



Station Ship News



**DING DING . . . DING DING . . . SHIP'S CREW ARRIVING . . . ABOVE AND BELOW DECKS
IN THE AIR, AT SEA AND IN PORT . . . DING DING . . . DING DING**

Midway veterans and family members interested in joining the MVA, see the application at the end of this newsletter



USS Midway (CV-41) being maneuvered into Alava Wharf at Naval Station Subic Bay, Philippines, by four tugs on September 14, 1982, with assigned Carrier Air Wing 5 (CVW-5)

European travel agency selects Midway Museum as nation's best

While most Midway Museum visitors purchase their tickets on the ship's website or at the ticket booth on Navy Pier, the museum also works with a number of online travel agencies in the United States and around the world to help sell admission tickets.

In 2020, the Midway won the Tiqets "Remarkable Venue Award" as the Best Museum in the U.S.

Tiqets is one of the biggest online travel agencies in Europe.

"We rely heavily on our partnerships in the European market," said Joe Wagstaff, Midway's travel industry sales manager. "Tiqets aligns with Midway's customer service philosophy and it's amazing to be recognized with the best museum in the U.S. award for 2020, especially in light of the challenges facing the tourism industry over the past year."

Winning the award was based on more than 750,000 user reviews submitted to Tiqets.

“Congratulations to the USS Midway Museum for winning the best museum award,” said Sue Warnke, Tiqets’ regional manager for the western United States and Canada.

Midway faced stiff competition from the Houston Museum of Natural Sciences, California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco, and The Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago.

“This award highlights Midway’s commitment to the guest and it’s tremendously rewarding to be honored in this way,” said Joe.

Editor’s Note: This article appeared in the Midway Currents Spring 2021 issue. Used with permission from the USS Midway Museum.

Charles Girolamo 1927 – 2025

Midway: Present arms and colors.

Today we honor our brother, Charles Girolamo, who passed away on 14 February 2025. A man of dedication, quiet strength, and unshakable service, Charles lived a life defined by duty, skill, and heart.

Before his time aboard the USS *Midway*, Charles began his journey as an apprentice electrician in the Naval Shipyards. He soon enlisted in the Navy, where his keen eye and steely nerves earned him a place in Fire Control Technician training. From there, he traveled to Bremerton, Washington, to A School, followed by advanced system training in Florida. He then proudly served aboard the *Midway* from her maiden voyage until the end of World War II.

Charles's sense of purpose didn't stop with the Navy. After some time as a civilian, he enlisted again—this time in the Army—where he trained in telephone systems and served in Germany and on various European TDYs. He also completed a tour in Laos during the Vietnam era. Later, he transitioned into the Air Force, mastering radar control systems and supporting their operations until his retirement in the 1970s.



Amidst his decades of service, Charles built a beautiful life. He married Edelgard, the love of his life, and together they raised two daughters, Brigitte and Carol. Charles will be remembered for his wonderful tales of military life, his sharp sense of humor, his kind and generous nature, and his ever-willingness to lend a hand.

He was a husband, a father, a patriot, and a storyteller. His legacy lives on in the lives he touched and the stories he shared.



Fair winds and following seas, Charles

2026 MVA Reunion

Hello Shipmates.

Hope everyone is having a great summer!

We have started working on next year's reunion in San Diego. Yes 2026!!! After talking a year off to recover from the Three Sisters Reunion, we will be back in San Diego, September 13-16 2026. But not at the Wyndham. We on the board have decided to look at other hotel options in San Diego and decided on the DoubleTree in Point Loma.

Steve DeCata, Vice President Reunions

Cactus-Midway Collision of July 29, 1980

Ensign Bill Olsen, JOOD (Junior Officer of the Deck & Conning Officer)

Many stories are posted annually on the collision's anniversary. Each story is valid. Here's mine - I was driving the ship.

The MV (motor vessel) Cactus struck USS Midway's port side on July 29th, 1980, at 1951 local time. We were transiting the Philippine's Pallawan Passage, enroute to the Indian Ocean. Damage was so severe that we returned to Subic for emergency voyage repairs. While at Subic, Captain Carmichael, myself and many others underwent a formal administrative inquiry. Ultimately, we resumed our mission, arriving on Gonzo Station about 6 weeks late. Two officers were punitively reprimanded. We also sent two shipmates home in coffins.

What was the damage?

Cactus' direct point of impact: A Division's Forward O2N2 Plant was obliterated. We worried about the pure oxygen venting out.

Plus: 4th Division's Cordage Locker was gutted. Heavy ropes hung down, streaming aft. We worried they'd foul the propellers.

Plus: Cactus' uprights raked the port side: Destruction included the Fresnel lens landing system, the LSO's platform, the port side EWCM system, parts of Elevator 3, many of the

encapsulated MK6 Liferrafts, and a hundred yards of catwalks and antenna arrays, all twisted. And lots of peripheral damage along the port side, all above the water line.

Plus: Six Aircraft whose tails were parked over the water, were severely damaged. Some spewed out JP-5 fuel.

Our biggest worry was the JP-5 leaking directly down and into the venting Oxygen below. That was a potential fireball which could have ignited the aircraft, cooked off any loaded weapons, risked thousands of lives and the ship itself. Yes, we were worried.

And two lives - instantly snuffed out - while standing the watch in the O2N2 plant.

But why? What led to it?

As part of Operational Deception that was typical in transit, we were in EMCON Alpha, meaning our signal emissions were minimized to avoid detection. So, our radars were off. This was done to "sneak" into the IO before the Soviets knew we were there. We were in wide open waters (not a narrow passage) and had good visibility to monitor the shipping traffic. As I took the watch as JOOD and conning officer about 1915 local time, we were already aware of the merchant ship that was broad off our port bow... not yet knowing it was the Cactus. Using visible means, the JOOW and I determined that the ship would pass close, perhaps inside 1000 yds (1/2 mile.) Normally, the Captain must be informed of any ship passing within 10k yards (5 miles). I plotted a course to open the range, and recommended to the OOD an immediate turn to starboard, and notification of the Captain. The OOD, an aviator who was very new as an OOD, balked at my recommendation and did not notify the Captain. His testimony later at the inquiry proved that he had not thoroughly understood the navigation situation, thinking we were in restricted waters (we had plenty of room... miles of it... to maneuver). Furthermore, the OOD did not know where the Captain was (he was in a meeting in the inport cabin). Furthermore, the OOD stated that he assumed the Navigator who was on the bridge, and as the Senior Watch Officer, had greater authority. Regardless, the OOD had full authority and responsibility. I was the only officer of

the bridge watch team who was a Surface Warfare Officer. All others were Aviators.

As minutes ticked by, the JOOW and I updated our Maneuvering Board solutions based on visual sightings, coordinated with CIC and the lookouts, and I repeatedly recommended an immediate turn to starboard. We started the LN-66 radar, a civilian-band surface radar to check our range to the Cactus. Either the OOD or Navigator began speaking on Channel 16 radio - the civilian-band bridge-to-bridge radio - to hail the merchant ship... who never answered. As minutes ticked by, I realized that the Cactus had now turned slightly, resulting in a "constant bearing - decreasing range" which means imminent risk of collision.

Despite my recommendations being repeatedly denied by the OOD, I chose to ignore the OOD and began turning the ship to starboard. In the last 90 seconds, I ordered increasing rudder to turn even sharper away from Cactus. 30 seconds before impact, the Navigator ordered the collision alarm to be sounded, and ordered "Brace for Shock" to be announced on the 1MC.

Cactus hit and then grazed us, raking down the port side. We healed while dragging Cactus.

Screeching metal. Fuel spraying from the F-4s. Flight deck lighting coming on. Sailors running on the flight deck to man hoses. The sights. The sounds. The trembling and groaning of the ship. The vibrations. All of that seemingly in slow motion - it still haunts me to this day.

The Captain had never been notified. When he felt the ship turning and heard the collision alarm he raced to the bridge. He arrived as the Cactus was still raking down our side. The Captain ordered All Engines Stop, Rudder Amidships. (I should have thought of that.) DC Central called on the 21MC recommending General Quarters. As we got word about the O2N2 plant, and could see the fuel spraying, we got really worried about the risk of explosion.



Import Subic Bay for repairs from the collision

The aftermath:

July 29th was a very, very long night of damage control. I'll let others tell that story.

I and the other officers involved wrote statements. I still have a copy of my statement. The next morning, I was charged with Dereliction of Duty, Hazarding a Naval Vessel, and two counts of Negligent Homicide. I assumed that all other officers, including the Captain, the XO, the Navigator, the OOD, the JOOW, and the CIC Watch Officer had similar or lesser charges. All of us attended the inquiry of about 2.5 weeks.

Reconstructing the events - my starboard turn of the ship averted a worse catastrophe - we would have T-Boned the Cactus. At 1930 the DCA was holding Damage Control Training on the fo'c'sle. All of R Division, and all Repair Party Officers and Leaders not on watch were on the fo'c'sle at the time of the collision. Had I not turned the ship, we would have T-boned the Cactus and possibly injured a large contingent of the Damage Control team. We would also have disabled both of our catapults, whose water brakes are at the leading front edge of the fo'c'sle. It was projected that we could have possibly lost an anchor or two, sheared off the bow, and received damage below the waterline had we T-boned the Cactus. Although we did sustain significant damage, it was instead a glancing blow.

A truly herculean effort by SRF Subic, and representatives from SRF Yokosuka, NAVSEA,

NAVAIR and many other players teamed up to get Midway back to her fighting trim. The entire O2N2 plant, Fresnel Lens and EWCM systems were cannibalized from other carriers undergoing overhaul and flown to Subic. Replacement aircraft were flown in. The ship was patched, painted, tested, and proven ready for sea.

When we set sail, we had a new Navigator - the former Navigator had been relieved for cause and a career-ending punitive action. The OOD had his qualification removed and received punitive action. I never saw him again. The JOOW stopped standing bridge watches and later in the deployment the A-6 aircraft he piloted suffered a flight deck fender-bender upon recovery. Not sure what happened to him.

The Captain kept his ship.

I qualified as OOD, and soon became the OOD for all special evolutions, Sea & Anchor Detail and served as a trainer and on the qualification board for other aspiring bridge watch standers. In 1981 I was honored by Captain Carmichael as USS Midway's Shiphandler of the year, and by Admiral James D. Watkins as CINC Pacific Fleet's Shiphandler of the Year.

12 years later:

On April 11, 1992, I attended USS Midway's decommissioning ceremony at NAS North Island. I was then a LCDR and serving as XO of USS Mars AFS-1. It was an honor to spend some time speaking with Midway's former skipper, Admiral "Hoagy" Carmichael. We briefly recalled that fateful night, and he thanked me for being proactive and possibly averting what could have been a worse disaster, and for my service in training the next generation of bridge watchstanders.

And yet the sights. The sounds. The trembling. The groaning. The vibrations. All in slow motion - still haunts me to this day. Dedicated to MM2 Daniel Macey, MM3 Christian Belgum, and all those who worked tirelessly to get Midway & her Magic back to sea.

Bill Olsen, CDR, USN (Retired)

Far Away Places

David Payson, 1963-64, RDSN

The six months I spent on Midway in the early 1960's was just long enough for me to make my one and only Westpac cruise on her. We visited several countries in the Orient, including Hong Kong, Japan and the Philippines. It was a great experience for a young man; one I won't soon forget. During the cruise, I spent a lot of time observing operations in Midway's Combat Information Center (CIC), because my next duty station when we got back to the States was to attend Class A Radar School on Treasure Island, San Francisco. This cruise to the Far East was on-the-job-training for me. So, it wasn't all fun and games.

When we returned from overseas to Alameda, CA, Midway's homeport, I bid my shipmates a fond farewell and headed across town to attend radar school on Treasure Island. Leaving Midway was a "melancholic" experience for me, to say the least. I guess you could say, I had grown fond of duty on her, because there was always something going on, such as air ops and random GQ's. But after this cruise, I had to leave her. My orders were clear: attend radar school under a new Navy program called pre-school indoctrination (PSI).

So, off I went to radar school on Treasure Island, where I learned many things, including: 1) how to track airplanes and ships ("bogies" and "skunks," we called them) on the radarscope; 2) what I could fathom about the complexities of Ohm's Law; 3) how to hunker over a radarscope and look busy when you're asleep, and 4) a lot of other stuff I never used. My RD school classmates were mostly young men fresh out of basic training. So, in their presence, I strutted my stuff like an old "Salt." After all, I'd been out to the fleet, and had done **real** work in Midway's CIC (although most of the time under close supervision). But I have to say, I did feel well indoctrinated.

Some 61 years later now as I write this, the Navy's radar school I attended in 1964 on Treasure Island is long gone, along with just about everything else I remembered about the place. Unfortunately, over the years, Treasure Island has been become a modern-day suburbia, cluttered with homes,



condos and way too many people, and only vaguely resembles the T.I. I left behind when I graduated from radar school and returned to the fleet.

Here is a strange "factoid" that came to me over time. Since I first came aboard Midway in Subic Bay, not stateside, I determined that I was only on Midway for a total of **one day** in the United States—the rest of the time I was visiting exotic ports on her overseas and having fun (except the short stint I did on the mess decks, wasn't so much fun! And I did not realize that I was away from the U.S. for so long during my one Midway cruise.

My one tour of duty on Midway left me with many positive memories of her. Now days, as a lifetime member of the MVA, I've visited her many times over the years since she's been "stationed" as a museum ship in San Diego. I live some 1200 miles up the West Coast from her, in Washington State. Given all the years I've spent writing about Midway in my past assignment as MVA's newsletter editor, I sometimes feel like I'm still at sea on her, out there riding the gentle swell of the waves. (Play Twilight Zone theme and exit stage left . . .)

Coffee Trouble

Leonard Viccaro, 1962-64, AN/V-2 Div

My 2nd day aboard USS Midway March 1962, I was assigned to V-2 Division Arresting Gear. I was informed by the Chief Petty Officer that being the new "Boot" in the Division I was directed to get up at 4:30 am to make coffee for the 90 men in the division. Not being a coffee drinker, I was told that it was mandatory for me to take on this duty. So, the next morning I arrived in the section by the Cat PO's office and measured out several cups of coffee into the huge coffee maker and then proceeded to fill it with water from the spigot located on the bulkhead. I felt really proud of myself completing the task. Several shipmates arrived and filled their cups with coffee. They all got weird looks on their faces and spit out their coffee. I didn't know what was wrong, as I don't drink coffee and hadn't tasted it. It turned out that the spigot that I filled the pot with was SEA WATER. It was unmarked. Needless to say, I was in Deep DoDo. The Chief went up one side of me and down the other and put me on report. The Captain chewed him out for

wMVANEWS EDITing me up and told him from now on he could get coffee in the mess hall when it opened up. Oh yes, I got 3 days of bread and water for my error. PS they never let me make any coffee after that. The Captain told me that if he ever saw me with a cup of coffee in my hand while I was aboard he would throw me so far in the hold that I would never see daylight. I never did and still don't drink coffee!

Editor's Note: I feel Leonard's pain about coffee. I am also not a coffee drinker. Did 20 years in the Navy and still don't drink coffee.

In the early 80's I was stationed at the shipyard in Bremerton at a small command. Worked for a Captain, LCDR and me, I had just been promoted to YNC. I was usually the first one in the office and I would make the first pot of coffee. I read somewhere that you should clean the coffee maker with vinegar. So, I bought some at the Commissary and cleaned the coffee maker. Didn't have any use for the vinegar, so used it all. Big mistake. The Captain had a cup of coffee and said who put the vinegar in the coffee maker! I spent the rest of the day running water through the coffee maker. At the end of the day, I had the LCDR taste it and he said it was good to go. Never did that again!



Midway leaves Japan 1991

Commander Vern Jumper, Air Boss, 1975

Mark Blocksom, 1975-77, SK3, S-1 Division

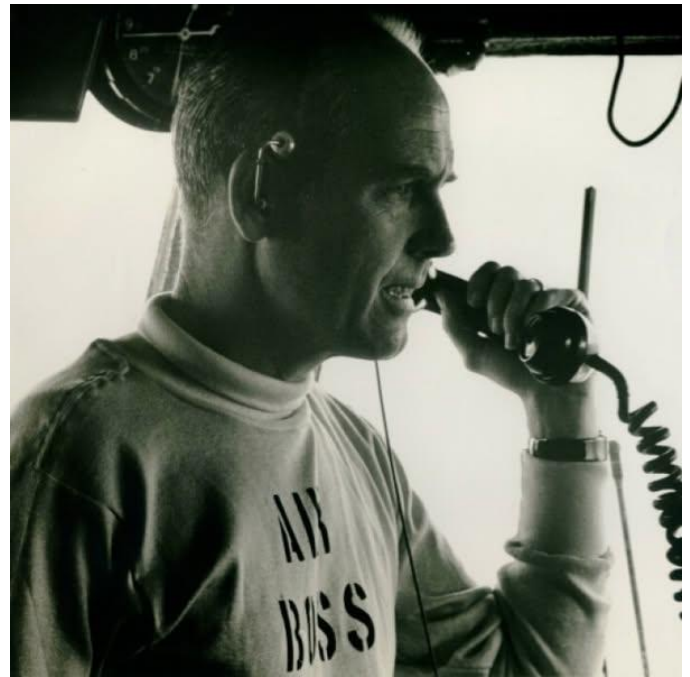
Vern Jumper was one of our beloved Docents on USS Midway Museum for many years. He passed away on July 4, 2025, at the age of 93. He was great at sharing his Midway Magic stories particularly of Operation Frequent Wind where Midway was instrumental in the rescue of thousands of Vietnamese refugees. He was the Air Boss on Midway when a particularly poignant event was the landing of a small O-1 Bird Dog aircraft flown by South Vietnamese Air Force Major Bung-Ly with his wife and five children on the deck of the Midway, after the Midway's Captain, Larry Chambers, ordered helicopters moved to make room for his landing. This family was spared due to the quick reaction of Jumper and Captain Chambers. This all happened just a few months before I checked aboard Midway for my first tour of duty and the crew was still reminiscing about the spectacular operation that unfolded that day and how it forever changed their lives. That is just one of the many events that made the USS Midway special throughout her 47 year career and now as America's Living Symbol of Freedom here in San Diego, Fair Winds and Following Seas, Vern! Ceiling and Visibility Unlimited, good sir!

[USS Midway Museum](#)
[USS Midway Veterans Association - MVA](#)
[Friends and Crew of the USS Midway Veterans Association - MVA](#)
[Midway Magic \(CV-41\)](#)
[USS Midway ~ 47 Years of Magic](#)
[Research Library, USS Midway Museum](#)

Pleasure Boat hits the USS Midway Museum

On July 18, 2025, a pleasure boat hit the Midway Museum. Use the link below to watch a youtube video

<https://youtu.be/1e3Tog3qcdY?si=kj-1k440s7ee3d-6>



Midway Air Boss 1975



Midway Docent

In Memoriam

Shipmate Charles Girolamo, Fire Control Technician, passed away 14 February 2025. Charles was a Midway Plank Owner. See his obituary in this newsletter issue on page 2. May he rest in peace.

Shipmate Vern Jumper, CDR, Air Boss, 1975 passed away on July 4, 2025, at the age of 93. He was also one of the original TOPGUN instructors at NAS Miramar. See article on CDR Jumper on page 7. May he rest in peace.

Shipmate David Huke, AK1/S-6 Division and NC1/X-Division, passed away on 17 March 2025. May he rest in peace.



USS Midway Veterans Assoc. Website
<http://ussmidway.net>

USS Midway Veterans Assoc. Facebook
<https://www.facebook.com/USSMidwayVeteransAssociation>

The Masthead USS Midway Veterans Association

A quarterly newsletter for USN and USMC Veterans who served aboard the USS Midway, and who are friends eternal.

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Letters to the Editor

E-mail me your comments/questions about articles that appear in this newsletter, and I will answer them. If I don't have the answer, I'll put you in touch with the author of the article/story. As editor of this newsletter, I'm all for open communication between Midway shipmates and MVA members.

Send to: mvanewseditor@gmail.com



This document is "fillable." Type directly in the fields. Immediate Family Members need only to complete section of this form that applies to them.

MIDWAY VETERANS ASSOCIATION
Application for Membership

I am a USS Midway Veteran and I wish to join the USS MIDWAY VETERANS ASSOCIATION, which is open to all Navy and Marine Corps veterans, regardless of department or air wing affiliation, who served on Midway at any time she was in commission. Note: Immediate family members (21 & over) of MVA members are also welcomed to join the MVA at the same dues amounts as MVA members and have the right to vote on MVA issues (see sign-up below).

MVA Veteran Name: _____ Date _____

Spouse/Partner Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone Number Home: _____

Email: _____

Actual years served aboard: _____ to _____

Rank/Rate/Division while aboard (e.g., RM3/CR Div.): _____

Years served in military _____ to _____

How Did You Hear About Our Reunion Association? _____

Immediate Family Member Name: _____ Associated with MVA Member _____

Mailing Address _____ Email _____

City _____ State _____ Telephone _____

Complete this form, either online or manually, selecting one of the 3 dues amounts (pay by check or with credit card):

Check One

- ☐ [\\$20.00/yr for veteran + spouse/partner or immediate family member \(age 21 or over\)](#)
☐ [\\$25.00/yr for veteran and family](#)
☐ [\\$100.00 for Lifetime Membership including family \(one-time payment\)](#)

Follow link below to charge by credit card (**PayPal, Discover, VISA, MasterCard**); when PP site opens follow the easy instructions.

<https://ussmidway.net/index.php/paydues>

OR pay by check. Make check payable to Midway Veterans Association and mail completed form and check to address below. Completing this form will also get you added to MVA's electronic mailing list to receive your MVA newsletter online.

USS Midway Veterans Association
18940 Priceless Road
Perris, CA 92570

The USS Midway Museum supports the USS Midway Veterans Association in preserving the legacy of every Midway sailor, regardless of department or air wing affiliation. (NOTE: The USS Midway Veterans Association is a 501(c)(19) nonprofit organization; contributions (aka, dues) are tax-deductible as provided by law.

Contact: Bernard (Ray) Tillery, MVA Treasurer, at ray.tillery@yahoo.com;
Telephone 806-678-0742.
18940 Priceless Road
Perris, CA 92570

For more information on how to join the MVA as an Immediate Family Member of an MVA member contact MVA's VP of Admin. Marty FitzGerald at email: marty.fitzgerald@earthlink.net. He will fill you in on the details.