



# Old Salts & Assorted Spies Newsletter, 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2025

## President's Message: Words from Michael Barnes

Hope you all have a Happy New Year! Also, hope you had a wonderful Christmas season. Robin and I had a peaceful quarter. She attended Order of Eastern Star Grand Chapter in



Reno. We both have been chasing seasonal colds. 27 December I awoke to find ski slopes decorated with the first major snow. So got to get ready



for my first ski day (after the holiday crowds.) Then I observed a flock of blue birds temporarily nesting in our juniper bushes.

No sad news regarding members this quarter. So, trust all is well and we are looking forward to a great year and reunion in 2026.

International Conference on WW2 - Robin and I are dedicated supporters of the National WW2 Museum in New Orleans. Our fathers were WW2 vets. We attend the International Conference on WW2 almost every year, and did this year. We report the highlights on this year's conference in a separate article.

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### OS&AS ASSOCIATION - OFFICERS:

#### PRESIDENT

Michael Barnes

#### VICE PRESIDENT

Anna Mae Clark

#### SECRETARY

Pam Harlin

#### TREASURER

Richard P. Martinez

#### NEWSLETTER Editor

Robin Barnes

#### WEB SITE Editor

Gary S. Powers

To contact OS&AS, please use the following email:

[osasusr@gmail.com](mailto:osasusr@gmail.com)

### Editor's Corner:

I am enjoying the work on each newsletter. The articles submitted have been great.

Keeping sending them in to [osasnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:osasnewsletter@gmail.com). I plan to issue 4 newsletters per year.

*Robin Barnes*

**President’s Message-continued:**

Continued from Page 1

September, 2026 Reunion - Finally. planning continues for the OS&AS September 2026 reunion. Tim Kathka and I met with the NAS Fallon PAO. He has some very interesting and exciting plans for our visit to the home of “Top Gun.” Unfortunately, the negotiations with our first-choice hotel have been difficult and ultimately unsuccessful. There are lots of ‘first-choice’ selections in Reno, and we quickly expanded our search. The plans for NAS Fallon and the lunch cruise on Lake Tahoe are still on track. We will be announcing the final schedule, hotel results, and registration information as soon as possible in a special issue, so watch for it.

**Chairman’s Message: .....**Greetings from Bill Craig****

As I sit writing this column the year 2025 is rapidly drawing to a close. Thanksgiving has slipped behind us and Christmas is just around the corner. Before we know it 2025 will be in the history books. I hope that each of you have had a memorable year and have enjoyed the holidays. Pretty soon 2026 will be upon us with the promise of new and exciting things to come. Among those things of course is the next Old Salts reunion in September. Elsewhere in this newsletter you will find more information from Mike Barnes and Team Reno regarding the details of that gathering. Be sure to save the dates on your calendar. We look forward to seeing you there.

This fall Laura and I have spent an inordinate amount of time on the road in our motorhome. We have been traveling for the past six weeks and will make it back to San Antonio just in time for Christmas. Our ramblings have taken us from Texas across the Gulf coast through Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida visiting friends and relatives along the way. We spent some time camping on the waterfront at the Naval Air Station at Key West.



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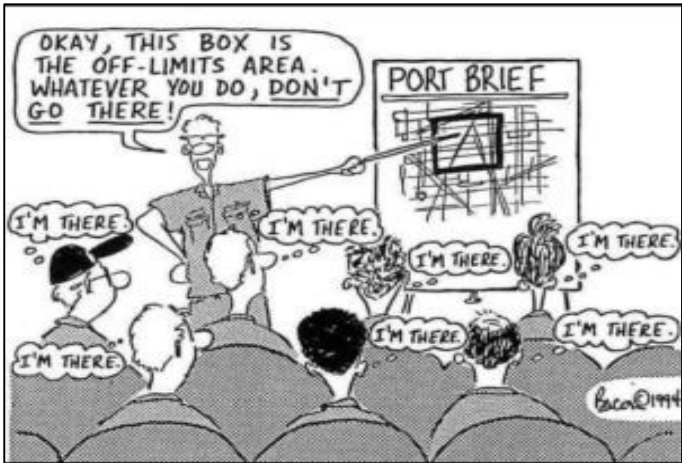
While there we took the ferry for a full day visit to Fort Jefferson, a 19<sup>th</sup> century fortress in the Dry Tortugas. Construction began in the 1840s to control the shipping lanes coming out of the Gulf and the Caribbean through the Florida Straits. The Civil War disrupted progress and the advent of steam powered ships and rifled naval guns made the fort obsolete. It was abandoned in the 1870s without ever being completed. Today it is a National Park and a popular destination for snorkeling the coral reefs.



We continued up the east coast of Florida to Georgia and South Carolina stopping at the Freightliner factory in Gaffney SC where the chassis of our coach was built. While the factory service center performed annual service we were able to take a personal guided tour of the amazing factory assembly line. From there we drifted back west to Texas for a brief interruption in our travels for several obligatory high mileage doctor appointments. Having received medical clearance, we continued north to Oklahoma for a pre-Christmas visit with our oldest grandson before returning home for Christmas.

By the time you read this we will be celebrating the New Year. I hope that 2026 is joyful and prosperous beyond your expectations. I am excitedly looking forward to seeing everyone in Reno in September!

**A BIT OF NAVY HUMOR**



OLD SALTS & ASSORTED SPIES  
 Financial Report  
 Wells Fargo Operating Account  
 Sep 30, 2025


<b><u>2025 Financial Activity</u></b>		
Beginning Balance 1-1-2025		<b>\$ 18,553.09</b>
Donations	\$ 595.00	
2025 Reunion Proceeds	\$ 747.72	
Membership Expenses	(\$1,029.24)	
Administrative Expenses	(\$48.98)	
Ending Balance 9-30-2025		<b>\$ 18,817.59</b>
Treasurer's Note: We are also maintaining a \$100.00 Reunion Account with Navy Federal Credit Union for future reunions.		

OLD SALTS & ASSORTED SPIES  
 2025 Contributors  
 Sep 30, 2025

- Albert Baxter
- Anna Mae Clark
- Belton Jennings
- Ben & Katherine Crew
- Bill & Bonnie Anderson
- Bill & Laura Craig
- Carrie McCutchen
- Don & Ana Maria McLeod
- Doug & Pamela Newton
- Drew Jones
- George & Jo Nelson
- George & Peggy Sugars
- George & Susan Snyder
- Jeff & Stephanie Johnson
- Jerry & Cynthia Wiens
- Jodi & Ben Gittes
- Joe Maggiore
- John & Cathleen Geist
- Michael & Robin Barnes
- Mike & Shirley Winkler
- Norman & Peggy Lussier
- Paul & Judy Pappenheim
- Ralph & Nina Ross
- Richard Juda
- Rick & Bea Martinez
- Tim Kathka
- Timothy & Anne Lockhart

**First Texas Navy created, 11-25-1835.....Bill Craig**


On this day in 1835, the first Texas Navy was established when the General Council authorized the purchase of four schooners and granted letters of marque and reprisal to privateers until the ships were armed. Established to protect the supply line to New Orleans, the navy included the 60-ton *Liberty*, the 125-ton *Independence*, the 125-ton *Brutus*, and the 125-ton *Invincible*. All four ships were lost by mid-1837, and the Texas Navy virtually ceased to exist until March 1839, when the first ship of the second navy was commissioned. A cruise ending in July 1843 marked the end of the operative career of the Texas Navy, as a truce with Mexico came that summer and the United States undertook to protect Texas until annexation. In June 1846 the ships of the Texas Navy were transferred to the United States Navy. The officers of the Texas Navy desired to be included in the transfer, but seniority-minded United States naval officers opposed the proposal. In 1857 the claims of the surviving Texas Navy officers were settled, and the Texas Navy was no more.




**1824**

## First Republic of Texas Navy: 1835-1837

During the beginning of the Texas Revolution, a naval force was quickly assembled, based out of Quintana and Velasco.






**Liberty** (flying 1824 tricolor flag)  
60 tons, Capt. William S. Brown

Even before Texas declared its independence, in late 1835 the provisional Texian government adopted laws to create a navy. However, actual creation was done largely through the efforts of Quintana merchants Thomas Freeman McKinney and Samuel May Williams, who put up much of the cash and personal credit required. The first four schooners acquired - **Independence**, **Liberty**, **Brutus**, and **Invincible** - helped defend the coast during the Texas Revolution and the dangerous months that followed the victory at San Jacinto.


During the revolution and the early days of the republic, Quintana and Velasco served as a principal base of the Texas Navy, due to their position at the mouth of the Brazos River and easy access to areas settled as part of Austin's Colony.

Later Galveston, with its sheltered anchorage and growing commerce, was designated as the navy's primary base, but Quintana and Velasco remained critical strategic points on the vulnerable Texas coast.


*Images courtesy of San Jacinto Museum*



**Independence**, 112 tons, Capt. Charles Hawkins




**Invincible**, 126 tons, Capt. Jeremiah Brown



**Brutus**, 125 tons, Capt. William Hurd

Learn more here:  
Use password "TNA"



**Patriots Point Maritime Museum.....Bill Anderson**

Bill Anderson reports that Bill & Laura Craig stopped by for a recent visit during their travels. While there, they visited the Patriots Point Maritime Museum; One Million Square Feet of History and Adventure.



Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum on South Carolina’s Charleston Harbor is a must-see. With WWII aircraft carrier USS Yorktown as centerpiece, the Museum is also home to destroyer USS Laffey, the Cold War Memorial, the Vietnam Experience, the Medal of Honor Museum, and the Congressional Medal of Honor Society. It’s nearly 1,000,000 square feet of hands-on history combined with heroes’ stories and stunning natural landscapes.

We’re the destination for history and adventure with exhibits and more that engage families, veterans, tour groups, educators, and others.

Of special interest to Bill Craig, was a tour of his sister ship, *USS Laffey*. Here are photos and notes of that visit.



While visiting Charleston, SC in November, Bill and Laura Craig, pictured in front of the aft twin 5-inch gun mount, toured the destroyer *USS Laffey* (DD 724). *Laffey* is the Allen M. Sumner-class sister ship to the *USS Collett* (DD-730) that Bill served on, including off of Vietnam.

*USS Laffey*, anchored adjacent to the *USS Yorktown* at Patriots Point Naval and Maritime Museum in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina. On April 16, 1945 off Okinawa, the *Laffey* sustained attacks from 22 kamikaze aircraft. Eight kamikazes were splashed by *Laffey*, but 5 kamikazes and 4 bombs struck the destroyer. Thirty-two of 336 crew were killed and more than 70 wounded. She earned the nickname “The Ship that Would Not Die” for surviving her heroic exploits.



**A REQUEST FROM YOUR MEMBERSHIP CHAIR.....Tim Kathka**

I have assumed the duty of Membership Chair, relieving Chuck McClain as of the Annapolis Reunion. I am now maintaining the membership rolls, which is challenging without assistance from you, our members. While we are reasonably efficient at adding new members, especially as we gain members during our reunions, the larger challenge is when one of our shipmates passes away. We are now making a special effort to recognize the service of each of our shipmates, regardless of whether or not they ever became a member of the Old Salts and Assorted Spies organization. At each of our reunions we include a Remembrance Table and read the names of all of our fallen comrades since the previous reunion.



That is where you come in. We are counting on you in the field to help us by reporting the death of any shipmates in your circle of friends or area of the country. YOU are our best source for this info.

Please email any names, and obituaries or news clippings if possible, to [tkathka@aol.com](mailto:tkathka@aol.com). I will ensure that your shipmates are recognized at next reunion.

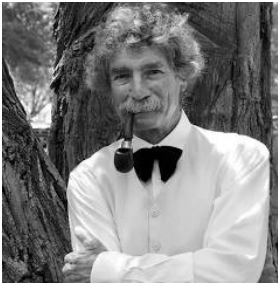
## OS&AS 2026 Reunion, Reno NV.....Michael Barnes

Good news, planning is still underway and progressing!

NAS Fallon: On 15 Oct 25 Tim Kathka and I met with Gavin Graham, PAO for NAS Fallon, and determined that the PAO has some great ideas for an incredible Navy Day at NAS Fallon. He was on furlough at that time, due to the government shutdown, but he has resumed duty. We will have more details when we issue the special reunion edition soon.

Lake Tahoe lunch cruise: plans are set; details to follow in special edition.

### Busses are reserved



Guest speaker for banquet: McAvoy Layne has agreed to perform as our guest speaker. McAvoy Layne (sometimes written McAvoy Lane) is a renowned Nevada-based performer, writer, and educator famous for his decades-long portrayal of Mark Twain, capturing the author's wit, wisdom, and spirit in over 4,000 events worldwide. He's a respected local figure in Northern Nevada and the Lake Tahoe area, known for his "Ghost of Mark Twain" shows, literary events at places like Piper's Opera House, and columns (often titled "Pine Nuts") for local news outlets, sharing insights on culture and history. He will give us a unique insight into the history and culture of Lake Tahoe and the High Sierras!



Reno Balloon Races-9/10-13/26: If anyone is interested in coming 1 day early to attend the final day of the Reno Balloon Races, the planning team will assist in coordinating hotel rates, transport and tickets.

Hotel: TBD. Unfortunately, our negotiations with the Grand Sierra Resort proved troublesome and ultimately unsuccessful. We are actively engaged with a number of other potential sites, and the area abounds with good possibilities. This will be finalized before we issue the special reunion newsletter soon.

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**NAS Fallon** is home to the Fighting Saints of VFC-13, the Desert Outlaws of Strike Fighter Wing Pacific and the Naval Strike Air Warfare Center. NAS Fallon serves as **the Navy's premier tactical air warfare training center. NAS Fallon is the home of the Navy's strike fighter training, including "Top Gun" School**.

**Lake Tahoe scenic lunch cruise** we'll travel alongside the Truckee River to visit "Palisades Tahoe" (formerly Squaw Valley) on the way to a very scenic boat ride traveling the west shore of Lake Tahoe and enjoying a cruise in and out of Emerald Bay.



### **Tentative Schedule**

- Reunion target dates are 13-17 Sep 2026. This is the week following Labor Day. We are looking to target an ideal tourism time without fighting crowds, other special events or weather.
- Reunion typical schedule: (Proposed)

**Sunday 13 Sep** - travel to Reno, check in at selected Reno hotel, with hospitality suite and a "President's Reception" in the evening. (NOTE: Negotiations are underway with the top-rated location with many on-site attractions located close to most attractions in Reno area).

**Monday 14 Sep** - Tour to NAS Fallon (approved by NAS Fallon) (Or cruise on Lake Tahoe if priorities change.)

**Tuesday 15 Sep** – Trip to Lake Tahoe and lunch cruise on the lake (or NAS Fallon if priority changes)

**Wednesday 16 Sep** – Business Meeting breakfast, late-morning & afternoon open for self-directed tours or events; guides/literature to be provided. Dinner banquet catered by hotel with our selected guest speaker.

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**Thursday 17 Sep** – Travel home or continue on your own in area (MANY great attractions from mountains, lakes, outdoor activities, indoor entertainment, and fine dining. (See next page for links to information about the wonderful Reno/Tahoe area and its many attractions.)

NOTE: **The Reno Hot Air Balloon Races** will finish a 4-day run on Sun 13 Sep. We are exploring the options for any that might want to come into Reno, NV a day early on Sat 12 Sep to view the final day of the Balloon races on Sun 13 Sep. Further details will be made available when we finalize plans. Races are an annual event showcasing various hot-air balloons (including special shapes), plus races, a glow show, and vendors.



### Planning Considerations:

1. Visit to NAS Fallon requirements per discussion with PAO (further after our meet with him on 15 Oct 25).
  - a. Most all visitors from our group will have DOD retired ID or DOD dependent ID. A very few may not have DOD ID
2. Presentation (UNCLAS) from NAS Fallon and Squadron Command re: mission and capabilities; AND potentially (UNCLAS) presentation from the “Top Gun” mission.
3. Tour of the flight line? Or?
4. Potentially lunch in Fallon
5. Tour will arrive/depart via chartered bus.
6. Further planning/next steps NAS Fallon PAO has signed off on the general visit terms and plans. We are moving ahead!
7. Bus trip to Lake Tahoe and scenic 3.5 hr. boat ride across the Lake with lunch available off a great menu. This is a terrific ride on a “paddle-wheeler” replica that holds about 100 passengers. It has a full bar and attractive menu, for us to choose and pay for our selections.
  - a. We will stop for a short time at “Palisades Tahoe,” formerly known as Squaw Valley, home of the 1960 Winter Olympics.
8. We reserved the busses required for 14 and 15 Sep tours.
9. Final plans, hotel, pricing, and registration form will be in the special reunion edition soon.

**The following links will be active on the newsletter cover email.**

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**Link to NAS Fallon and tourist and entertainment in the Reno/Tahoe regions, Etc.**

**NAS Fallon:**

[Naval Air Station Fallon](#)

**Reno-Tahoe Tourism:**

[Reno Sparks Convention and Visitors Authority | Visit Reno Tahoe Home | National Automobile Museum](#)

**Tahoe Gal**

[Tahoe Gal | Lake Tahoe Cruise | Lake Tahoe Boat Tour and Rides](#)

**Palisades Tahoe** (aka Squaw Valley, site of 1960 Winter Olympics)

[Best Ski Resort Lake Tahoe | Palisades Tahoe](#)

**Tahoe Resources**

[Plan Your Lake Tahoe Trip and Reno Trip | Visit Reno Tahoe](#)

[Only Have 3 Days in Lake Tahoe? This Itinerary Hits All the Best Spots](#)

[HGTV names Nevada's most charming small town — here's the pick](#)

**Reno Hot Air Balloon Races**

[The Great Reno Balloon Race – World's Largest FREE Hot-Air Ballooning Event](#)

**SEE YOU IN RENO!**

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**National WW2 Museum, New Orleans, LA.....Michael & Robin Barnes**

**International Conference on WW2 Nov 20-22 (and pre-conference symposium).**

Robin and I are staunch supporters of the National WW2 Museum. We attend most of the annual conferences. This is an article on the 18<sup>th</sup> International Conference which focused on the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of WW2. Amazing authors and historians bring history to life. The pre-conference symposium was on “WW2 Special Forces and Special Operations”.



We encourage you to review the article and go to the website at [Plan Your Visit | The National WWII Museum | New Orleans](#) to see all the attractions, programs and cultural studies of WW2 and its impact on the world. You can also find the actual presentation videos of the symposium and the International Conference on their website.



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Our fathers were WW2 veterans and my father's war-time collection of mementos from his deployment to the China-Burma-India theater (CBI) has been donated to the museum. And the annual conference always honors a few actual WW2 veterans who are in attendance (Fewer every year!)

### **Highlights of Pre-conference Symposium : "WW2 Special Forces and Special Operations"**

Of special interest were the historical backgrounds of the beginning of the Navy Seals; the "Women Agents of the SOE" (British); and, the "X-Troop: The Secret Jewish Commandos of WW2". These warriors have not been widely publicized and their history you should find very interesting.

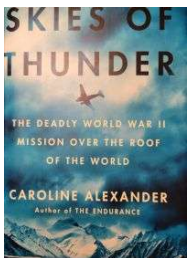
### **Highlights of International Conference**

Opening presentation of Conference: "Need to Know: World War II and the Rise of American Intelligence".

Featured a panel with Nicholas Reynolds, former CIA officer who was ultimately appointed the historian for the CIA Library at Langley. His book by the same title is proving an in-depth and interesting read about the history of intelligence and the CIA.



Closing Presentation: "Skies of Thunder....." the war in the CBI theater



A panel discussion featuring Author Caroline Alexander and her book "Skies of Thunder: The Deadly World War II Mission Over the Roof of the World" This author wrote of the war in the China-Burma-India (CBI) Theater. I had a special interest in this presentation. My father flew the badly engineered C-46 2-engine transport over the Himalayas in the CBI theater. And, as the author so vividly described, it was a death wish for pilots like my father. However, my father was indeed lucky, having been ultimately forced to bail out due to double engine failure, as she vividly describes in her book. However, unlike many described in her book, my father and crew parachuted safely into jungle head-hunter territory. And, like some of the lucky ones, he and his crew were rescued by a headhunter tribe and brought to safety. The rest of the story is too lengthy to tell here. But it is thrilling. And I thank Bill Anderson for previously letting me know about this book, so I had read it before listening to the author at the Conference.

**You can view all symposium and conference presentations and information at:**

[18th International Conference on World War II | The National WWII Museum | New Orleans](#)

## OS&AS Ship's Store.....ISCM Benjamin Crew

The OS&AS challenge coins originally sold at the 2024 reunion in Annapolis MD and advertised in the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Newsletter are now available for purchase. They can be ordered by emailing shipping information to ISCM Crew at [iscmben@aol.com](mailto:iscmben@aol.com) with the subject line COIN. Coin cost; \$10.00 each plus shipping, usually about \$5.50 depending on number and location, *to be paid for by personal check via return mail upon receipt*. Profits (\$4.75 each) will be contributed to the designated charity for the next reunion. In addition, OS&AS shipmates who served in Reserve Intelligence Area 19, or are otherwise interested, can also order RIA 19 challenge coins the same way.



But enough about challenge coins for now! Is there interest in a bigger Ship's Store; a Digital Ship's Store perhaps? A physical store, with significant inventory, shipping and bookkeeping requirements can be a challenge, even a financial risk for a "senior" operator. But what if we can identify providers willing to accept orders, and direct payment, and ship OS&AS logo products? Or some variation thereof? Would you be interested?

To begin, we would have to identify desired products, the level of interest in each, and desired art work (if any beyond our logo). With that information in hand a search for appropriate providers can begin. Please email your interest and suggestions to ISCM Crew with the subject line STORE.

Returning briefly to challenge coins; in addition to RIA 19 there were other RIAs that had logos or patches etc. Coins commemorating your RIA can also be produced for \$500 for an initial order of 50 if there is sufficient interest. If you have an image of your RIA logo please send a picture to ISCM Crew with the subject line LOGO regardless of whether there would be interest in ordering coins.

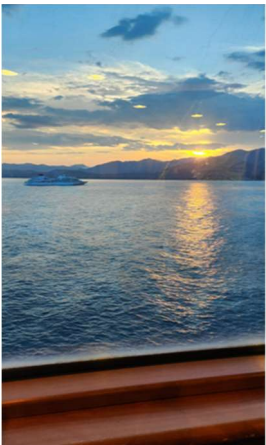
**Japan Adventures – Part 2.....Michael & Robin Barnes**

Shimizu, Japan, 8-16-25 – “Fujisan Hongu Sengentaisha & Mt. Fuji World Heritage Center” saw a cloudy day so saw just a small glimpse of Mt. Fuji. The Museum was great.



PRINCESS Shimizu, Japan

Kumano, Japan, 8-17-25 – A port stop for sunset & fireworks



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Wakayama, Japan, 8-18-25 – Best of Wakayama



Kochi, Japan, 8-19-25 – Kochi Local Connections, banner maker, calligraphy class & saki tasting

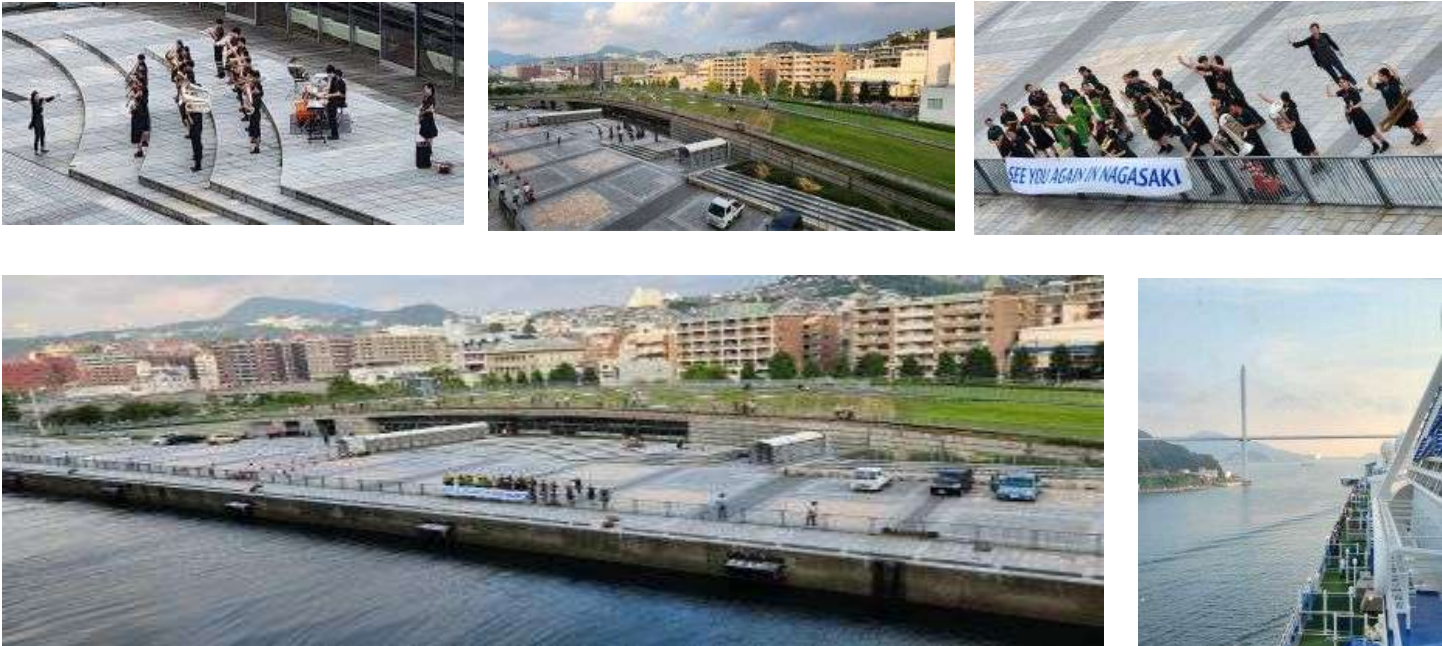


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Busan, South Korea, 8-21-25 – on board ship “Sail Away”



Nagasaki, Japan, 8-22-25 - on board ship “Sail Away”



Continued on Page 17

Kagoshima, Japan, 8-23-25 – Chiran Samurai Houses & Kamikaze Museum



We traveled home on 8-25-25. Japan was beautiful and we had a wonderful time there.

**Please keep your membership information up-to-date.**  
**Complete this form and email to osasmembership@gmail.com**



**MAILING ADDRESS AND INFORMATION FORM**

NEW MEMBER_____
UPDATE_____

FIRST NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ M.I.: \_\_\_\_\_ LAST NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
HOME ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ ( ) Check if preferred address  
CITY, STATE, ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
SPOUSE'S FIRST NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ YOUR EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_  
BUS. ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ ( ) Check if preferred address  
CITY, STATE, ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE: Home (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ CELL: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ BUS: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
RIA/NRIC of Retirement: \_\_\_\_\_ YEAR: \_\_\_\_\_ RANK/RATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**I would like to donate \$\_\_\_\_\_ to the Operating Fund for the Association of Old Salts & Assorted Spies.**  
**A yearly donation of \$25.00 is suggested for the Operating Fund. Any amount is appreciated!**

**Make checks payable to OS&AS and mail to: Richard P. Martinez, Treasurer**  
**248 Palomino Court**  
**The Woodlands, TX 77382-1812**

*The information requested on this form is used to keep the OS&AS mailing directory correct. New members please complete this form marked as 'NEW MEMBER.' Please fill in the information as an 'UPDATE' form when submitting 1.- change of address/phone/email; 2- additional information or 3-making a donation to the Operating Fund.*

**Updated contact information can also be emailed to: [osasmembership@gmail.com](mailto:osasmembership@gmail.com)**

**If you would like to submit an item for the next newsletter, please send it to: [osasnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:osasnewsletter@gmail.com)**