

SCUTTLEBUTT

A Quarterly Newsletter

March 2019

Presidents Corner

Hello Gambier Bay Family!

Registration is now open for our 2019 Taffy 3 Reunion, **which will be the last one hosted by the USS Gambier Bay**. We will be in San Diego, California, October 24 – 27, 2019, at the same hotel as our 2014 reunion, Holiday Inn Bayside. All information regarding registration, hotel, our excursion, memorial service, banquet, etc., is enclosed. We will open our reunion with a Welcome Reception on Thursday, October 24 beginning at 5 pm. Beginning Thursday and continuing through Friday evening, the **Taffy 3 Model Ship Group** will honor our survivors of Taffy 3 by displaying models built by the group of all Taffy 3 ships and the Yamato. They are a group of experienced, volunteer, and professional model ship builders who specialize in 1:96 scale, remote controlled, model ships.

We will also have our last membership meeting (time to be determined) to fill you in on changes within the Association.

We look forward to reuniting with our survivors, family, and friends from all the ships in Taffy 3. **And once again, the Association Board of Governors has voted to cover the registration fee and three nights hotel stay for all USS Gambier Bay/VC-10 survivors who attend the reunion.** For details or questions, please contact Marlene Hughes at mahhome@cox.net.

We have been asking our members to help us streamline, save on postage costs, and **Go Green** to the way we send out our Scuttlebutt publication. It was decided to discontinue the US mail option,

PLEASE NOTE: WE WILL STILL OFFER THE US MAIL OPTION TO OUR SURVIVORS AND WIDOWS.

If you are currently receiving your Scuttlebutt publication via the US mail and have an email address, please help streamline, save on postage costs, and **Go Green** and email Marlene Hughes your email address at mahhome@cox.net so she can add you to the distribution email list.

As a side note - - you can always visit our website and download current and previous Scuttlebutt publications.

I am sad that this will be our last reunion – I have made met so many of the families of our survivors and I feel like the Association survivors and families are an extension of my family. I will miss seeing all of you, **BUT** we will all still be in contact through our Facebook page, our **FABULOUS WEBSITE**, telephone conversations, snail mail, and email.

I look forward to seeing you at the **2019 reunion in San Diego**.

Paula LaRocco-Grond





In Memoriam

Shipmates who have crossed the Bar

George C. Beckett February 2, 1926-January 23, 2019 S 2/c



George Charles Beckett, 92, of Sullivan, IL passed away on Wednesday, January 23, 2019. A service to honor and celebrate George's life will be held at 10:00 a.m. on Monday, January 28, 2019 at Dawson & Wikoff Funeral Home, Macon. The family will receive friends for a time of visitation from 4:00-6:00 p.m. on Sunday. George will be laid to rest in South Macon Township Cemetery with military honors provided by the Macon County Honor Guard. George was born on February 2, 1926 in Macon, IL, the son of Raymond and Isaphinna (Grubb) Beckett. He married Mercedes Mouche in October of 1950. She preceded him in death. He retired from Borg-Warner after 30+ years of service. George served proudly in the United States Navy during WWII. He attended Sullivan First United Methodist Church and he enjoyed golfing and sports. George is survived by his sons: Darrell (Carolyn) Beckett of Lumberton, TX and Duane (Janice) Beckett of Sullivan, IL; brother: Dale Beckett of California; sister-in-law: Lillian Beckett of Sullivan, IL; grandchildren: Carmine Beckett Gagnor, Kari Beckett Vincent, D. Chris Beckett, Kendra Beckett Williams, Elizabeth Denise Beckett VanAvery, Kelly Rachelle Beckett Ellis, Richard Allen Beckett and Timothy Charles Beckett; 28 great grandchildren and 6 great-great grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his parents, wife, son: Phillip Beckett, two brothers, two sisters and

three great grandchildren.

Messages of condolence may be sent to the family at www.dawson-wikoff.com. *(George was wounded when the ship went down on 10/25/1944, may you rest in peace and we will toll the bell for you in October.)*

Evelyn I. Beaird December 6, 1926-October 17, 2018



Evelyn I. Beaird, 91 of Canton, passed away at 11:10am. Wednesday, Oct. 17, 2018, at Heartland Health Care in Canton. She was born Dec. 6, 1926, in rural Marietta to Robert J and Idella (Haffner) Thompson. She married William "Bill" Beaird Aug. 21, 1949, in Bushell. He survives.

Also surviving are three children, William L. (Ralynn) Beaird of Bartonville, Daniel A. (Geraldyn) Beaird of Canton and Sandra "Sue" (Alan) Beuster of Granite City; five grandchildren, Eric (Kelly) Beaird, Andrew (Malia) Beuster, Emily (Brent) Dean, Laura (Justin) Howard and Nathan (Emily) Beuster; four great-grandchildren, Aimee, Taylor, Ethan and Evelyn; three sisters, Frances Smith, Zelpha Kessler and Lois Extrell; and one sister-in-law, Charlotte Beaird.

Evelyn was preceded in death by her parents; one brother, Robert Thompson; and two sisters, Esther Still and Marjorie Singleton.

Evelyn worked as a seamstress and bookkeeper. She retired from Keefauver Grain in Fiatt. Evelyn also worked in 4H.

Services will be held at 10:30a.m. Saturday, Oct. 27, at Sedgwick Funeral Homes & Crematory in Canton. Pastor Alan Beuster will officiate. Burial will follow services at Howard Cemetery in Rural Smithfield. A visitation will be held from 5-7p.m. Friday, Oct. 26, at the funeral home. Memorials can be made to the Alzheimer's Association, Heartland Health Care Activity Center, or donor's choice. To view Evelyn's DVD or to make online condolence, go to www.sedgwickfuneralhomes.com *(I received a nice letter from Evelyn's daughter Sandy about her Mom's passing and this obituary, Bill served on the Gambier Bay as a Seaman 2/c. Our condolences on Evelyn's passing. May you rest in peace and we will toll the bell for Evelyn in Oct.)*

Edmund R. Pietrzak- Crossed the bar on April 23, 2006



**Board of Governors & Officers
2017-2019**

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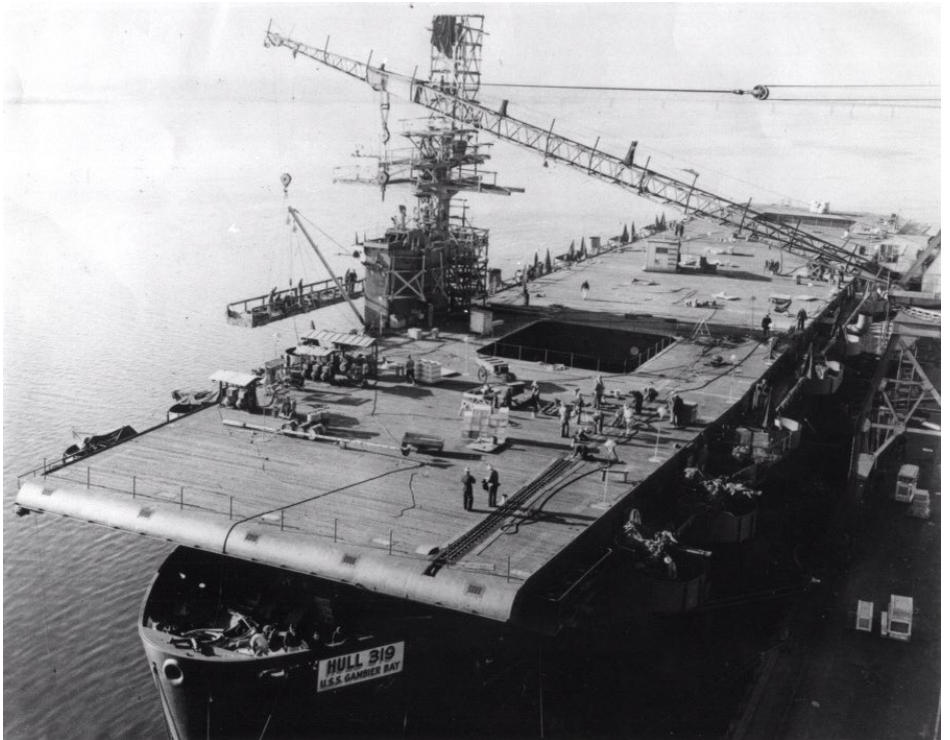
In Appreciation

Thank you to all the names listed for your donation, buying from the ship's store, subscription or lifetime membership. All of this helps the association spread the word about that fateful day on October 25,1944.

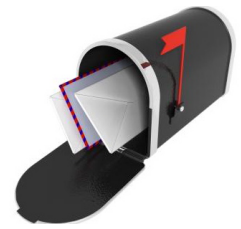
*Amy Bulgatz
Clay Ketcham
Thomas Tomkins
Laurie Bacastow
Gary Brown*



Here is a picture of the USS Gambier Bay being built in 1943



Mail Call



Sent from Chris Shelvik
1/21/2019

Dear Marlene,

I am going to send you the dues for this year. This will be my last year so you can take me off your mailing list. With old age showing up and my wife in a memory care center we have to watch our budget . I was fortunate to have attended one of your reunions which was your first one in San Diego. I was the only one from the LCI rescue members there but I think there may have been 10 or more from the P C rescue ships attending. We sure had A good time and your people sure treated us good. My LCI group had A reunion in Reno and we so happy to have three of the men from the Gambier Bay attend with us. They were George Feliz, Buckey Buttner and Norm St Germain and his wife. Buckey was one of the men we actual picked up. There was one fellow on the ship I went to high school with and he was rescued, A Clarence Chick. At this time I will say thank you all for the great news I have received over the years and thank you for all you have done for the group Chris Shelvik LCI 337

(Chris-Thank you for the e-mail but I will continue to send you the Scuttlebutt via e-mail. Do not worry about the dues Chris, I fully understand about watching budgets. So sorry to hear the news about your wife. All the best to you, Marlene)

E-mail from Sherine Tully
1/8/2019

Hi Marlene.

Lyndle (Irick) is doing well. Last year, he sold his house and moved to Bayview Retirement where there is always someone to check in on him and make sure he is okay. He lives in a small studio where he proudly hangs his picture of the Gambier Bay and happily shows off the beautiful quilt he received from you. I love for him to be there because part of his monthly rent includes two meals per day, which means he is eating much healthier now than when he lived alone. Carl and I visited with him last week, and he was bubbly and healthy.

Wishing you a wonderful New Year!

Take care, *(So glad to hear he is doing well in the retirement home and is loving his quilt- and thank you for updating his Sherine. address for me-Marlene)*

Received a note from Bob Belcoure

Marlene- Here is a picture of my father that I just got from my sister. She got it from my Grandmother in 1963. You may keep it for the Website. See you in October. Bob Belcoure
(Bob-thanks for the picture and it has been put up on the website-you certainly do resemble your Dad, Robert Belcoure S 2/c)



Received a note from Amy Bulgatz
12/27/18

Hi Marlene,

Wishing you a Happy Holiday Season!!!

We are hoping to see you all in San Diego.

Fondly *(Amy, thank you for your Lifetime membership and we look forward to seeing the family in October)*
Amy Bulgatz.

Letter received from Sandy Beuster
2/15/2019

Dear Marlene,

First and foremost thanks to you and everyone who work to maintain the "Scuttlebutt", the reunions and the Website going. It is much appreciated. I am the daughter of Bill Beard who served on the Gambier bay. He, and my mom, Evelyn started attending the reunions in the early 70's and attended many of them. They enjoyed them and looked forward to them, Poor health kept them from going in more recent years. My mom passed away in October. My dad wanted me to submit her obituary to you and I had forgotten to do so- this is the reason for my letter today. I am enclosing a copy of her obit. My dad turns 93 in a few days and remains in his own home. He looks forward to the "Scuttlebutt" and we always share it with him.

Thanks for all you do,

Sincerely,
Sandy Beuster

(Sandy-So sorry to hear of your Mom's passing. Her obit is in this Scuttlebutt and thank you for the appreciation-this is my way of giving back to these guys. Also thanks for your address and information-I will add you to the e-mail list.

The founder of **TOPGUN** tells his story

Dear Reader:

I don't send mass emails very often because I don't usually enjoy receiving them myself. (I'm also doing a little writing—please see the PS below.) But I hope you'll bear with me while I tell you a quick story and recommend a new book that I'm particularly proud of having been involved with.

Quite a few years ago, a gentleman from San Diego emailed me to say he enjoyed my book on the Guadalcanal naval campaign, *Neptune's Inferno*. He mentioned that he had flown jets during Vietnam and had been part of a west coast Navy fighter squadron, VF-121, that had something to do with the TOPGUN program.

I thanked him for writing and for his service. Because I was hip deep working on *The Fleet at Flood Tide*, that was the end of it for a while. I filed away his email, thinking I might want to connect with this individual again some day.

It turned out to be a long time—six years—before I finally spoke to Darrell Gary. When I did, I learned that America's finest are pretty good at burying a lead. It turned out Darrell was one of the founding instructors at the Navy Fighter Weapons School at Miramar back in 1969.

Darrell soon introduced me to some other members of the TOPGUN "tribe," including the retired Navy captain who was once his boss at Miramar.

That man is a remarkable 84-year-old named **Dan Pedersen**. Though his call sign back in the day was "Yank," more people know him as "The Godfather of TOPGUN." He created the famous fighter tactics schoolhouse and served as its first officer-in-charge.

I think he's someone whose story all Americans should know.

It's been my privilege to help Dan publish an exceptionally fine memoir. **TOPGUN: AN AMERICAN STORY** will be released on Tuesday March 5th by Hachette Books.

It's the first time one of TOPGUN's "Original Bros" has published a book, and I consider it one of the finest combat aviation memoirs ever published. Dan takes you from the dawn of jet fighter aviation in 1953, when he joined the Navy as an enlisted man, to the current travails of the F-35. In between he tells the story of how a small group of junior officers—from Miramar to Area 51—overturned the status quo and changed the air war over North Vietnam by training our best Navy fighter pilots to fly the F-4 Phantom as it had never been flown before.

The book is personal, authoritative, thrilling, and action packed. It has a pretty good love story in it too.

I hope you'll consider getting a copy, reading it, and telling your friends.

History is alive only to the extent people know it. Here is a piece of history worth knowing, the story of TOPGUN as only its founder can tell it.

Thanks for your time and interest.

Best,

James D. Hornfischer

P.S. My own next book will be a few years away. The subject is the Navy in the Cold War. And I'm having a blast with it.



APPLICATION FOR USS GAMBIER BAY ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP

SURVIVORS/WIDOWS DO NOT PAY DUES

Membership dues are \$15.00 annually or \$100.00 for Lifetime Membership

Both options include a subscription to our newsletter, Scuttlebutt

Membership Application (please check one)

_____ \$15.00 annual dues
_____ \$100.00 lifetime dues

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

**Please indicate if you would like your
Scuttlebutt subscription emailed
or send via the US mail.**

Additional Information

Survivor Name: _____

Crossed the Bar Date: _____

Survivor Rank/Rate: _____ **Division:** _____

Member relationship to survivor: _____

**Please Mail Application and Dues
(payable to USS Gambier Bay Association)
TO
Marlene Hughes
2228 E. Greenlee Road
Tucson, AZ 85719-2012**

Pictures from the 70th Anniversary reunion in 2014



Welcome to the Taffy III 75th Reunion Information Pages

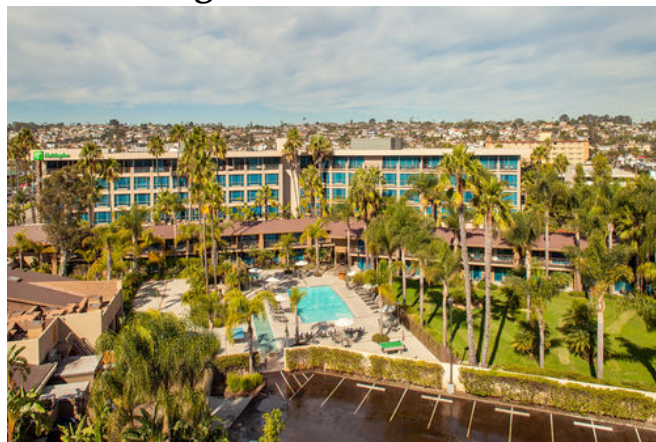
When: October 23-28th

Where: Holiday Inn Bayside, San Diego

Rate: \$129 & Tax= \$145.24

This rate is good for 3 days before and after reunion.

Comps- Free Parking, complimentary airport shuttle, High Speed internet service, 37 " TV, coffee maker, hair-dryer, mini refrigerator, iron/ironing board. There is a 9 hole Putting course, Exercise room, Ping-pong, Shuffleboard, Pool, Jacuzzi and complimentary rental bikes w/helmets.



A sign up sheet will be available in the Hospitality Room to use the shuttle for shopping. The Point Loma Cafe is next to the lobby and serves Breakfast & Lunch from 6am-1:30pm. Seniors enjoy a 10% discount.

The Bayside Bar is behind the Point Loma Cafe, opens at 1:30 and serves Lunch and Dinner until 11pm. Dine inside or enjoy their tropical patio with fire pits.

They serve complimentary happy hour hors d'oeuvres Mon-Fri. from 5pm to 6:30pm.

Right across the street are nearby restaurants, Pizza Nova and Jimmys Famous American Tavern and many with a 1 mile radius of the hotel. A convenience store and gift shop are on the hotel property.

The cut off for reservations is October 2, 2019. You may make reservations by calling 1-800-662-8899 or 619-224-3621. Our Group code is TAF-make sure you give them the code for the rate. If you want to book online here is the link [Taffy 3 USS Gambier Bay CVE73 room reservations at Holiday Inn Bayside](#) Remember you can use your Priority Rewards number with this rate.

Airport Shuttle Service:

If you are arriving by plane call 619-224-3621 after you have collected your luggage and the hotel will instruct you on where to pick up the shuttle.

It depends on which terminal you are in.

City tour of San Diego -Sat October 26th 9:00AM

The tour will visit the Taffy 3 Memorial and the Bob Hope Memorial, downtown, with time to explore and take pictures. Then proceed over the Coronado Bridge and stop at the Coronado Beach with nearby restrooms. The narrated tour would pass by the famous Del Coronado Hotel, then a tour of Balboa Park.

The tour would pass through the historic Gaslamp district and drop off those who would like to go Seaport Village to have lunch on their own and shop in many one of a kind shops.

Those on this tour that would like to return to the hotel without the Seaport Village stop, will be brought back to the hotel, after the others are dropped at Seaport Village.

This tour will return back to the hotel between 1:30 - 2:00 P.M.

Santee Park -Sat October 26th - If you have your own vehicle and want to witness the model builders remotely maneuvering the 13 ships they built on Santee Lake, we will have directions to Santee Park in the hospitality room. It will take approximately 40-45 minutes to get there, make sure to leave around 9am. 13 ships plus the Yamato will be on display in The Point Loma Room (bottom floor of the tower) Thursday and Friday before taking them to Santee Lake on Sat.



Reunion Itinerary

Thurs - Oct. 24th - Hospitality room open by 1pm-Check in and reception will be in the Bayside Room from 5pm till 7PM.

In the Point Loma room(bottom floor of the tower) will be a display of all 13 ships in Taffy 3. They were built By a group of experienced, volunteer, and professional model ship builders in 1:96 scale and they are remote controlled. They will be displayed all day Friday as well.

Friday - Oct. 25th - Memorial Service at Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery- Board buses at the hotel at 8:45 A.M. (Boarding will begin immediately with the first two rows on each bus designated for Handicap.)

Departure of all buses will commence at 9:15 A.M., with all buses departing and traveling in succession. The buses will arrive at 9:45- we will work at short distance to the chairs for the service to start at 10:00 A. M.

After the Memorial Service , we will have an opportunity to walk across the street to view and photograph some of the Taffy 3 monuments and then re-board the buses and proceed a short distance to visit the other area of Taffy 3 Monuments.

We will re-board the buses and arrive back at the hotel at 12 P.M.

Friday- Oct. 25th - 12:30 P.M.- Luncheon in the Bayside Ballroom

Friday-Oct. 25th- Hospitality room open at 3-10PM

Friday- Oct. 25th- Dinner on your own

Sat- Oct. 26th. 9AM-4PM Hospitality Room open

Sat - Oct. 26th- City tour departs hotel at 9:00 A.M. Anyone wishing to go to Santee Lake via own vehicle to see motorized ship models in action should leave at 9 A.M. (see information pages about tour and Santee Lake)

Sat- Oct. 26th- 6 -11PM Banquet in Bayside Ballroom

Sun - Oct. 27th - 9AM-10pm Hospitality room will be open all day. Check out

The Hospitality Room will be on the 5th floor overlooking San Diego Bay. We will be selling tokens for drinks in the hospitality room. This room also has a full length balcony. It will be open every day during the reunion except for the banquet, memorial service and luncheon.

Aerial View of Holiday Inn



This is the Harbor View Room/ Hospitality Room



Make your reservations for the hotel right away-there are other ships from Taffy III joining us.

Reunion Details

1. Be sure to attend the reception on the evening of the 24th. A recognition of each ship is planned and maybe a waving of hats from the survivors. Hospitality room open til 10PM.
2. Friday, October 25th will be a meaningful day. We will board buses starting at 8:45AM to go to Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery for our Memorial Service. The program will start at 10AM.

After the memorial service and checking out the Taffy 3 monuments we will return to the hotel for a luncheon in the Bayside Ballroom at 12:30pm. Dinner will be on your own, plenty of restaurants within a mile of the Hotel.

4. Saturday, October 26th if you have signed up for the tour, the bus will leave at 9am. If you have a vehicle and want to go see the ship models in action you should leave at 9am (it should take about 40-45 mins to get to Santee Lake). Otherwise the Hospitality Room will be open or there are plenty of things to see and do in San Diego on your own.

On this evening the banquet will take place from 6-11PM. A great meal is planned and entertainment with a raffle. Each ship will be donating a gift card and there will be a couple of free nights raffled off as well. We will also have a 50/50 Raffle.

5. If anyone needs a wheelchair or walker or scooter here are the company's in San Diego you can call to rent one. The hotel has only one-it is on a first come basis.

A. Eric's Medical Supply (619-298-9640) www.ericomedicalsupply.com

B. Scootaround Mobility Solutions (1-888-441-7575) www.scootaround.com

C. Point Loma Pharmacy (619-223-7171)

Please plan on spending time in the hospitality room with the view of San Diego Bay.

Very Important- Please send in your registration early because once we have reached 240 people we will not accept anymore. If for any reason you have to cancel you will be refunded your registration grand total up until October 20th.

PLEASE DO NOT BRING ITEMS TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE RAFFLE.

Any questions, comments please contact Marlene Hughes. (520-326-0747 or mahhome@cox.net). Please get your registrations in as early as possible by 9/1/2019

Taffy III 75th Reunion Registration Form

Please Print

Name: _____

Spouse or Guest (s) Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State/Zip _____

Phone: _____ Cell: _____ Email: _____

Ship Represented: _____ Survivor _____ Associate _____ Special Needs: _____

Please indicate on another sheet of paper who is coming to the reunion (family) so you can be seated together, especially if they are sending their registration separately

Event	Day	Cost per person	# Attending	Total
Registration Fee by 9/1/2019 includes Bus to Memorial Service on 10/25/2019		\$50		\$
Registration Fee after 9/1/2019 Cutoff is 9/23/2019		\$55		\$
Luncheon - At hotel (see choices below)	Fri - 10/25	\$44		\$
City Tour (see in information pages)	Sat - 10/26	\$50		\$
Banquet (see choices below)	Sat - 10/26	\$50		\$
Welcome reception is included in Registration fee	Thurs-10/24			\$

Grand Total: \$ _____

Banquet Entree Choices	Qty.
Grilled Halibut	
Roast Pork Loin	
Fettuccine Beef Bourguignon	
Grilled Vegetable Wellington	

Please make checks payable to Taffy III Reunion and mail this form with payment to:
Marlene Hughes
2228 E Greenlee Rd
Tucson, AZ 85719-2012

Phone: 520-326-0747
 Email: mahhome@cox.net

Any questions regarding the reunion please contact me by phone or e-mail
Cut off date for registration and tour is 9/23/19

Cut off for hotel is 10/2/2019

Luncheon Entree Choices	Qty
Poached Salmon	
Chicken Marsala	
Grilled Vegetable Tower	

**TAFFY III 75th Reunion
2019 in San Diego, California**

Save the Date Oct 23-28th 2019

**Please come join the Gambier Bay Association Commemorate
the 75th Anniversary of the Battle of Leyte Gulf**

**Bring your children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews.
Let them be aware of the last greatest Naval battle in WWII.**



The Latest Scoop from around the

“ Scuttlebutt”

Return to
Marlene Hughes
2228 E Greenlee Rd
Tucson, AZ 85719-2012
Address Service requested