



## YAGRGRAM #89 - FALL 2022

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view & print this YAGRGRAM in color at <http://www.yagrs.org>

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### YAGRS/MMA - 2023 REUNION HOTEL INFORMATION

We have a signed contract with the Hyatt Regency Dulles Airport in Washington DC. Dates are Monday, July 3 through Saturday, July 8, 2023. Room rate is \$129 a night plus 13% room tax. We are working on tours. Will publish them when selected. We are in the process of negotiating a contract for a viewing room in a downtown hotel on the evening of July 4th for viewing the DC fireworks.

You can reserve a room by going to the link below. It is very easy and convenient. This link was previously sent out the Ships Coordinators for distribution.



<https://www.hyatt.com/en-US/group-booking/DULLE/G-YAGR>

You can also reserve by calling 703-713-1234 and use the code G-YAGR. REGISTER EARLY as we will not be able to increase the number of rooms when the room block is filled. Rooms reserved after that will be at the going rate.

2023 REUNION WILL BE PATRIOTIC RED, WHITE & BLUE

I think I should give the background as how we came to the Hyatt and the dates. After the Nashville reunion, request for proposals (RFPs) were sent out (June/July) to various areas including Myrtle Beach, NC, Dayton, OH, Harrisburg, PA, Lancaster, PA, Warwick, RI, Buffalo, NY, & McLean, VA. We received proposals from only Tysons Corner, Myrtle Beach & Warwick. Dates offered were in early April 2023. Tysons Corner rate \$139. Myrtle Beach was \$236. Warwick was considered too far from the core of the area under consideration. All others failed to respond. Myrtle Beach rate was out of the question. Tysons Corner rate looked good until we saw the devil in the details. Those details increased the room expense (no breakfast), ladies breakfast extra, lack of normal compensations, (free meeting rooms, mikes, etc), etc. Oh, we did get one unsolicited offer from New York City. It was also out of reason.

Brian Forrester had a reunion with the USS Forrestal CVA-59, (Jul 25 to Jul 31) which used the Hyatt Regency Dulles. Since Brian was familiar with the Hyatt sales staff, he asked what was the possibility of having the YAGRS/MMA reunion there. The hotel responded with the above offer. Being there were no other reasonable offers and the price and location fit what was decided in Nashville, it was decided to go with the Hyatt. I know it is over the 4th so we are looking to have something patriotic for the group on Tuesday the 4th. The special is a trip to DC for the fireworks display on the fourth from a hotel viewing room. I know it may be hot but the Forrestal group did not complain as everything (hotel, buses, tour sites, etc) was air conditioned. But what could be more patriotic than DC on the 4th of July.

The selection mirrored the selection process for the Nashville reunion. Few if any responses and those that did were out of reason. This makes 2 years in a row that finding a reasonable site with price & amenities a frustrating procedure. Also the time factor for getting a hotel was short. Eleven months before a reunion date. And like in Nashville we will have to make some adjustments to the normal routine. So as in the past be prepared to stay flexible.

One thing already determined is that the Hyatt will not give us additional rooms at the contract rate if we reach the number contracted for. If we contract for 60 rooms and need 65, the five additional rooms will have to pay the going rate which is unknown at this time. Hyatt did not even give way on this to the large Forrestal group. They filled their contract rooms and late individuals had to pay the going rate which at the time was \$220. So it will behoove you to REGISTER EARLY if you plan on coming to the reunion. Also if we fall short of the contracted rooms we will have to pay the hotel the contract rate (\$129) per room for the number short.

The contract has 30 rooms available for Monday Jul 3 and 50 rooms for Tuesday Jul 4 and 60 rooms for the rest of the week. All based on double occupancy.

As you can see the hospitality industry has recovered and is still in the drivers seat. Reservation procedures and code are noted above.  
Lee Doyel

### Nashville 2022 Reunion Report

From: Lee Doyel

Lee Doyel opened the business meeting reporting there were 26 men and 17 ladies present. The smallest attendance ever to date. The thinking was that Nashville would be a good place and draw a large number.

In Colorado Springs the YAGRS and Mariner Marlin Association (MMA) Association decide to join the two groups to increase attendance and have more leverage in negotiations with hotels and tour companies.

As In Colorado Springs meeting Nashville was chosen because it was the MMA's choice which meant that every other year each group would decide where to go the next year.

Secretary Mell Harder had not been present since 2015 due to his wife's medical condition. It was noted that his wife had died recently but it did not diminish his efforts in performing his obligations to YAGRS for REUNION name tags, attendance list, YAGRGRAM, etc. The group expressed its appreciation to him for his dedication. The color coding in your YAGRGRAM address is the same. Color means you are delinquent in your dues.

Treasurer Ray Ostrowski was also not able to be present. However he reports the bank balance at \$19,913.00. YAGRS will get over \$11,000.00 from MMA as YAGRS essentially funded the reunion as Ray was able to transfer funds electronically to Brian Forrester for tour deposits and final payments. It was easier and more practical this way rather than each group write checks for their part.

Lee reported that the Colorado springs reunion cost the benefactor \$39,838.00. So far he has gotten a total of five thank you notes to the benefactor from members.

As with past reunions we had to do some last minute changes. The General Jackson Showboat Dinner was cancelled. So a new dinner show was booked. It was \$69.50 cheaper than the Jackson. So Ray will be issuing refund checks to those that had scheduled the Jackson.

The ladies breakfast contributed \$655 to the local VA unit along with various personal items.



Roland Cote (not present) reported that the USS Massachusetts is on the return from the virus and is under new management which has plans to bring the ship back to its previous status.

The YAGR museum is in fine shape

Webmaster Frank Pulaski (not present) reported the website now has a counter and it comes up high on the first page when queried. At Colorado Springs it was suggested that all the YAGRGRAMS be put not he web site. He has put YAGRGRAM number 60 through 68 which were done by Mel on the site.

Lee has hard copies of all the YAGRGRAMS including the first ones by Harry Miller. They are in the process of being digitized and will also be put on the web site. Probably by end of May or the first part of June.

Lee still has a few YAGR books and well over 200 have been sold and a dozen or so have been sent to various museums, historical societies, Library of Congress etc.

There still is some inventory left in the ships store. See web site for the list. First come, first served.

Lee noted the Association over the years had been contacted on a regular basis by law firms about asbestos on the ship. They have also pestered other ship reunion groups about asbestos.

While there was asbestos on the YAGR ships, it was encapsulated to prevent exposure. The old piping in the ships was left in place sealed off, encapsulated and all new piping installed.

Lee said that this reunion had been the most frustrating and tiring ever. When the request for proposal (RFP) was sent out, very few hotels responded and those that did were very expensive.

The RFP was sent out again and a couple more responded one of which was the present Raddison. It became obvious that the Raddison was the only viable one. A site visit determined that concessions by us would have to be made. No DJ or dance floor. So a stand up comedian was booked for the Saturday banquet. Liquor and wine from the hotel bar. Beer, snacks and soft drinks by the group in the hospitality/ready room. Men and ladies Saturday breakfast had to be held together.

A discussion was held as to why attendance was so low. YAGRS had 41 and MMA had 37 for a grand total of 78. No specific reason for the low attendance was made although various reasons (virus hangover, medical, personal conflicts, tour prices, inflation, etc) were set forth. The attendance was so low that the group did not meet the contract obligations. All hotel contracts have minimum requirements, primarily food & beverage (ie banquet). The group was in danger of having to pay several thousand dollars to make up the minimum requirement. However thanks to Brian, he was able to get the hotel to waive the penalty fee. Note, we initially booked 70 rooms but only filled 44.

Lee stated at the New Orleans reunion (2019) he detected the beginnings of a malaise and general declining lack of interest was edging into the Association. Unknown why. Perhaps the length of doing the reunion. Nashville is the 25th. Lee reported that this past year several people have been asked to be taken off the ships coordinators list as they no longer wanted to get Association news. Also several had indicated Colorado Springs was their last (no stated reason) reunion. Also two or three present at this reunion indicated it probably would be their last reunion.

It was obvious the both groups had the "core group" present and these would attend even if the number were smaller. However another one this small would not economically work. Particular since the hospitality industry has recovered big time along with increasing inflation. Future reunions will undoubtedly be more expensive. Room costs will probably start at \$149 a night plus taxes. Airline prices will stay high.

Discussion evolved down to "do we give it one more shot" or "go to Rhode Island and "fold the flag" as required by the YAGR bylaws. Lee had researched where most of the YAGR membership lived and apparently the best bet for a possible larger attendance lay somewhere north of the Mason Dixon Line and east of the Mississippi River.

During this discussion Brian checked with the MMA meeting and they were in agreement that a next reunion must have sufficient numbers to warrant continuing having them. They also wanted to give it another try. As to place, it was mutually agreed that it would be left up Lee, Doug and Brian to find a suitable location in either the Northeast, mid Atlantic or upper Midwest.

### USS Massachusetts Report

from: Roland Cote, AGR-10

2022 YAGR donation presented aboard USS Battleship Massachusetts to Executive Director Meghan Rathburn. Representing the YAGR Association are John Hemminger YAGR-2, Roland Cote YAGR-10, and Henry Mackay YAGR-12.

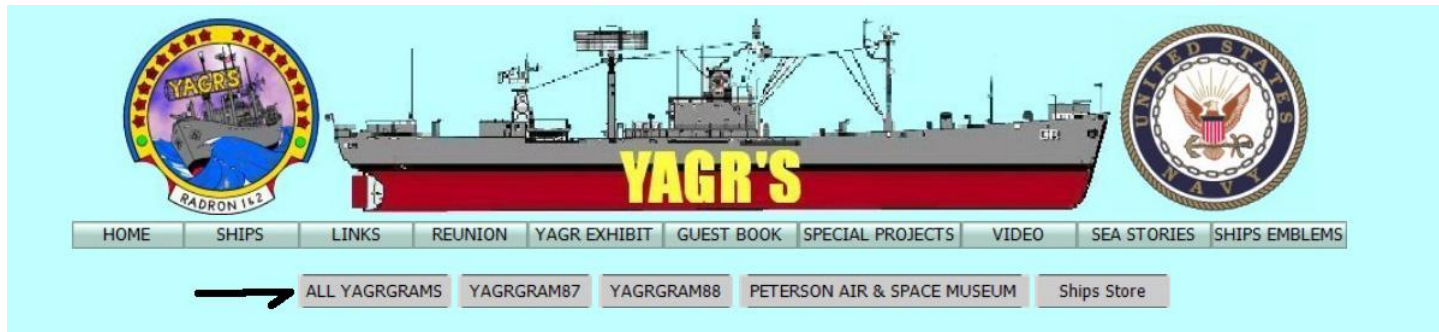


**Website Report**

From: [Frank Pulaski](#)

The first 60 YAGRGRAMS were handed down to Lee as hard copies. He had them all converted to PDF files that can be viewed on the website. They are all posted on the YAGR website, 61 through 88 designed by Mel Harder. Just go to the home page <http://www.yagrs.org> and click on ALL YAGRGRAMS. It is very interesting to see how the association was put together by Harry starting with YAGRGRAM #1.

**below: Screen shot of YAGR'S website showing location to view all YAGRGRAMS**



**ship's coordinators** : Lee Doyel

Ship's coordinators maintain an email list that is used to forward memos from the chair and advance notices of reunion plans to crew members. If you wish to be included, send an email to your ship's coordinator. Due to various circumstances, I now need coordinators for AGR-1 & AGR-7. Howard Oberstein recently stepped in as coordinator for the Interpreter. I can supply group lists to anyone who takes one of these ships. Duties are not extensive. Primarily forwarding what I put out to the ship's email list.

- |       |  |        |   |
|-------|--|--------|---|
| AGR-1 |  | AGR-9  | Frank Mahaffey <a href="mailto:franknbets@gmail.com">franknbets@gmail.com</a>                     |
| AGR-2 | Ralph Rappuhn <a href="mailto:rrappuhn@aol.com">rrappuhn@aol.com</a>                   | AGR-10 | Paul Langenus <a href="mailto:plangenus@cox.net">plangenus@cox.net</a>                            |
| AGR-3 | Chuck Parker <a href="mailto:chuckparker@gmail.com">chuckparker@gmail.com</a>          | AGR-11 | George Sleeper <a href="mailto:gsleeper@roadrunner.com">gsleeper@roadrunner.com</a>               |
| AGR-4 | Steve Mierzejewsk <a href="mailto:stevejackie43@gmail.com">stevejackie43@gmail.com</a> | AGR-12 | Jesse Germany <a href="mailto:jgermany31@gmail.com">jgermany31@gmail.com</a>                      |
| AGR-5 | Bob Werstler <a href="mailto:rdwerst@sbcglobal.net">rdwerst@sbcglobal.net</a>          | AGR-13 | Richard Willhite <a href="mailto:willys55nut@comcast.net">willys55nut@comcast.net</a>             |
| AGR-6 | Lee Doolittle <a href="mailto:tleedoo@u.washington.edu">tleedoo@u.washington.edu</a>   | AGR-14 | Howard Oberstein <a href="mailto:howardoberstein@sbcglobal.net">howardoberstein@sbcglobal.net</a> |
| AGR-7 |  | AGR-15 | Lee Doyel <a href="mailto:mldoyel@cox.net">mldoyel@cox.net</a>                                    |
| AGR-8 | Ron Stasiak <a href="mailto:ronstasiak@rocketmail.com">ronstasiak@rocketmail.com</a>   | AGR-16 | Frank McNamara <a href="mailto:ec2sc1@comcast.net">ec2sc1@comcast.net</a>                         |

**Dues Payment Form - dues are \$17/year**

Make checks out to YAGRS. Mail to:

Ray Ostrowski, Treasurer  
123 Barbara Dr., Newburgh NY 12550

Ray can also be reached at: e-mail: [rayrosie@hotmail.com](mailto:rayrosie@hotmail.com)  
phone: 845-565-6243 cell: 845-245-5707

Current membership year ends May 31, 2022. Highlighted date on address label is the date your current membership expires. If that date is **5/31/2022** or earlier, please update your membership by making a dues payment. Upon dues payment, you will receive an updated membership card and crew list. Please complete the information below and mail to Ray Ostrowski with dues payment.. You may pay for more than one year.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Ship: \_\_\_\_\_

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

amount enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ email: \_\_\_\_\_