



# NAAV NEWS

SEPTEMBER 2020

3rd QUARTER

*Publication of the National Association of Atomic Veterans*

## FROM THE DESK OF OUR NATIONAL COMMANDER



**Keith Kiefer**  
NAAV - Commander

I hope all of you are safe and healthy. We are living in unusual times. Maybe by the time the next newsletter comes out, we will have returned closer to a state of normal.

I'm looking forward to having the Presidential election behind us

Please note the new date for the NAAV 2021 convention. When the registration forms come out in the next newsletter, members should register as soon as possible. This will make the planning process go smoother. You will be reimbursed if the convention needs to be cancelled again.

I imagine by now you're getting tired hearing about the Atomic Veteran Service Medal. Presently, we have funding for the medal and a provision for the medal in the NDAA Bill. Unfortunately, these need to go through what is called a "Reconciliation Process." Up until this is completed, either or both of these provisions can be pulled from the final bill.

We are working hard contacting individuals to keep these provisions in the final bill.

We had a conference call with staffers to get a hearing on the RECA Bill. Chairman Nadler, Congressman Lujain's staff, Congresswoman Pelosi's staffers, former Speaker Martinez, Rep. Garcia, representatives of eight groups and others participated in this conference call. The call was encouraging.

Thank you to those completing the surveys and sending documents into the organization.

Also, I would like to thank those that have helped update our member database.

Please make sure you complete and return the enclosed ballot by November 1, 2020.

I miss seeing members at our annual convention and look forward to seeing you in August 2021.

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



Turn your AMAZON SHOPPING into a force for good. Shop at [smile.amazon.com/ch/42-1126431](https://smile.amazon.com/ch/42-1126431) and Amazon donates to National Association of Atomic Veterans.

To see the impact of your marketing, visit the AmazonSmile Metrics Dashboard for National Association of Atomic Veterans. Simply log in at [org.amazon.com](https://org.amazon.com) and click the "View metrics" button.

## FROM THE DESK OF OUR NAAV VICE COMMANDER



**Fred Schafer**  
NAAV -Vice Commander

Hope all are doing Great, with this virus all around us. This staying at home is hard to live with. Be prepared for this Virus to be very strong this fall and winter, so please stay SAFE.

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.

This summer has gone by very fast. Like most of you probably, getting things caught up around the house. Those projects that I have been putting on the back burner, are getting done.

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. Keith has set up an account to pay your dues online, or order from the store and want to pay online call Keith. His phone # is 612-232-6596.

I will repeat this. "Keep working with you states 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.

Remember when you send in a check for your annual dues, please send in your phone number and e-mail address, plus a note on how the money is to be used. Let's help update the data base.

A big Thank you to the State commanders

and members that have supported NAAV, with donations and working with your State and Federal VA to make these things happen.

Business Info, we will have to elect or reelect four members to the board this September. At present Keith Kiefer, Lincoln Grahlf, Gillie Jenkins and Robert Ruyle.

Please stay safe and be careful

Thank you!

Fred Schafer  
National Vice Commander

## TAPS



- HOWARD E. STINNETT.....Lynchburg, VA
- JAMES T. TRACY.....Roanoke, VA
- FRANK T. WEST.....Blacksburg, VA
- MORRIS BLATT.....Brooklyn, NY
- WAYNE SMITH.....Delphos, KS
- JOHN D. CODDING.....Sun City, AZ
- BERNARD A. BYRNES.....Westwood, MA
- MICHAEL E. BERG.....Sequim, WA
- ARNOLD C. LECHNER.....San Antonio, TX
- ROBERT S. FISHER.....Saylorsburg, PA
- CLAUDE R. BURPEE.....Corryton, TN
- FRED GOHS.....Garden Grove, CA
- WILLIAM (Bill) CROUCH....Radium Sprints, NM
- WILLIAM D. GRIFFITH.....Eugene, OR
- TED MILLIGAN.....Lebanon, OR
- ALBERT D. TOMINAC.....Tigard, OR
- EDWARD W. WALLACE.....Lebanon, OR

## NAAV AMBASSADOR TO BRITAIN turns 90!

Alex Partezana, a NAAV member, celebrates his 90th birthday October 2nd.

In 1951 he received a letter in the mail. That year the government picked over 400,000 men to be drafted into the military and he was one of them.

In April 1953 he was stationed at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. The 8th Marines, 2nd battalion was based there. From there 2800 marines were ordered to Yucca Flats, Nevada to take part in the atomic bomb testing. They were transported in military planes called 'flying box cars'. The plane was called a Flying Boxcar because the inside of the plane had no seats. There were benches along both walls and one in the center from the pilots to the rear. That way they could transport a lot more troops. They all reported to a camp called Desert Rock V.

The operation he was involved with was known as UPSHOT KNOT HOLE. There were eleven atomic bomb tests in this series each called a 'shot'. His shot was called BADGER.

They reported to a tent camp with squad type tents, each held ten marines. The next day they went to a class with instructors and a film. They showed what to expect when the blast occurred. After class they were given liberty from ten AM to 12 midnight in Las Vegas.

At that time Las Vegas was a very small town. If you've ever been to Las Vegas or seen it on TV, most of the fancy lights and casinos you see are in a part of Vegas called the strip. At that time the strip was mostly in the planning stage and the casinos were in the downtown area.

The next morning they loaded into a truck that took them to Yucca Flats some 42 miles away. They all walked to a tower which was 300 feet tall and had a bomb mounted on top. You couldn't see it since it was covered with a tarpaulin. At the base of the tower they placed all different types of equipment. There were tanks, jeeps, cannons, rifles, and pistols. Some of the jeeps and tanks had mannequins dressed in combat gear sitting in them. In other places they had many crates containing c-rations. There was a gasoline supply dump, flame throwers, landing vehicles, and trucks.

They also used live sheep, pigs and rabbits during the test. To measure radiation they used something called a film badge. When you take a picture using film, the picture comes from the film reacting to light. Film also reacts to radiation in much the same way. They can develop the film and figure out how much radiation there was.

Pigs were placed in pens at various distances with film badges on them. The sheep were tied to cactus with film badges around their neck.

The Army engineers moved around cactus and juniper trees, to put them at various distances from the bomb.

The size of the Badger bomb was 23 kilotons which for an atomic bomb is pretty small. That 'pretty small' bomb was the equivalent of 23 thousand tons of TNT high explosive.

Their trench was a mile and a half from the bomb. We had volunteers that were in trenches one mile away and another group that was in trenches three quarters of a mile away. The men were a little nervous since behind our trench, farther away than they were from the bomb, were large pine trees and different size buildings to see the effect the bomb would have.

The men were taken back to the camp, and told to be ready to load up the trucks at 1 AM. The men arrived at the site at 3 AM and the bomb was set to go off at 4:30 in the morning. They were broadcasting instructions over a loud speaker. There were some lights to allow the men to get where they needed to go. The men were directed to their trenches, which were five feet deep and four feet wide. The night was very cold. Once the men were in their trenches they turned off the lights. It was so black you couldn't see your hand in front of your face.

As the count down got down to five they were told to crouch down and lean against the wall towards the bomb and to keep our eyes open.

Even a mile and a half away from the explosion we would feel a blast wave like a [strong/brisk/?] wind. The men were to wait for the blast to go over the trench and then a few seconds later it would come back. Then the men were to stand up in the trench and look at the bomb.



# LABRATS ASSOCIATION



**Alan Owen**  
LABRATS Co-Founder

LABRATS (Legacy of the Atomic Bomb. Recognition for Atomic Test Survivors) continues to grow since we launched in June 2020, we continue to promote the work across the world being undertaken by organisations and individuals. Our site now has 135 videos, 117 blogs, 50 website links, 33 research papers, 42 links

books, 23 organisations / individuals, 22 Facebook links and 10 Twitter feeds.

We have a weekly quiz at 8pm UK time every Wednesday and you are all welcome to take part. It is broadcast across Facebook.

We continue to enhance the website daily, with a history section, and a new USA Bills page where the bills currently passing through the house and senate are listed, as well as a find my representative section, where you can enter your address and find out who your representatives are, so you can contact them and ask them for support. You can find out more here - <https://www.labrats.international/usabills>

Our aim is to build an online resource where every aspect of the testing program is covered including the indigenous people whose homes were devastated. Our Facebook page now has over 1500 followers and increases every day, we are collating information from across the world regarding the tests.

We have also launched a weekly radio show, which will be hosted by Susan Musselwhite where we will be interviewing veterans, descendants and people connected to the tests. We would like to hear your story. If you would like to be interviewed, please email [media@labrats.international](mailto:media@labrats.international) or call +442032863988, your stories are so powerful to the cause.

Unfortunately, due to Covid-19, we will not be seeing you all this year at the NAAV conference, this is a great disappointment to us as we wanted to meet up with you all. We look forward to continuing our association with NAAV and its members, we

need to ensure that no veteran or their family is forgotten, and that the world is reminded of the testing program and its devastating consequences.



This fantastic image was provided by Bev Androl

The image of the mushroom cloud is imprinted on many of the Veterans and they will never forget it. The world has been affected by the tests, the eco systems, the veterans, the clean-up crews, the scientists and the civilians and we aim to give them a voice, a platform where they can be heard. We must continue the fight for recognition, in the UK, LABRATS have now joined the medallic recognition fight in the UK to support the Veterans. We must never give up, until the world recognises the failures of the governments and recognises the damage they have done.

The Veterans agency in the UK have now provided specific guidance and a new application form for a war pension, which details the conditions that are attributable in the UK, this is a massive step forward on a long journey of over 2 years, more work needs to be done, with further conditions to be added, but it is progress.

You have all been affected by the testing program in some way, as you are reading this article. We are here to promote you, we will share Social Media feeds, articles, research papers and help wherever we can. We have recently signed up to help find the Enewetak Survivors and update the roster.

Continued on Page 8...

# LOOKING FOR POTENTIAL STUDY CANDIDATES

Thank you to those that completed surveys and returned them.

We have included the two surveys again in this letter hoping to get surveys from those that haven't completed them.

As previously mentioned we have lost historical documents. Please communicate with your spouse, loved ones, children and heirs that if the family doesn't want or doesn't know what to do with your Atomic Veteran related documents, old NAAV Newsletters, books or memorabilia, please contact NAAV before destroying them. NAAV has lost valuable historical documentation because loved ones didn't know what to do with them.

If anyone has copies of the 2004 survey they submitted, we would like to get a copy of that.

Another form is included to collect potential participants in three DNA studies we would like to conduct. The three DNA study groups we are looking for potential candidates for are:

1. The original Atomic Veterans (primarily 1945 to 1963 Atomic Veterans).
2. Cleanup Veterans primarily living and working on Lojwa/Ruint.
3. Cleanup Veterans primarily living and working on Enewetak.



Please mail all of these to NAAV C/O KEITH KIEFER 14944 295th Ave NW, Zimmerman, MN 55398



**Go to Pages 6 & 7**

## CORRECTION

Correction to the "NEW NAAV CHAPLAIN" article published last quarter! The article contained a contact/title error.

Rev. Patrick J. Rohen, Chaplain  
(Captain) U.S. Army (Retired)  
Senior Status Priest  
Diocese of Toledo in America

E-Mail [patrickrohen1957@icloud.com](mailto:patrickrohen1957@icloud.com)  
Phone (567) 213-1652

## LOOKING FOR OPERATION DOMINIC USS PRINCETON CREW MEMBERS

I am trying to find vets from operation DOMINIC that were on the USS Princeton LPH5 at that time. I think I am finally getting some of the radiation information we need. I have asked, DTRA for readings from the helicopters that picked up the pods, the radionuclides that contaminated the air, ship, and water we drank and bathed in. They have a researcher trying to find this information. I can only hope they will be honest with the results. I have already received the RECA award for thyroid cancer and would be willing to share that information with them if we have any members from that group they can contact me at [lbriner694@aol.com](mailto:lbriner694@aol.com).

LLOYD BRINER of Decatur IL

# LOOKING FOR POTENTIAL STUDY CANDIDATES



We are presently looking for potential future DNA study candidates.

There are three study groups we are looking for potential candidates for. Those being original Atomic Veterans (primarily 1945 to 1963 Atomic Veterans), Enewetak Cleanup Veterans primarily living and working on Lojwa/Ruint and Enewetak Cleanup Veterans primarily living and working on Enewetak.

Which study group do you fall in ?

\_\_\_ original Atomic Veterans (primarily 1945 to 1963 Atomic Veterans)

\_\_\_ Enewetak Cleanup Veterans primarily living and working on Lojwa/Ruint

\_\_\_ Enewetak Cleanup Veterans primarily living and working on Enewetak.

What time period and operation was your exposure?

Are either of your parents alive?

Are you married/have a spouse/significant other/civil partnership/a biological parent?

Is your this individual alive?

Would they be prepared to participate in the study?

Do you have Children?

How many children?

Would they be prepared to participate in the study?

Do you (the exposed veteran) have brothers or sisters that are alive?

Are they married/have a spouse/significant other/civil partnership/ a biological parent?

Is this individual alive?

Would your sibling be prepared to participate in the study?

Do they have Children?

Would your siblings children be prepared to participate in the study?

How many children?

**Please provide all of your contact information and return to --  
NAAV • 14944 295th Ave NW • Zimmerman, MN 55398**



# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ATOMIC VETERANS Genetically Affected Children's Research Project 2020



If any of your children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren were born with birth defects, mental retardation, physical handicaps, chronic illnesses, Downs and other syndromes, or if you lost children and/or grandchildren to SID, miscarriages or still births, and if your wife, daughters or granddaughters have experienced chronic pregnancy problems or illnesses, these conditions may have been caused by your exposure to ionizing radiation while in service. Specify also if any of your children, grandchildren or great-grandchildren have health problems similar to yours. PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE and RETURN THIS FORM TO:

**Genetically Affected Children's Project 2020**  
**14944 295th Avenue NW • Zimmerman, MN 55398**  
**Phone: 612-232-6596 • E-Mail: Kiefer4ramsey@yahoo.com**

1. Veteran's Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Veteran's Middle Name: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Veteran's First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Wife's Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Veteran's Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Veteran's Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Street Number & Name) (City) (State) (Zip Code)

8. Number of Children: A. Boys \_\_\_\_ Girls \_\_\_\_ B. Grandchildren: A. Boys \_\_\_\_ Girls \_\_\_\_  
C. Great-Grandchildren: A. Boys \_\_\_\_ Girls \_\_\_\_

9. Veteran Deceased: Yes: \_\_\_\_ No: \_\_\_\_ If YES, cause of death: \_\_\_\_\_

10. Names of nucleau bomb tests and/or other radiation risk activity: \_\_\_\_\_

11. Branch of Service: \_\_\_\_\_ Ship/Military Unit: \_\_\_\_\_

12. Military Rank: \_\_\_\_\_ Dates of Service: \_\_\_\_\_

13. List individually, health problems of cildren, grandchioldren, great-grandchildren plus miscarriages, premature births, premature deaths etc. Give sex and age. Please give technical medical name first and common name in parenthese i.e. Osteoprisis (Bone Disease).

**PLEASE USE ADDITIONAL SHEETS OF PAPER IF NECESSARY!**

Continued from Page 3

First you would hear two distinct clicks then the blast. It got so bright that you were blinded for a second. The ground shook so violently that the trench looked like it whipped when you looked down the trench. When they stood up there was a big mushroom cloud and a big angry looking ball of fire rolling inside the clouds rising upward.

The men were ordered out of the trench and told to walk towards the bomb. Each squad leader had a geiger counter to register the radiation and he checked each member of his squad. When they were about a hundred yards away the radiation was too high and they were told to stop and go back to the trenches. After two hours they started walking back towards the blast area.

As they moved closer some of the men came across the animals. Most of them were hurt, the closer to the blast all of them were burned to some extent.

Upon getting to the spot where the tower had stood there was nothing left but a large depression. Most of the equipment at the base of the tower were either burned beyond recognition or was on fire. All the big equipment was thrown at various distances. Some were disintegrated. The animals close by were dead.

## LABRATS CONTINUED

Continued from Page 4

We are not a membership organisation, but you can help us by purchasing merchandise, including patches and pin badges from our website.

Our goals are the same, we fight for justice and ensure that the Atomic Test Survivor community is not forgotten. There are so many people who are fighting for the same cause and we need to work together to ensure that the world remembers. If you have any video links, pictures or want your story to be published, please contact us, we are here to help.

Submitted by..  
Alan Owen



The men went back to camp and discarded all their clothes, to be burned. After that they showered in some temporary showers they had set up for the occasion.

They were told the exercise was top secret, under no circumstances were they to talk to anyone about what they were doing or why they were there. Alex tried mailing a letter to his wife, but because it was a souvenir envelope with a Yucca Flats logo on it came back marked "Can not be mailed" since it would have let her know where he was. He still has the envelope.

While they weren't allowed to talk about it, the papers had the whole story. The next day they published pictures of the twelve marines from the Cleveland area who had participated. They had pictures of the bomb and the men in the trenches.

Alex Partezana USMC  
North Olmstead, OH





## VP-872 AND THE PROJECT DOMINIC ATOMIC BOMB TESTS



In 1962 the United States was in the midst of the Cold War. We experienced The Cuban crisis and the Berlin crisis. I was living in Santa Clara California and was attending monthly Naval Reserve meetings at the Naval Air Station Alameda. I was one of the many Weekend Warriors that train one weekend a month.

In August of 1961 I received a letter from President Kennedy recalling me to active duty in my Naval Air squadron, VP-872. I moved my family back to Tennessee and moved into my barracks at NAS Alameda. Our squadron was augmented by members of VP-701, VP-703, and VP-875 and other Naval Reservists. Our squadron flew patrols along the West coast and trained for our deployment to the South Pacific and Christmas Island in March of 1962. I was rated Aviation Electronics Technician 2nd class. (AT-2) and flew radioman position in crew 12. Each aircraft had a crew of 12 officers and enlisted.

We arrived on Christmas Island in March of 1962 and then came under operational command of Joint Task Force 8, participating in Project Dominic. Our squadron assignment was to fly patrols with our 12 P2V-5F Neptune aircraft and flight crews before each of the Atomic Bomb tests near Christmas Island. As I understand it, the main purpose of patrols was to ensure that there were no ships anywhere in the fallout area of the bomb tests. We searched thousand of square miles of the South Pacific with our radar the night before each early morning's bomb test. These tests occurred about twice a week.

We did locate a few freighters that did not get the maritime warnings. We were able to notify them to change course and get clear of the test

area. The scheduled bomb test would have to be aborted if we were unable to contact the ship. The international distress frequency worked more than once to establish contact with the freighter. The Russian spy ships stayed just outside the test area perimeter. As crew 12 radioman I kept a list of possible frequencies that might work.

After completing our night patrol we landed and mustered on the flight line near our aircraft. It turns out that every soul on Christmas Island had to be accounted for and positioned near an aircraft or ship in order to evacuate the island in case of a problem with the bomb's detonation. The bombs were dropped from a B52 over a floating barge target and were set to detonate at several thousand feet above the ocean. If the bomb failed to detonate and exploded in the ocean the island could be sprayed by radioactive water. Fortunately this never happened. We were prepared to load about 25 persons in our aircraft which normally carries a crew of 12.

Our squadron was also briefly called upon to fly some patrols out of Johnston Island for some bomb tests that were made using land launched rockets with Atomic bomb warheads.

As you can imagine there was not a lot to do when off duty on Christmas Island. We spent a good deal of time lounging under the Cabana trees near our barracks. Our movie theater was outside and prone to heavy tropical rains during our movies. We had two small communities we could visit. One was named London and the other Paris. We were not allowed to hang out with the local Christmas Island residents. We did get to visit the end of the island where the British performed their atomic bomb test in the 1950's. They left a lot of their rusted out equipment and scrap in a nearby junk yard. I found

out that the dump was recently all cleaned up and shipped to the scrap yard.



VP-872 flew close to 1,900 hours in April and May of 1962. VP-872 was deactivated in August of 1962 in ceremonies presided over by ADM. Chester W. Nimitz. VP-872 has flown over 4,900 hours or more than 750,000 miles and has maintained a perfect safety record.

Continued on Bottom Page 10

## THANK YOU

Thank you to those that have sent documents, old Newsletter and Atomic Veteran materials. Please let your spouse, Children and others know they can send Atomic Veteran related materials to: NAAV C/O Keith Kiefer 14944 295th Ave.NW Zimmerman, MN 55398

## NAAV Convention Rescheduled Mark your calendar

We cancelled the annual 2020 NAAV Convention due to the COVID-19 situation. This convention is now rescheduled for August 25, 26, 27th, 2021, same location. More information will be provided in future news letters.

## NAAV BOARD MEMBER ELECTION BALLOT



You should find a NAAV Board Member Election Ballot in this newsletter. Normally, we would hold an election at our annual NAAV Convention. As you may know we had to cancel our convention due to the COVID-19 situation. Due to this unusual situation we need to improvise. In Order to conduct the election we have decided to hold the election using a mail in ballot. Four board members are up for election. To cast your ballot please select four candidates via a check mark or a write in candidate. Fold the sheet in half with the address on the outside tape the two edges together, place a stamp on the ballot, return address is optional. The ballot must be mailed by November 1, 2020.

## REMINDER RECA SUNSET

Those that are eligible for the Justice Department Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA) presently, only have until July 10, 2022 to file a claim. Please spread the word and contact your Congressman or Federal Senators to extend the sunset date. We have Bills in both the house and Senate to extend the sunset date, as well as, increase the benefits.

## Attention Atomic Veterans that have filed a VA claim for Prostrate Cancer

If you filed a Veterans Affairs (VA) Service Connected (SC) claim for prostrate cancer and were unsuccessful please contact us.

We can refer you to a party that has success with this type of claim.

## Project Dominic Continued

Continued from Page 9

I have been coordinating our VP-872 squadron reunion for a number of years and collected many photos and artifacts. They are stored at the Alameda Naval Air Museum in Alameda California.

Our shipmates have related many interesting tales about their experiences on Christmas Island now called Kiritimati. Our squadron was comprised of close to 300 shipmates when recalled. We are now down to about 30 shipmates. Several of our shipmates became ill and were able to file a claim with the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act. (RECA) and receive compensation.

Submitted by:  
ROZ BROWN  
Aviation Electronics Technician  
2nd class. (AT-2)



## UNITED WE STAND

In March of this year I had the extreme pleasure of receiving a recognition award at a meeting which included both the Atomic Cleanup Veterans and the Marshall Islanders. This award means a lot to me because it recognizes a principle which I have long felt is important; that principle is enshrined in the frequently quoted line, "United we stand, divided we fall". Let me tell you why this is important for me.

I am a survivor of Operation Crossroads. I suffered health problems as a result of that experience. I also had a daughter who died of illness that I firmly believe was related to my radiation exposure. And I have a son who suffers from Addison's disease, which is a problem related to the endocrine system. The government's assertion that radiation induced ailments can't be genetically transmitted is contrary to the opinion of all the geneticists. And, for over three decades, almost every physician I consulted would rather obviously avoid the subject.

Then, in 1980, I read an article about the National Association of Atomic Veterans in my local newspaper. The organization (referred to as NAAV) had been established by another atomic bomb test survivor, Orville Kelly and his wife, Wanda, in 1979. Orville had died a few months later, but the organization survived with Wanda at the helm. I sent an inquiry immediately to the cited address in Burlington, Iowa. Quickly I was invited by Wanda Kelly to join NAAV, and before long I and two other navy veterans were appearing around Wisconsin, spreading the word.

The membership of NAAV was, of course, primarily veterans. However, not long after this, another organization, the National Association of Radiation Survivors was founded by Dorothy Lagaretta, a laboratory worker connected with the Manhattan Project at the University of California. NARS was an organization of people who had been exposed to radiation related to the Atomic Bomb. This included nuclear industry workers, radium miners, and people who lived downwind of nuclear tests; this very soon came to include Marshall Islanders. By 1984 NAAV membership was approaching a thousand; at what was its fifth annual meeting, which was held in Kissimmee, Florida that fall, Wanda announced that she was officially stepping down as Executive Director; she said she needed

more time to organize the other aspects of her life, but would still continue as a permanent member of the Board of Directors.

After almost four decades, a few of the details escape me, but my memory tells me that the person who took over leadership of the organization at that time was a fairly high ranking reserve, or National Guard officer; the headquarters also moved to Eldon, Missouri. It is also my recollection that this person brought with him a number of new members. I do know that, at the general meeting, I made a motion to the effect that we, of all people, should take a stand supporting universal nuclear disarmament and was shouted down. In response to this, several of us pretty much withdrew from participation in NAAV activities and joined NARS; NARS, in turn, took a much greater interest in veterans concerns.

Sometime in the 1990's, I ran into one of the members who had stayed active in NAAV. He told me that Oscar Rosen was now the commander, and that he had pretty much improved the situation. He told me that he really felt I should come back and help get back where they should be. I accepted his suggestion; now I would be active in both organizations.

Several years later, I had become president of NARS, and Richard Conant had succeeded Oscar at the head of NAAV. Coincidentally, on one particular occasion, both organizations had planned their annual meetings for overlapping dates at neighboring hotels in Las Vegas. Dick and I got together during that week-end and agreed that there was a lot of sense in merging our organizations; there is strength in numbers. Unfortunately, we couldn't convince the bulk of our members; while NARS, unfortunately, did not survive by itself NAAV ultimately did.

Today, more than ever, the mere existence of nuclear weapons endangers life as we know it. For that very reason, I was pleased to participate in a meeting which brought together Atomic Veterans, Cleanup Veterans and Marshallese people for a common cause. The limitation, and, hopefully, elimination of nuclear weapons is a topic that affects the whole world. In my opinion we should therefore be reaching out for everyone to join in the effort.

by F. Lincoln Grahfs PhD  
Operation Crossroads



NAAV  
130 Cleveland Street  
Lebanon, OR 97355-4505

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

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

**Fred Schafer  
Vice Commander & Treasurer NAAV  
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E-Mail: [derf@trcschafer.com](mailto:derf@trcschafer.com)**

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Deadlines are the 1st of every 3rd month and any material submitted after that time may be delayed until next issue. All submissions are to be e-mailed to [bobruyle34@gmail.com](mailto:bobruyle34@gmail.com) or mailed to Robert L. Ruyle • 420 Steinway Road • Lincoln, NE 68505-2564. 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.

**NAAV BOARD MEMBERS**

**NATIONAL COMMANDER**

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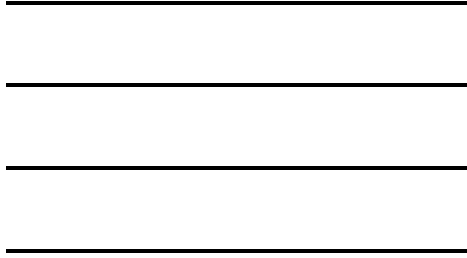
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**NAAV**  
**c/o Bob Pfeifer**  
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Fold here

# NAAV Board Voter Ballot

Please vote for four members. Check by the name to vote for the individual or write in a member.

\_\_\_\_\_. Keith Kiefer

\_\_\_\_\_. Lincoln Grahfs

\_\_\_\_\_. Gillie Jenkins

\_\_\_\_\_. Robert Ruyle

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Please add your return address, a stamp and mail before November 1, 2020.