



# NAAV NEWS

MARCH 2020

1st QUARTER

*Publication of the National Association of Atomic Veterans*

## FROM THE DESK OF OUR NATIONAL COMMANDER



**Keith Kiefer**  
NAAV - Commander

I imagine many are getting tired of being inundated by all the talk and effects of the Corona-19 virus. Any loss of human life is a tragedy. But America is at its best in the face of adversity. During these times we are able to put our petty differences aside and come together for the common good. We have shown this in WW I, WW II, 911, and disasters all around the world, (The Hattai earthquake is an example of the later.) Is America perfect? No. However, we and the world are better and stronger as we persevere through this tragedy. Friedrich Nietzsche said: "That which does not kill us makes us stronger." And John F. Kennedy pointed out "When written in Chinese, the word 'crisis' is composed of two characters. One represents danger and the other represents opportunity." We Americans are blessed to live in the best culture this world has to offer. We will survive the inconveniences and economic effects of the adversity we are now facing and will be the first citizens to reach out to the rest of the world in compassion.

Some may be wondering, "are we going to have a conference this year in September?" Unless it becomes illegal or the board over rides me, the answer is Yes! Sept. 9th, 10th and 11th. Please keep these dates open and plan to register with NAAV soon. Should the event be cancelled, your fees will be credited or refunded. More on this else where.

The Remembrance Day event in Springdale, Arkansas was a tremendous blessing. It was moving, emotional, educational and healing for all. The hospitality, forgiveness and acceptance

by the Marshallese people was incredible. The attendance was exceptional. Thanks to all that helped make it a success.

*Keith (K<sup>2</sup>)*



Joint Marshallese Enewetak CleanUp  
Personnel March 1st 2020



Remembrance Day CleanUp Veterans

## FROM THE DESK OF OUR NAAV VICE COMMANDER



**Fred Schafer**  
NAAV VICE COMMANDER

Now for the start of the Spring. The Remembrance Day/Cleanup Veterans Convention in Springdale, AR. February 28th-March 1st was a success, attended by many Vets and Islanders.

Keith Kiefer is doing a great job as National Commander. He is a very busy person. We need to thank him for the time he spends doing what he does.

Gillie Jenkins is having a hard time keeping State commanders. If you want to help your state commander, call him and ask to help. I am sure he will find something for you to do.

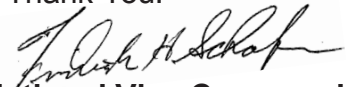
I had a knee replacement surgery on the 4th of February. This has slowed down my travels this Spring. The surgery went well. I got up and running in 30 days. Then this virus hit the nation, it has slowed us all down. Please stay at home and be safe. We are in that age group.

We are working on several projects to improve the items in the store. Membership continues to grow and the items in the store continue to sell. Also several donations have come in.

I will repeat this. "Keep working with your state and Federal Congress to get July 16th as Atomic Veterans day annually. Also get a section of Highway to become Atomic Veterans Memorial Highway. State Commanders work with your members and get members to get current in dues; just \$ 25.00 will get you current. Please update your information. Phone numbers are not current. E-mail or call with that information. When you send in dues let us know of any changes.

Thank you to members that send in extra dues earmarked for helping someone that needs help with their dues and other support of NAAV.com Please make checks out to NAAV. Not to me.

A big Thank You to the State commanders and members that have supported NAAV, with donations and working with your State and Federal Agencies to make these happen. Thank You!



**Fred Schafer, National Vice Commander**

## WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO THOSE BLOOD TESTS?

In the fall of 1946, after spending five months at Bikini Atoll as part of the salvage unit at Operation Crossroads, the crew of the USS ATR40 proceeded ultimately to San Francisco and prepared the vessel for decommissioning. We left the ship in mid-January. Those men, whose enlistments were up, were discharged; the rest of us were re-assigned. Having just completed twenty-eight consecutive months sea duty, I was granted sixty days leave, with orders to report in to the receiving station at Treasure Island (San Francisco).

Toward the conclusion of my leave I began hearing rumors that quite a few of the 42,000 men who had participated in Operation Crossroads had been reporting in sick; this led me to wonder..

Then, when I reported in, I noted a sign above the desk; it said, "Were you at bikini? If so, tell the yeoman." When I followed that directive I was sent to the medical office where a corpsman drew a blood sample for a CBC (complete blood count).

I know that a large proportion of those men went through that receiving station in late 1946 and in 1947. It is interesting, though, that I can't recall ever meeting any of them face to face until at least twenty years after I had left the Navy. Even after that long time, at least some of them remembered and, with me, they wondered; were those samples analyzed, and if so what did they reveal? We let them take our blood; what did they do with it?

**Submitted by F. Lincoln Grahlfis**  
**Past Vice Commander**

## STATE COMMANDERS REMINDER

Gentlemen, I would like to remind you that it is the State Commander's duty to check as often as possible by calling, emailing, or writing the members in your area at least once a year so we can keep up with the deaths, the moving into assisted living homes and the like.



I realize this is a real task for some, especially those with many members, but we have to find some way because some of us have been making calls from the membership list each month and find members who have been dead for two years or more and the same for members that have moved in with relatives, family or assisted living homes. I know it is a task but it's one we have to pay more attention to. Thanks for all you do, but make a new years resolution to try to get in touch. We need your help!

**Submitted by Gillie Jenkins  
Director of State Commanders**

## SHIPS STORE



If anyone has ordered something from the store and have not received it please let Fred Schafer know.

Call him at **541-258-7453**

## TAPS



HAYS B. WHITSEL.....Chambersburg, PA  
LAWRENCE E. WAGNER.....Virginia Beach, VA  
THOMAS L. BAIR.....Joplin, MO  
COL. JAMES D. REEVES.....Littleton, CO  
CHARLES R. McKAY.....Severna Park, MD  
THEODORE P. GECK.....Stayton, OR  
WILLIAN R. THORSON.....Silverdale,, WA  
SAM GROSMAN.....St. Louis, MO  
WILLIAM T. PIPER.....Patagonia, AZ  
WILLIAM T. WATSON.....Glendale, AZ

## DUES REMINDER

**REMEMBER DUES  
ARE \$25.00 per  
YEAR AND THEY  
ARE TO BE SENT  
TO FRED SCHAFER,  
103 CLEVELAND ST.,  
LEBANON, OREGON  
97355-4505**



## NAAV DONATIONS



Did you know that by purchasing things on Amazon you can get DONATIONS coming to NAAV by signing up on their AmazonSmile Program.

Here's how to shop AmazonSmile:

1. Visit [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com)
2. Sign in with your Amazon.com credentials
3. Choose a charitable organization to receive donations, or search for the charity of your choice in this case:

National Association of Atomic Veterans  
Lebanon, OR

4. Select your charity
5. Start shopping!
6. Add a bookmark for [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) to make it even easier to return and start your shopping at AmazonSmile

From then on when logging in on AmazonSmile and ordering online, 0.5% will automatically be donated to NAAV.

**amazon**smile  
You shop. Amazon gives.

## REMEMBRANCE DAY AWARDS

As part of the Remembrance Day event many received recognition and awards. This is a sample of the recognition.

The Enewetak Atoll Radiological Cleanup members received a Certificate of Gratitude from President, H.E. David Kabua, of the Republic of Marshall Islands (RMI) and RMI Senator, Jack J. Ading, of Enewetak Atoll on behalf of the Marshallese people and Government.



Daughter, Sophie and dog, Pepe are proud of Paul Griego's Humanitarian Award and Certificate of Gratitude recognition.

Lincoln Grahls a NAAV Board member and speaker at the Remembrance Day event received a recognition plaque. Lincoln's presentation can be viewed here on You Tube: <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=hvAzlnwdkZs&feature=youtu.be>



## STATE & AREA COMMANDERS

It's time to start planing for an Atomic Veterans Day gathering July 16th plus or minus a few days. Contact your state members.

We sorely need to get our data base updated. While planning for Atomic Veterans Day get your members contact info updated.

Because our data base is out dated the organization is wasting precious resources, sending Newsletters to deceased members, time wasted trying to reach members when a reporter wanted to tell our story.

I recently tried to contact some 45 members. Of those only 5 had valid phone numbers. Please help all of us.

Edmund Burke said "Nobody made a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could do only a little."



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**NAAV  
c/o FRED SCHAFER  
130 Cleveland Street  
Lebanon, OR 97355-4505**



Convention Hotel:

**HILTON KNOXVILLE AIRPORT**  
Knoxville, TN  
2001 Alcoa Highway  
Alcoa, TN 388701  
**Direct Line:**  
**+1-865-984-7080**  
**+1-865-724-1129 Fax**

**Special Rate is: \$122.00 plus taxes (does not include breakfast)**  
**Rate is good for dates of the convention (Sept. 9, 10, & 11th**  
**(Checkout on the 12th)**  
**Limited number of rooms at this rate, first come first serve.**  
**Make reservations prior to June 30th, 2020!**

**NAAV 41st ANNIVERSARY CONVENTION**

**REGISTRATION FORM**

**KNOXVILLE, TN**

**Sept. ,9 th, 10 th, & 11 th, 2020**



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Name (on name badge) \_\_\_\_\_  
Spouse/Guest \_\_\_\_\_ Guest \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_  
Wheelchair Access \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Yes

Member Required Registration Fee \$65.00  
Welcome Reception \$40 PP \* \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_ (room and appetizers, etc.)  
Thursday 10th Activity Day Trip \$85 PP \* \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_ (admission, transportation, etc.)  
Friday 11th Dinner \$65 PP \* \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_ (room, meal, etc.)  
Total due \_\_\_\_\_ Check # \_\_\_\_\_

***Attach check (tape in space above) payable to NAAV,  
fold form, tape edges, attach postage and mail by June 30, 2020.***

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ATOMIC VETERANS 41ST  
ANNIVERSARY CONVENTION  
REGISTRATION FORM  
Knoxville, TN  
September 9, 10, 11th, 2020**

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
9	10	11	12

Hilton Knoxville  
Airport, TN

Tour Oak Ridge

Speakers 8:00 am  
to 5:00 pm Lunch  
on your own

Check out



Y-12 Plant, in Oak Ridge TN.



4:00 pm to 6:00 pm Registration	Alexander Guest House		
Dinner on your own	Oak Ridge History Museum		
6:00 pm Social time with appetizers	Y-12 History Center etc. Dinner on your own	6:00 pm Dinner	
	7:00 pm Board meeting	Auction contingent on if we have donated items	

# TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION

## McGhee Tyson Airport (TYS)

### AIRLINES: CURRENT NONSTOP SERVICE

Allegiant Air Airlines  
American Airlines.  
Delta Airlines  
Envoy Air  
Frontier Airlines  
United Airlines

### Airport Transportation Services

You can walk across from KNOXVILLE (KYS) airport to the Hotel or call for a shuttle.

Lift Uber Hail

If you rent a car and don't mind driving about 1 hour you can look at flying into:

Knoxville Downtown Island Airport (DKX)

Campbell County Airport (JAU)

Rockwood Municipal Airport (RKW)

**Convention Hotel: HILTON KNOXVILLE AIRPORT, Knoxville, TN**

2001 Alcoa Highway, Alcoa, TN 37701

Direct Line: +1 865 984 7080: +1 865 724 1128 fax

Special rate is: \$122.00 plus taxes ( does not include breakfast ) rate is good for dates of the convention (Sept. 9, 10, & 11, checkout on the 12th). Limited number of rooms at this rate, first come first serve.

**Make reservations prior to June. 30, 2020.**



# BROTHERS AND SISTERS FROM ANOTHER MOTHER

As NAAV National Commander, I often get comments I/we are not doing enough for a subset of the Atomic Veterans, even fighting and division among the subsets. Whether you are a Marshallese, a broken arrow operation, Clean Up Veteran, civilian, 1945 to 1963 Atomic Veteran, or Operation Tomodachi (Fukushima) or some other operation involving the Nuclear legacy, we all have been affected by the experience in simulator ways. We all have similar goals and need to work together. President Lincoln said it best "A house divided against itself, cannot stand." Our senior members have laid the ground work for some recognition and compensation. The youth are the future of the organization if we are going to continue as an organization. We need each other.

The writing below from our new Mexico State Comander, Paul Griego, it is not here to admonish anyone, it is merely for illustration purposes. Keith

Two veterans were overheard saying "Hell, this is not about us, it is about those cleanup guys." The reply was, "they are trying to take over our organization."

During the recognition event, it was saddening to me to hear these words spoken between two Atomic Test Era Veterans.

I am one of those "cleanup guys" and I am the New Mexico State Commander, I guess that makes me also one of those who are accused of trying to take over NAAV. It seems the same dynamics within a family would have between the big brother and the little brother as they share their family legacy.

Being a "cleanup guy" I too am a voice from ground zero, being a State Commander I am also the

voice for NAAV in my state. The previous State Commander had succumbed to time and passed his voice to me. This was inevitable as with all life there will be a time that all of our voices are silenced. I understand that the "cleanup guys" as with most Atomic Test era Vets do not have a long life expectancy, however, the test era vets have a 30 year head start.

Most test era vets understand this and welcome the Atomic Cleanup Veterans as their little brothers. The big brother Test Era Vets that showed up to their little brother's recognition event was an essential part and appreciated. This event was very emotional, having our big brothers joining was heart warming.

Our big brothers who joined us made an incredible effort to be at this event, they are in their 90's. Some of the big brothers were not there to just be supportive they also took the time to share valuable information. Information about the testing, health effects, chromosomal damage and so much more.

The big brothers shared their personal stories and the stories from the voices of the men that are no longer with us. We listened as a good little brothers would knowing we can be the voice for those who pass first. The time we have now is precious, a time that big brothers and little brothers need to recognize each other. I encourage everyone in this family to seek each other out and share each other's story. Let us not only have the hope that NAAV lives on beyond us, let's make sure our legacy and our voices are not lost to time.

Our big brother, Lincoln G, joined us for all the reasons I mentioned but also to share his wisdom as Lincoln has recognized and embraced we are all "voices from ground zero".



## MEMBERSHIP

We can now accept annual membership fee payment using a credit card. We can even set you up for automatic annual renewal. Send the name on your credit card, billing address, the account number, expiration date, and cvs code. Call or write Fred Schafer.



# BRITISH NUCLEAR TEST VETERANS ASSOCIATION



**Alan Owen**  
BNTVA - Chairman

In these troubled times across the world with the Coronavirus outbreak, it is difficult to put any political pressure on the UK Government, but we continue to fight for our veterans.

We have taken the decision to cancel 2 conferences scheduled for May 2020 as a precautionary measure for the health of the attendees and the trustee board.

We are undertaking a campaign of releasing documents via our social media and Nuclear Veterans Worldwide which prove that the UK government knew the risks and were well informed of the genetic damage that the test would cause. The committee responsible for our Medal claim met on the 4th February, but no information has been released as to the discussions or the outcome of our claim for recognition.

The UK Government has not put back into public view the documents that relating to the Nuclear Testing program for a 'security review'. These documents were publicly available at the National Archives, but they are now under the control of the government and we do not expect them to be released back into the public domain.

We are due to meet with the Veterans Minister on the 22nd April (subject to the Coronavirus cancelling the meeting), where we will discuss the issue of a medal and War Pensions for our veterans. We hope that this meeting will be productive.

We continue to challenge the government and this year will see the release of two important studies into the Nuclear Veteran. Public Health England will release their 4 th Epidemiological study into the Veterans and Brunel University will be reporting on the DNA study which examines the DNA mutations across the Veteran, their spouse and a descendant. This research is eagerly awaited and may provide further evidence that the Veterans have been exposed and their DNA damaged and this damage has been passed on to their children.

Susan Musselwhite and I were honoured to participate in a video panel discussion at the recent Nuclear Remembrance Day, an event which I wanted to attend, but unfortunately due to family illness was unable to.

We must continue to work together to ensure that the world knows about the Nuclear Veterans, the inhabitants of the testing sites and the struggles of the Veterans and their families. This is a worldwide problem which needs as much attention as we can possibly get. Keep sharing as much information as possible, lobbying governments and providing support for each other is the way forward.

The Nuclear Veterans Worldwide website continues to grow and now contains the largest set of videos relating to the nuclear tests than any other site. If you haven't visited it, you can access it via [www.nuclearvets.com](http://www.nuclearvets.com) each country has their own section.

We must never let the world forget about our Nuclear Veterans and their families. Stay safe and continue the fight.

**Alan Owen FBCS CITP MInstLM FLPI**  
Chairman - BNTVA

## THURSDAY SEPT. 10th CONVENTION ACTIVITIES INCLUDE

Tour of Oak Ridge, American Museum of Science and Energy, Soup kitchen for lunch (on your own) The Alexander Guest House (the original Manhattan Project hotel (which is now listed as part of the Manhattan Project National Historical Park)) Oak Ridge History Museum, going through Historical District viewing original alphabet houses, Tour the Oak Ridge History Museum, Y-12 History Center, Visit the International Friendship Bell and the Secret City Commemorative Walk, Visit the K-25 History Center.

## HOW I SPENT THE SUMMER OF 1946

Within six months after the conclusion of World War II, a plan was developed in Washington to test the efficacy of atomic bombs against naval vessels. My shipmates and I learned about this from an ALNAV sometime around the beginning of January, 1946. Said message solicited volunteer participants.

Ultimately, the plan developed into OPERATION CROSSROADS, which would involve well over two hundred ships and just over forty two thousand personnel. There were, however, very few volunteers; so men were arbitrarily assigned to this duty. Thus, on April 20, 1946 I was transferred to the rescue tug, ATR 40. I don't recall just when, but sometime in the ensuing three weeks, my new ship-mates and I learned that we were assigned to rescue and salvage operations at the atomic bomb tests.

On May 11, 1946 we departed Pearl Harbor on the ten day trip to Bikini Atoll, where we would spend the next five months. We had absolutely no protective clothing or special equipment, and our only preparation for this experience had been the requirement that we turn in any cameras in our possession and sign a secrecy oath.

Within a few days of our arrival at Bikini our first class ship's cook began a daily routine of sitting for hours on the deck at the rear of the ship; he simply sat and stared out silently over the water. This continued, day after day, for a considerable time. Eventually, our commanding officer took notice and ordered him transferred to Pearl Harbor

for psychiatric observation. To this day there is at least a small question in my mind as to whether he was mentally disturbed or simply more clever than those of us who remained aboard, and who have spent decades dealing with radiation induced health problems. This, however, left us short one cook!

Of course, our commanding officer requested a replacement cook and we hit the jackpot. The aircraft carrier, USS Saratoga was one of the target vessels and once she had been deployed in the target array her crew was removed and those men were available for reassignment. As a consequence, we ended up with a man who had been an officer's cook on the carrier, USS Saratoga. Now, it has always been my contention that navy ships are provisioned with top quality raw materials, but the navy cooks frequently don't do justice. This man, having cooked for some high-ranking officers, knew how to make the best of this material. We ate well that summer! I never had any word of what happened to our original cook after he left the ship. The Saratoga, of course, survived the air drop on July 1st. But the underwater detonation on July 25 seriously damaged her hull. She lasted through the night, but on the following afternoon she began to go down. Manned ships in the area lay dead in the water as crew members watched this victor of many WW II battles slide quietly into the deep. The ATR-40 was less than 200 yards away and I was able to see R.C., our cook, at the rail watching his former ship disappear.

**Submitted by F. Lincoln Grahlf  
Past Vice Cmdr.**





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Lebanon, OR 97355-4505

**IF UNDELIVERED PLEASE RETURN TO THE ADDRESS ABOVE!**

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

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Vice Commander & Treasurer NAAV  
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