

# **USS WILHOITE DE/DER 397**

## **Association Newsletter**



USS WILHOITE DE 397

**April, May & June**  
**2020**

## ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

### President

Tom Morrissey

3240 South 76<sup>th</sup>

Lincoln, NE 68506

Phone (402) 483-6889

Email: [tommorri2010@hotmail.com](mailto:tommorri2010@hotmail.com)

### Vice President

Lee Robinson

2382 County Rd 207

Brookeland, TX 75931-5202

Phone (409) 698-9332

Email: [bjr3645@sbcfloral.net](mailto:bjr3645@sbcfloral.net)

### Treasurer

Dana Alcorn

12863 W. Vernon Ave

Avondale, AZ 85392

Phone (602) 570-3262

Email: [alcorncpa@msn.com](mailto:alcorncpa@msn.com)

### Secretary

Connie Mauldin

106 Chestnut Dr.

Yukon, OK 73099

Phone (405) 354-9204

Email: [cporetrn@cox.net](mailto:cporetrn@cox.net)

### Chaplain

John Caldwell

610 Saddle Ridge Ave

Durham, NC 27704-1237

Phone (919) 471-4513

Email: [bcaldwell@nc.rr.com](mailto:bcaldwell@nc.rr.com)

### Historian

Bill Endter

109 Larkspur Lane

Locust Grove, VA 22508

Phone (703) 323\*8297

Email: [eendter@cox.net](mailto:eendter@cox.net)

**Dear Shipmates & Families,**

**Hopefully winter has passed and spring is on the way. I hope this finds all of you healthy.**

**This newsletter has the corrected registration form for the Buffalo, NY reunion. Please look it over and plan on being there. If you have any questions at all, please feel free to contact me.**

**A reminder that our dues are to be sent to our treasurer, Dana Alcorn, 12863 W. Vernon Ave., Avondale, AZ. 85392-7138. Please make your checks out to USS Wilhoite Assoc. Dues are \$25 per member. Our newsletter is mailed to members who have paid their dues only. Again, if you would prefer to have your newsletter emailed, please email me [cporetrn@cox.net](mailto:cporetrn@cox.net) so I can have your correct e-mail address.**

**I am thrilled to announce that I have been contacted by 2 former shipmates. Edward "Ed" Koester & Albert "Al" Dyson. Ed served on the Wilhoite late 50's in "R" Div. Al served from Jan. 65 to Aug. 67, he was ET. If you would like to contact either of these men please e-mail or phone me (405) 354-9204 & I will give you their contact information.**

**On Martin Luther King Day at Pearl Harbor, the Navy announced the building of an aircraft carrier which will be named after Mess Attendant 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Doris Miller. I have enclosed that information in this newsletter and hope you enjoy it.**

**At this writing our nation is facing an enemy, COVID 19. I thought you might like to see how the US Navy is handling this and keeping our sailors safe.**

**Until next time, Fair Winds & Following Seas.**

**Connie Mauldin, Secretary.**

## Wilhoite dues paid 2020

(Numbers beside name indicate the year the dues are paid through)

Aittala, Gene (21)

Yonkofski, Ben

Alcorn, Mike & Dana

Cusato, Paul

Dyson, Al

Ereck, Ron (21)

Gergens, Steve & Ruby

Hawes, Eugene (22)

Hayes, Will

Huml, Vincent (21)

Hydro, John

Knight, James

Mauldin, John & Connie

McFadden, Charles

Morrissey, Tom

Owens, William

Parker, David

Payson, Dave

Polh, Art

Rott, Ray & Donna

Shanahan, John

Tencer, Charles

Thompson, Ross

Torriglia, Paul



### **IN REMBRANCE**

**It's with sadness that we remember another shipmate passing, Jim Winebarger. Jim died on January 25<sup>th</sup> in Ft. Myers, Florida. Jim served on the USS Wilhoite 1945-46 as TM 3. He also served on the USS Finch DE 328 during WWII 1944-45. He was preceded in death by his wife, Hilda. Our deepest sympathy to his family.**



**If you know of a shipmate that is ill or has passed away, please notify us @ [cporetrn@cox.net](mailto:cporetrn@cox.net) or mail to Connie Mauldin 106 Chestnut Dr, Yukon, OK 73099. It is important that we remember our shipmates.**

# Navy to name aircraft carrier for Pearl Harbor hero Doris Miller

By William Cole Jan. 17, 2020 Updated 10:02 am

On Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Monday, at Pearl Harbor, the Navy is expected to announce that a \$12.5 billion aircraft carrier will be named after Mess Attendant 2nd Class Doris Miller, the first African American to receive the Navy Cross for valor for his actions on Dec. 7, 1941, when he manned a machine gun on the USS West Virginia to fire back at attacking Japanese planes.

"I think that Doris Miller is an American hero simply because of what he represents as a young man going beyond the call of what's expected," said Doreen Ravenscroft, president of Cultural Arts of Waco (Texas) and team leader for the Doris Miller Memorial.

In 1941 an African American was not allowed to man a gun in the Navy, and as far as rank was concerned, "he could not really get above a messman level," Ravenscroft said. Miller's actions started to turn the tide, she added.

"Without him really knowing, he actually was a part of the civil rights movement because he changed the thinking in the Navy," Ravenscroft said Friday.

"In the end, the fact that he didn't think about what could be repercussions — that wasn't a thought when, at the time and in war, he did what was needed in his way to defend the United States of America," she said.

He will be the first African American to have an aircraft carrier named after him, according to Navy records. The big ship is not expected to be home-ported in Hawaii.

Two of Miller's nieces are expected to be at Pearl Harbor for the announcement, including 66-year-old Flosetta Miller.

Ravenscroft said "Dorie" was a nickname that the Navy gave Miller, while "his family is extremely particular that he be called Doris Miller." USS Miller, a destroyer escort, previously had been named in honor of the Pearl Harbor veteran.

Miller's Navy Cross citation reads, "For distinguished devotion to duty, extraordinary courage and disregard for his own personal safety during the attack on the fleet in Pearl Harbor, Territory of Hawaii, by Japanese forces on December 7, 1941. While at the side of his captain on the bridge, Miller, despite enemy strafing and bombing and in the face of a serious fire, assisted in moving his captain, who had been mortally wounded, to a place of greater safety, and later manned and operated a machine gun directed at enemy Japanese attacking aircraft until ordered to leave the bridge."

Adm. Chester W. Nimitz, commander in chief of the Pacific Fleet, personally presented the Navy Cross to Miller on board the aircraft carrier USS Enterprise in Pearl Harbor on May 27, 1942.

According to the Navy, Miller, then 22, had arisen at 6 a.m., and was collecting laundry when the alarm sounded.

"He headed for his battle station, the antiaircraft battery magazine amidship, only to discover that torpedo damage had wrecked it, so he went on deck," the Navy account states. "Because of his physical prowess, he was assigned to carry wounded fellow sailors to places of greater safety. Then an officer ordered him to the bridge to aid the mortally wounded captain of the ship. He subsequently manned a .50-caliber Browning anti-aircraft machine gun until he ran out of ammunition and was ordered to abandon ship."

In high school Miller was a fullback, and on the West Virginia he was the ship's heavyweight boxing champion. Miller had not been trained to operate the machine gun.

"It wasn't hard. I just pulled the trigger and she worked fine. I had watched the others with these guns. I guess I fired her for about 15 minutes," he said later, believing he "got" one of the Japanese planes.

Miller was born in Waco on Oct. 12, 1919. He enlisted in the Navy in September 1939 as a mess attendant.

Miller served aboard the USS Indianapolis from December 1941 to May 1943, the Navy said. He was then assigned to the escort carrier Liscome Bay. Miller died on the ship when it was torpedoed by a Japanese submarine on Nov. 24, 1943, during the invasion of the Gilbert Islands, according to the Navy.

The Navy has so far ordered four new Gerald R. Ford-class aircraft carriers — the Ford, John F. Kennedy, Enterprise and CVN 81, which has not been named — as successors to Nimitz-class vessels.

The 1,092-foot Fords feature a new nuclear power plant, a redesigned island, electromagnetic catapults, improved weapons movement and an enhanced flight deck capable of increased aircraft sortie rates, according to shipbuilder Huntington Ingalls Industries.

The Navy has been fixing problems with weapons elevators on the USS Gerald R. Ford, which was commissioned in 2017. CVN 81 has a procurement cost of \$12.5 billion. It is expected to be delivered in 2032.

According to a 2019 Congressional Research Service report, during World War II the War Department issued separate draft calls for black and white service members and maintained segregated training and unit assignments.

"The manpower needs of the Korean War (1950-1953) catalyzed racial integration in the services," the report said. "Under pressure to rapidly build up and deploy forces, the Army lacked the time and resources to continue to operate separate training pipelines for black and white soldiers. On the battlefield, Army and Marine Corps commanders began assigning black soldiers to replace losses in white combat units by necessity."

African Americans began commanding ships, submarines and shore establishments in the 1960s and 1970s, the Navy said.

The Navy said that as of December, 14 ships had been named for African Americans, including destroyers and a ballistic missile submarine. A May 2018 Congressional Research Service report said 69.1% of military active-duty members were white, 16.8% were black, 15.8% Hispanic, 4.4% Asian and 1.1% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, among other identifiers.

# US Navy orders self-quarantine for ships that have made stops in the Pacific amid coronavirus concerns

By Ryan Browne, CNN

Updated 11:19 PM ET, Thu February 27, 2020

**Washington (CNN)** — The US Navy has ordered all ships that have visited countries in the Pacific region to effectively self-quarantine and remain at sea for 14 days in order to monitor sailors for any symptoms of coronavirus.

"Out of an abundance of caution, Pacific Fleet is implementing additional mitigations to prevent Sailors from contracting COVID-19, and to monitor Sailors who have traveled to higher-risk areas," US Navy spokesman Lt. James Adams told CNN, using the official name for the virus.

The spokesman said that "at this time, there are no indications that any US Navy personnel have contracted Coronavirus Disease 2019," but added later that the Navy was acting out of an abundance of caution. "The health and welfare of our sailors, civilians and their families is paramount and our efforts are directed at detection and, if required, prevention of the spread of this illness," the spokesman said.

The commander of US Navy's Pacific Fleet, Adm. John Aquilino, issued guidance instructing Navy vessels departing from countries in the region "to remain at sea for at least 14 days before pulling into another port, in order to monitor sailors for any symptoms of the virus."

## Global impact

The self-quarantine is only the latest step the Pentagon has taken to protect its service members from the virus, which has spread globally to 43 countries outside of China and affected US military operations in Asia, the Middle East and Europe.

An upcoming military exercise with South Korea was suspended due to concerns about the virus.



**Related Article:** US-South Korean combined military drill postponed over coronavirus outbreak

On Wednesday the US military's Indo-Pacific Command, which oversees all US troops in the region, restricted all non-essential travel to South Korea for all US service members, contractors and defense department civilians serving as part of the command.

US Central Command, which oversees US forces in the Middle East, has also imposed restrictions on the movement of US troops there. On US military bases in Italy, access to on-base schools, child-care facilities, gyms and other public buildings has been temporarily halted and troops are bracing for the possibility of similar restrictions on other bases in Europe.

A large number of cases of the coronavirus have been identified in Iran and many concerned countries in the region

"US Central Command is taking multiple prudent measures to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 Coronavirus and to mitigate the operational risk such transmission would pose. One of those steps is to suspend leave and liberty for U.S. service members within the Central Command area of responsibility," US Navy Capt. William Urban told CNN in a statement.



**USS WILHOITE (DER-397) & USS FINCH (DER-328)**

**Buffalo, NY 2020**

**September 21<sup>st</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup>**

**MILLENNIUM HOTEL**

**Reservations 1-716-206-8327**

**2040 Walden Ave, Buffalo, NY 14225**

**Rooms \$110 per night – Free Breakfast**

**Ask for Wilhoite Group Reservations**

**PROGRAM**

**Mon. Sept 21<sup>st</sup>. – Registration – Hospitality Room (HR)**

**Tues. Sept 22<sup>nd</sup> – Maid of the Mist – Tour of the Falls – (HR)**

**Wed. Sept 23<sup>rd</sup> – Buffalo Naval Park/ Tour ships & Museum**

**Memorial Service on Fantail of USS Sullivan – (HR)**

**Thur. Sept 24<sup>th</sup> – Banquet/State Exchange/Pictures/Business Mtg  
(HR)**

**Fri. Sept 25<sup>th</sup> – Smooth Sailing Home**

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**REGISTRATION FORM**

**Name \_\_\_\_\_ Guest \_\_\_\_\_**

**\$134 per person # \_\_\_\_\_ Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**Mail to Dana Alcorn**

**12863 W. Vernon Ave**

**Avondale, AZ 85392-7138 \*send by May 1st 2020**

**USS Wilhoite \_\_\_\_\_ USS Finch \_\_\_\_\_ Rank/Rate \_\_\_\_\_ Yrs aboard \_\_\_\_\_**

**Circle shirt size for member S M L XL XXL Shirt size for guest S M L XL XXL**