going to go first. I get it now, you don't think this electronic newsletter is going to survive. You think, I'll keep fishing. Maybe, just maybe, if you offered a little something about yourself, about atomic tests, how you won at a poker game, how you liked the chow, well I don't care you'll Get Cash Fast. Just nothing inappropriate and keep to Atomic experience.

Then I'll pay cash! No, not the NAAV, I am going to pay you the cash so don't get fussy. Two prizes, I'm the judge (cause I got the money.) Each prize will be close in their value, I think. One will be given to the best article returned to newsboynaav by email. The other prize will be presented to the best article I receive by USPO. This is closed to all Directors and officers of NAAV. It is open to everyone else, including State Commanders. Payoff, to be split. Deadline will be January 15, 2015.

1. **One Piastre – Cambodge du Laos et du Vietnam (1953)**
2. **Two Pesos - Central Bank of the Philippines (1949)**
3. **One Dollar – Government of Hong Kong (1952)**
4. **Five cents – Military Payment Certificate (Series 541)**
5. **One Yi Yuan – Zhongguo Renmin Yinhang (1996)**
6. **Five Dollar – Bank of Canada (2013)**

Plus – each receive three different foreign coins – all different countries.

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Layout by Bob Ruyle

All NAAV members – here is a list of all State Commanders as of 9 August 2014. Your Director of State Commanders Gillie Jenkins wishes for all members to be able to contact their State Commander for questions. Hopefully this will “keep us together.” If your state does not have a State Commander or to volunteer to be a State Commander in your state, call or write to Gillie.

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Wyoming: Position available

