



USS KASKASKIA BLAST

Dedicated to the men who served aboard USS KASKASKIA (AO 27)

Volume 9 No. 1

March 2026

March 2026

Officers

President *Dennis "Denny" Butterfield*
dh-Jlbutters@hotmail.com

Vice President Michael Valsamy
mvalsamy@gmail.com

Secretary Richard D. Jones
AO27KASKASKIA@gmail.com

Treasurer Ben Pfister
ben.joe.pfister@gmail.com

Editor Richard D. Jones
AO27KASKASKIA@gmail.com

Historian Richard D. Jones
AO27KASKASKIA@gmail.com

Chaplain Marvin Bryant

CONTENTS

President's Message and Reunion Overview	1
Minutes of 35 nd Reunion	2
Dues are Due	2
Ship's Store	2
Taps	2
Registration Form	3
JAX Reunion Photos	4
Ron Tuscano's Paintings	5
Max OP Tempo	6

President's Message

Dennis "Denny" Butterfield

Welcome to all my shipmates, spouses, family members and friends.

This year marks 36 years that USS Kaskaskia has had a ship's reunion. Although my wife and I have only attended the Kaskaskia Reunions these last few years, it has been a true honor to meet so many shipmates and families.

I would like to thank a few people for helping me organize this event. A huge thank you to Larry Kish who helped me format this event. Richard Jones helped in getting the contact information out and Ben Pfister who was willing to handle the financial end and other people who gave me support in handling this endeavor.

This year our reunion will be held in my home state, South Dakota. We will be touring the Badlands of South Dakota, stopping off, and visiting Wall Drug the first day. The second day, we will travel to and visit one of our country's most cherished National Monuments, Mt. Rushmore. You can take the time to view the making of Mt Rushmore, visit the gift shops and maybe have lunch at one of the restaurants on site. Later that day we will drive to Crazy Horse Memorial where you will have time to visit the museum, gift shops and restaurants on site. Time permitting, after touring Crazy Horse Memorial; we can take a scenic drive on the Needles Highway, through the hole in the mountain and onto Custer State Park where you will have a good chance to see the buffalo roam. The third and final day we will be driving to historic Deadwood where Wild Bill Hickok met his ultimate demise, shot in the back of the head at the "old style" #10 Saloon by that cowardly Jack McCall. Before heading back to our hotel for the ship's meeting and our banquet, we'll take the time to drive to Mount Moriah Cemetery, AKA "Boot Hill" where you can view the final resting place of Wild Bill Hickok, Calamity Jane and Seth Bullock.

I sincerely hope that everyone has a wonderful, stress-free time at this year's reunion.

Best wishes to all,
Denny Butterfield

See Page 3 Registration

USS KASKASKIA Reunion Webpage
<http://www.kaskaskia27reunion.com/>

USS KASKASKIA (AO 27)

2025 Reunion Meeting Minutes
September 20, 2025
Jacksonville, Florida

President Mike Valsamy called the meeting to order. Board members present: Mike Valsamy Don Seymour, Richard Jones and Ben Pfister.

Eight additional members were present: Dennis Butterfield, David Lutman, L.J. Quesenberry, Larry Kish, Robert Spear, Jimmy Tabb, James Washburn and Judson Zernechel.

Meeting opened by reciting the Lord’s Prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance

Recognized departed Shipmates with a moment of silence.

Secretary Jones read the Minutes of the 2024 Meeting. Motion to approve by Larry Kish, Second J.D. Tabb. Approved.

Treasurer Ben Pfister gave the financial report. Total funds on hand \$2911.63. Motion to accept J.D. Tabb. Approved. President thanked Ben for his diligence.

Old Business:

Follow up on previous Jimmy Tabb motion to look into shortage of funds when Ben Pfister was given the bank account. (Approximately \$1500.00). Discussion. President Valsamy agreed to look into the shortage. Agreed that Ed must show receipts for disbursements. If unable, he must write a letter to explain the shortage.

New Business:

Larry Kish discussed the website changes and updates, Site fees of \$155.39 have been paid.

The photos and letter from Ron Tuscano concerning his Kaskaskia paintings was recommended to be added to the website by Ben Pfister. (See Page 5)

Dennis Butterfield offered to host the 36th Reunion in the Black Hills of South Dakota centered in Rapid City SD in September 2026. A motion was made by Judson Zernechel to approve the location. Approved.

Discussion was held on officers for the 2025-2026 term.

Proposed Officers for 2025-2026.

- President – Dennis Butterfield
- Vice President – Mike Valsamy
- Secretary -- Richard Jones
- Treasurer – Ben Pfister
- Historian--Richard Jones

A motion to approve the above slate was made. Motion carried.

Note: Copies of USS KASKASKIA Log Books were turned over to new Historian RICHARD JONES during the convention in Jacksonville.

Convention Statistics:

Youngest – Bob Spear -76

Member Traveling the farthest – Dennis Butterfield

Member Traveling the least – Richard Jones

Larry Kish made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by J.D. Tabb. Motion carried.

Dues are Due

Yearly dues of \$10.00 are now due. This token rate helps pay for the printing and mailing of the KASKASKIA BLAST and also for the yearly costs of maintaining the website. As you know, postage and the fees for the website have continued to increase each year. However, the board believes the cost is justified since it contains so much data and history of our ship.

Please send your check for \$10.00 to the Treasurer BEN PFISTER.

*Make check payable to BEN PFISTER
2411- 45th Street
Rock Island, IL 61204*

USS KASKASKIA Ship's Store

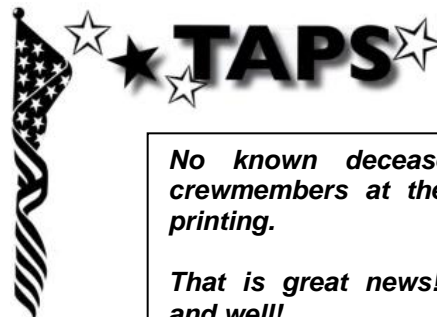
Vice-President Mike Valsamy has several USS KASKASKIA (AO 27) related items for sale. He plans to bring them to the Reunion; however, shipmates can order hats and pins from Mike via his email address. Mike has hats and a limited number of charms and pins from past reunions. The hats are \$10.00 plus \$3.00 postage and the charms and pins are \$5.00 plus \$2.00 postage. See the website for pictures of all of the charms available.



USS KASKASKIA AO27 Ballcap



USS KASKASKIA AO27 pin



No known deceased Kaskaskia crewmembers at the time of this printing.

That is great news! Stay healthy and well!



USS Kaskaskia AO27 36th Reunion
Rapid City SD– Sept 16– Sept 20, 2026
Reservation Form Due by August 1, 2026

Attendee Name _____ Guest/Spouse _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Home Phone (____) _____ Cell (____) _____

Email _____

Hotel Reservation Information

Reservations for the Best Western Ramkota Hotel, 2111 N LaCrosse St., Rapid City, SD 57701, can be made by calling (605)343-8550 and reference September 16-20, 2026-USS Kaskaskia Reunion. Hotel cost is \$131.00 per night and includes breakfast for two per room. This room rate is applicable 3 days pre and 3 days post reunion (e.g. Sept 17-23).

Excursion and Banquet Reservations

Wednesday – 9/16 – Meet and Greet in the Hospitality Room. Registration begins at 4:00. Enjoy drinks and snacks including Silver Dollar Cocktail Sandwiches, Fresh Fruit, Garden Harvest, Meat & Cheese Tray and Boneless Chicken Bites. All this while renewing friendships and sharing sea stories.

Hospitality Room Guests _____ **x \$50 per person = \$** _____

Thursday 9/17 thru Saturday 9/ 19 Bus Transportation – There is no access fee for any of the attractions we will be visiting only the bus transportation cost. Thursday – *Badlands & Wall Drug*. Friday *Mount Rushmore and Crazy Horse Museum*. Saturday *Deadwood*.

Number of Guests _____ **x \$100 per person = \$** _____

Saturday 9/20 – Annual business meeting and Banquet at the hotel (Cash Bar). The banquet will be buffet style including Chicken & Shrimp Romano pasta, Burgundy Beef tips, Honey Pepper Salmon.

Number of Guests _____ **x \$50 per person = \$** _____

Your total cost = \$ _____

Questions about the reunion can be directed to:

Dennis Butterfield

Phone (605)770-5420

email: dh-Jlbutters@hotmail.com

Please make all checks payable to Ben Pfister – Registration due by August 1, 2026

Mail to: Ben Pfister

Phone (309)314-7141 (Please identify by name)

2411 – 45th Street

Rock Island, Illinois 61204

email: ben.joe.pfister@gmail.com

USS KASKASKIA 2025 REUNION PHOTOS



President Mike Valsamy presents gift frame to CDR Orth, CO of USS INDIANAPOLIS (LCS 17)



Frame of major construction event covers with cancels dated on the event day designed by Richard Jones for gift to LCS 17 crew



Museum Ship Ex-USS ORLECK (DD 886) Located in downtown Jacksonville



Above-KASKASKIA Reunion families gathered on the forecastle of LCS 17 for group photo. Right- Group photo during harbor tour of St. Augustine, Florida



Don Wix shared his memories as a 1963 Plank Owner in KAS during our banquet



Click on this link [USS Kaskaskia Reunions Jacksonville 2025](#) for many more photos

COLOR PHOTOS OF KASKASKIA DURING CUBAN BLOCKADE 1962 COMPLIMENTS OF RON TUSCANO

Kaskaskia Plank Owner CS3 (1961-1963) had two B&W photos from the time the ship was part of the Cuban blockade. Ron had an artist recreate those photos in color on canvas. He made photographs of those and shared those with us at the 2025 Jacksonville Reunion. This is a copy of the letter Ron sent to Ben with these photos.

Hi Ben
unfortunately, as stated in my letter to you on July 7, I will not be able to join the reunion crew in Mayport Florida this year.
Enclosed our photos of the USS Kaskaskia refueling the fleet in October 1962. This was part of the Cuban missile crisis when we participated in the block cade with 200 other ships around Cuba. President John F Kennedy wanted to bring the USN to a capacity of 600 ships. during this time our nation was at the brink of war war III. we all worked very long hours serving our country and not knowing what the end results would be .
I was in charge of the gallery and served three meals a day and plenty of mid rats to the crew.
I served aboard the Kas from the recommissioning work in Hoboken, New Jersey in 1961 working our way-down the coast and stopping in Norfolk and then down to our home port in Mayport, Fla my tour ended, which included a med cruise in 1962 In August 1963

since I remembered that day that's depicted in the photos, I commissioned an artist name B Ducey to see if he could put my memories to a canvas. I asked for one painting to be 30" x 48" and then one smaller with a different view.
I enclosed some extra pictures to possibly hand out during the upcoming reunion, and possibly you could share my part of the story during these times . Maybe for-those crew members that would not be able to attend you could share them in the next volume of the
Kaskaskia Blast. Enjoy your time with the crew and ship's company.

Ron Tuscano CS3
Plank member



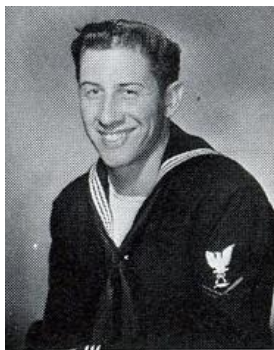
October 1992 USS KASKASKIA (AO 27) and USS ENTERPRISE (CVN 65) UNREP off the coast of Cuba



Cuban Blockade, October 1962 KASKASKIA, ENTERPRISE, USS HARWOOD (DD 861) and USS CANBERRA (CAG 2) during underway replenishment.



USS KASKASKIA (AO 27) on horizon, USS SABINE (AO 25) our Mayport, Florida sister ship.



R. Tuscano, CS3



Richard D. Jones
137 Putnam Ave
Ormond Beach FL 32174

To:

Heading to the DAKOTA BADLANDS for the 2026 Reunion!

Reunion Registration Information Enclosed – This Year--Join in--Be There!

MAX OP TEMPO BEGINS

