



## SEPTEMBER 2021

### USS Indianapolis Legacy Organization 3-Minute Update

Hello, Indy Family!

As we head into fall, it's time to catch up on all things Indy. So grab a hot cider, settle in for three minutes and see what's up...

#### **New Officers Elected**

For those of you who missed our annual membership meeting, I am pleased to announce our new officers: Admiral Dick Macke (USN Ret) is now serving as Legacy's new Vice Chair, and Brian Fruits is serving as our new Secretary. Dick, a former U.S. Pacific Fleet Commander, comes to us with a wealth of experience in leadership, strategy and administration. Brian, a theater director and professor of English, connected with the Indy family through his hit play, *In the Soundless Awe*, which explores the travails of Captain McVay after the sinking of *Indianapolis*.

Welcome aboard, Dick and Brian! We look forward to serving with you.

#### **Project 888 is Underway!**

We are excited to announce the official launch of Project 888, a major undertaking by our Education team. Project 888 will gather stories of the 888 men who died in

1945 while serving aboard USS *Indianapolis* CA-35. This includes the 9 crewmembers killed in the kamikaze attack off Okinawa and the 879 crew who died afterward when *Indianapolis* was torpedoed and sunk in the Philippine Sea on July 30, 1945. The Education team will be compiling photos and biographies of all 888 lost crew, and they need your help! To submit photos and biographical details, [click here to visit Project 888 online](#). For further information, please email the Education team via our website address: [admin@ussindianapolis.com](mailto:admin@ussindianapolis.com).

### **Bravo Zulu Awards**

At this year's membership meeting, we announced our first-ever Bravo Zulu volunteer recognition awards. "Bravo Zulu" is a U.S. Navy signal flag or voice message that means, "Well done!" The Legacy Bravo Zulu Awards recognize individuals, Legacy committees, and outside organizations that demonstrate exemplary service through leadership, support, or a specific project that honors USS *Indianapolis* (CA-35), furthers her story, and reflects great credit upon her crew and upon the Legacy Organization. This year's Bravo Zulu honorees are:

**Legacy Education Committee:** Wrote and presented the two-part webinar *Never Give Up!*, in collaboration with the National History Club. Marilyn Henry (Chair), Jim Belcher, Carl Fahnstock, Dawn Ott Bollhoefer, Jeff Sweeney, Michael Emery, Robert Cantrell

**Inaugural Legacy Student Members:** Founded and developed the Legacy Student Membership Program, producing outstanding results in their very first year. Julie Haas (Chair), Cindy Wilson, Melissa Felumlee, Sarah Trimble, Kasey Connor (Membership Committee) Shea Groves (Founding Student Member), Gunner Barr, David Groves, Shea Groves, Bryce Haas, Reagan Haas, Autumn Leigers, Sam Leigers, Milaan Seeliger, Jaiden Seeliger, Keanu Seeliger, Brayden Spillman, David Trimble, Declan McCall, Julia McCall, Mark McCall, Grace McCall

**Jennifer Brunson:** Initiated and grew the Zoom with Survivors program, providing a way for Survivors to connect with friends during the COVID-19 pandemic. Jennifer

has faithfully managed this program, showing up for every meeting for more than a year and a half.

**Doug Boles, President Indianapolis Motor Speedway, and broadcaster, Wally Leavitt:** For their dedicated friendship and support that keeps the story of USS *Indianapolis* (CA-35) alive in the City of Indianapolis.

**Jane Gwinn Goodall:** For three years of stellar service as Legacy Founding Secretary. Fair winds and following seas!

**Sara Vladic:** For three years of stellar service as Legacy Founding Member-at-Large, then Vice Chair. Fair winds and following seas!

### **Fredericksburg, Texas, Here We Come!**

We're planning a World War II history-packed, regional reunion May 17-20, 2022, in Fredericksburg, Texas! We're hoping to see y'all there for the next USS *Indianapolis* CA-35 gathering. Here's what you can look forward to:

- Gather with old friends and meet new ones at our first official in-person “*Indy*” gathering since 2019.
- Enjoy true Texas-style hospitality, including a delicious “Denim & Diamonds” themed BBQ banquet meal.
- Learn more about USS *Indianapolis* CA-35's significant contributions in World War II history.
- Explore the renowned National Museum of the Pacific War.
- Step back in time – all events will take place at the historic Admiral Nimitz State Historic Site.
- Bring the family - activities planned with all ages in mind.

Two convenient hotels within walking distance are being held for our group. Each hotel can accommodate up to four persons per room with breakfast included.

Reunion registration and hotel booking details coming soon! Please put it on your calendar and plan to join us next Spring in beautiful Texas hill country!

Check out this video overview of Fredericksburg and the National Museum of the Pacific War. <https://youtu.be/tlhnoS8bl1c>

### **Did You Miss the Virtual Reunion?**

The 76<sup>th</sup> anniversary commemorating USS *Indianapolis* CA-35 was held virtually on July 30-31. If you missed it, view the video links on our website [www.ussindianapolis.com](http://www.ussindianapolis.com).

### **Online Store Wrap-Up**

Thank you to all who purchased items from the online Legacy store in support of the organization. Your generosity is much appreciated. And thank you to those who may have had to make a switch to a different color in order to fulfill their apparel order. Product availability continues to be scarce during this pandemic.

### **Auction Winners from Coast to Coast**

A big THANK YOU to all who participated in the Virtual Reunion online Auction in support of Legacy's growing list of programs and services. The auction featured eight items and raised a total of \$1,370. Congratulations to the following winners, who—just like Indy's final sailing crew—hail from all over the country:

- Beverly Griesbaum (Lebanon, IL) – custom USS *Indianapolis* (CA-35) stained glass art.
- Matt Holleman III (Madison, MS) – Survivor signed print of “American Eagle in the Pacific,” by Earl O. Henry, Lt. Commander, Ship's Dentist, Lost-at-Sea.
- Barbara Stocker (Lancaster, MA) – *Only 317 Survived* book, the personal account of survivors of USS *Indianapolis* CA-35, signed by eleven survivors.
- Earl Henry, Jr. (Nashville, TN) – Bronze replica and beautiful display case of Congressional Gold Medal for USS *Indianapolis* CA-35 final sailing crew.
- Danny Couture (Vacaville, CA) – *Abandon Ship!* book signed by seven survivors.

- Suzan Reisner (Littleton, CO) – *Fatal Voyage* book, signed by author and inscribed to Victor Buckett, survivor of USS Indianapolis CA-35.
- Ron Kucer (Indianapolis, IN) – *Only 317 Survived!* Book signed by survivors Richard Thelen and Jimmy O'Donnell, as well as cover artist John Gromoziak.
- Thomas Celaya (Florence, AZ) – *Only 317 Survived!* Book signed by survivor Jimmy O'Donnell and cover artist John Gromoziak.

Special thanks to our donors, Jeff Rutherford, Earl Henry, Jr., Peggy Campo, Jane Gwinn Goodall, Bonnie Buckett, and Ron Kucer for contributing items for the auction.

### **Student Member News**

From Membership Chair, Julie Haas: "Our student membership continues to grow. We have five new members. Please welcome David Trimble, Declan McCall, Julia McCall, Mark McCall, and Grace McCall. We are gearing up for Zooms again so that the students can connect with each other, meet the new students, and continue the journey of learning the story of *Indianapolis*. They especially love it when we have guest speakers talk with us. In June, we celebrated the birthday of Survivor Harold Bray with cards and a goody box delivered to him. On July 10<sup>th</sup>, we toasted with Dr. Pepper & doughnuts in memory of James Smith who passed before we could shower him with cards and a goody box. But on James's birthday, the student members sent a bouquet of flowers to brighten the day of Jennifer Brunson, who had become great friends with James through the "Zoom with Survivors" program. "

Please take the time to visit our [website](#) and hear a special message from our founding student member, Shea Groves. The information on becoming a member is also right there on the site. We would love to have you join us!

### **Remembering Indy in Michigan**

Survivor Dick Thelen announced on a recent Zoom session that Lansing, Michigan, will be the proud home of a monument honoring the 98 Michigan sailors who were aboard USS *Indianapolis* (CA-35) when she sank in 1945. There will be two stones in the Michigan Veterans' Memorial Park. One will tell Indy's story and the other will list

the 98 names, hometowns, and ranks of each sailor. Special thanks to Steve Hammond for his efforts in bringing this dream to reality! Donations for this project can be sent to:

VFW Post 701

c/o USS Indianapolis CA-35 Memorial

123 N. Rosemary St.

Lansing, MI 48917

That's it for the September edition of the 3-Minute Update! See you next month!

Lynn 😊

Lynn Vincent

Honorary Survivor

Legacy Chair