

Dear MVA Members and All Midway Veterans!

For the first time since the inception of our reunion group, we're having to step away from the podium with a message of "Anchors Aweigh," leaving Norfolk without having liberty in one of the greatest Navy towns in the country. Our ship, crewed by USS Midway Veterans, is setting a course to help in the battle against one of the toughest adversaries ever faced by our country, **so we will not be holding a reunion in Norfolk this year.** To date the losses within our ranks have been minimal and we hope and pray that they stay that way as we set course for our **2021 reunion with San Diego and the USS Midway Museum.** Stay tuned to the IMC for more information as we pull out the charts, set the course, rendezvous with the battle group, and commit to a course of action.

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has upset our 2020 plans for a reunion in Norfolk, VA, and we've been scrambling to get information from the contract hotel, the Sheraton Norfolk Waterside, regarding the commitments we made when we signed a contract back in 2019 for the 2020 event. Not ever having to cancel an event previously and never having been thrust into a pandemic, we weren't prepared for the penalty clause in the hotel contract to be used against us – and that would have cost us a substantial sum if we were to cancel the reunion in advance of the hotel taking the lead and canceling many of their events in the 3rd and 4th quarters of 2020 on their own. It's a battle that we won without having to fire a shot – all we had to do was to patiently wait for the hotel to see that there was going to be very few participants for a ship's reunion event in September of 2020. They 'surrendered' and agreed to let the Midway Veterans off the hook with no penalties and no future agreements. However, in order to maintain an amicable relationship between the factions, we have agreed (in house) that we will seriously consider Norfolk and the Sheraton Norfolk Waterside Hotel for a reunion in 2022.

Gentlemen and ladies, on the more serious side, the Sheraton Norfolk Waterside has graciously agreed to cancel our contract with them with no penalties and no conditions for future considerations. Every person who made a reservation through the Midway Veterans room block will receive an email notice from the hotel stating that the hotel is canceling their reservation with no penalties. Those who have made reservations outside of the room blocks that we had set aside with the better negotiated rate will need to contact the hotel on their own and cancel their reservations themselves. **If for some reason you don't receive an email notice from the hotel, you can call them directly at 757-622-6664 to check on your reservation status.** Sadly, the hotel has been canceling lots of groups, so they usually get it right the first time.

For everyone's sake and for the sake of your health and well-being, follow the guidance of the CDC and your state health departments and minimize travel away from your homes, wear the face coverings, don't congregate in large groups, and religiously follow the hygiene guidelines for hand washing, social distancing, and wearing face masks. Many of us are in the group of older adults that are considered 'most vulnerable'! Believe it when you hear it from those in the healthcare 'front lines' that this virus is serious business. We want to see each and every one of you at our future reunions.

Stay safe and stay healthy!

Onward and upward, my friends.

Oscar R. Granger, President

USS Midway Veterans Association

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