



1943



1972



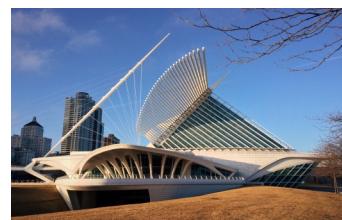
# THE BANG GANG NEWS LETTER

Published to perpetuate the memory of USS BANG (SS-385) and her Crew

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Spring/Summer 2026 [WWW.USSBANG.COM](http://WWW.USSBANG.COM) [WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/USSBANG](http://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/USSBANG) ISSUE-116

**AHOY SHIPMATES, SPOUSES, AND GUESTS**  
**LAST CHANCE!**  
**GET READY FOR THE 2026 USS BANG REUNION!**  
**JULY 27-30 2026**



**HOLIDAY INN PEWAUKEE WEST**  
**N14 W24140 TOWER PLACE PEWAUKEE, WI 53072**  
**1-262-506-6300**

**CALL HOTEL DIRECT FOR RESERVATIONS**  
**MENTION USS BANG GROUP**

REGISTER BY JULY 13, 2026



# FPO



This column is dedicated to all the letters we receive from you. Any info about yourself or others you want to share with your shipmates will be published here. Think of this as a combination of the bulletin board in the Crew's Mess and the IMC.

Hello Shipmates, friends and loyal readers,

Reunion time is just around the corner, and this issue will be all reunion and every page will be devoted to making sure everyone has a chance to sign up for a fun week in Milwaukee swapping sea stories and experiencing all the fun times and sights this great city has to offer.

John and Darlene Kraft have worked overtime to make sure our reunion will be a great success, and judging by the daily activities they have planned, it is time and effort well spent. First a word about the tours John and Darlene have planned. At first glance, they seem a little pricey, and compared to past reunions, they are, and for good reason. At past reunions, we went to military bases, museums, and local attractions where the admission prices were non-existent or nominal. Our hosts have planned what I believe is the most in depth, interesting and extensive view of the host city in our reunion history. I, for one, am really looking forward to seeing the heart of Milwaukee and soaking up every sight, sound and taste of what I feel is one of America's finest small cities. If you miss these tours, you will miss a great part of the reunion!

We will be staying in the Holiday Inn outside Milwaukee proper, and it has, what I feel, is a rarity in today's hospitality world...people where English is their first language. When I made my reservation, I talked to a person INSIDE the hotel, not in Manila or Bangladesh! It was the fastest, easiest, and most pleasant hotel reservation I've made in a long time. There are many restaurants in the area, plus one in the hotel as well. As an added plus, John has kindly consented to provide transportation to the Harley Davidson factory and museum. He plans to go after the business meeting on Thursday and the tour and surrounding plant works should take around three hours, and John will return to pick everyone up. Details will be given at the business meeting. If you are interested in going, and this is VERY IMPORTANT, call or email ME with your name and anyone else in your party who wants to go, and I will get in touch with John and give him the number of "tour" participants. John and Darlene will be, as always in reunions, busy with last minute details, so any help we can offer to make their job easier will be appreciated! This includes making your hotel and reunion registrations by the deadline of July 13, 2026. The hotel information, reunion sign up sheet, and tour information are on the next three pages, so sign up today!

So, make your reservations now so you won't miss any of the reunion and the good times we will have in Milwaukee, and of course swapping sea stories in the hospitality room!



**SEE YOU THERE!**



## Holiday Inn Pewaukee- Milwaukee West

### Amenities

- Indoor Pool
- Parking Included
- Health/Fitness Center
- In hotel restaurants
- Business Center
- Wireless Internet
- Kids Eat Free
- No Pets Allowed

**DATES: JULY 27<sup>TH</sup> THRU THE  
30TH, 2026**

**ARR. MONDAY & LV. FRIDAY**

**BANQUET THURSDAY**

**ROOM RATE: 129.00 + 13% TAX**

**= 145.77 ALL IN**

**BREAKFAST INCLUDED**

### Parking Information

Free Parking directly at the hotel

N14 W24140 Tower Place,  
Pewaukee, Wisconsin 53072 Unit-  
ed States

### HOTEL DIRECT PHONE LINE:

**262-506-6300**

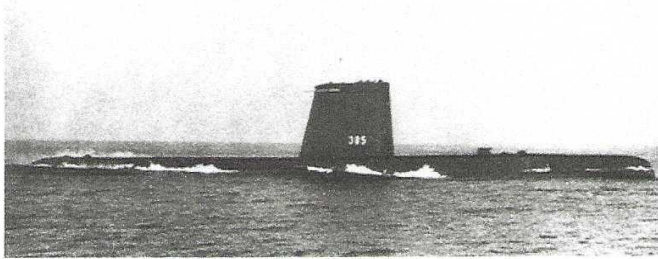
**MENTION USS BANG  
GROUP**

**MILWAUKEE ART MUSEUM/  
WISCONSIN WAR MEMORIAL**

(Where we will hold our  
memorial service)



**DEAD LINE TO REGISTER FOR HOTEL RESERVATIONS IS JULY 13, 2026**



## 2026 REUNION SIGN- UP SHEET

**WHO'S COMING? ADVANCE & BE RECOGNIZED!!!**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
STATE/ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE/E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_  
YRS ON BOARD/RATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
GUEST(S): \_\_\_\_\_

**TOURS:** Taste of Milwaukee No. \_\_\_\_\_ @110.00 = \_\_\_\_\_  
Milwaukee, a Great... No. \_\_\_\_\_ @140.00 = \_\_\_\_\_

**BANQUET ENTRÉE CHOICES:**

1.) Honey Madeira Salmon No. \_\_\_\_\_ @43.00 = \_\_\_\_\_  
2.) Chicken Paillard No. \_\_\_\_\_ @38.00 = \_\_\_\_\_  
3.) 6oz. Filet Mignon No. \_\_\_\_\_ @ 52.00 = \_\_\_\_\_  
4.) Duo - Crusted Top No. \_\_\_\_\_ @ 51.00 = \_\_\_\_\_

Sirloin & Chicken Champagne

**HOSPITALITY DEFRAIMENT:** No. \_\_\_\_\_ @ 20.00 = \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL:** \_\_\_\_\_



Your hosts are John & Darlene Kraft. Paul Schramm got the word out, publicity, that is. Pls complete the above form and send all checks, monies, coins of considerable worth (but NO Bitcoin or crypto of any type) etc. payable to:

**John Kraft**

**N49 W28619 Chardon Dr., Hartland, WI 53029**

**Questions?: 414-975-5951; jkraftus@gmail.com**

**DEADLINE FOR REGISTRATION IS 7/13/26**

**Tuesday, July 28**

**TASTE OF MILWAUKEE TOUR**

This guided tour gives you a great overview of Milwaukee learning about the city's history as well as the current progress. We'll see the major influence the European immigrants had on the city's architecture, business, and culture earning nicknames such as "Brew City", "Machine Shop to the World" and "City of Festivals". As we travel throughout the city, we will see some of the iconic Milwaukee sites such as City Hall, the many architecturally significant churches, the former breweries that made Milwaukee famous, and the magnificent Milwaukee Art Museum. We'll make a stop at the Milwaukee County War Memorial overlooking Lake Michigan for a Memorial Service. We'll also travel along the Lake Michigan shoreline seeing the beautiful waterfront views and Lake Drive mansions. We'll make a stop at the Milwaukee Public Market for an opportunity to pick up Milwaukee area treats and our guide will also provide each of us with a "Milwaukee Goodie Bag" of tasty Milwaukee treats that define the city's different neighborhoods which can be enjoyed along the way or taken home to savor later. Lunch will be provided at the Lakefront Brewery's Beer Hall, considered Milwaukee's most fun brewery tour started by two brothers in 1987, followed by an abbreviated brewery tour which includes beer samples, or soda, and a souvenir glass.

**8:30am - Depart Hotel**

**9:45am - Milwaukee War Memorial**

**12:00am - Lunch at Lakefront Brewery & Lakefront Brewery Tour**

**2:45pm - Milwaukee Public Market**

**4:00pm - Return to Hotel**

**COST: 110.00 EA**

**TOURS WE WILL TAKE LED BY OUR TOUR GUIDE,**

**KAY COLLINS OF CHEERS MILWAUKEE**



**Wednesday, July 29**

**MILWAUKEE - A GREAT PLACE ON A GREAT LAKE**

Our day begins with a home tour of one of Milwaukee's beloved beer barons. We'll learn about Captain Frederick Pabst, one of the men who made Milwaukee famous, seeing his beautiful Flemish Renaissance Mansion. Next, we'll enjoy a German Sampler Plate lunch at Mader's German Restaurant, a favorite on Milwaukee's Old World Third Street since 1902, before boarding the Edelweiss Sightseeing Boat. Some say the name Milwaukee derives from a Native American word meaning "Gathering Place by the Waters" and a great way to see Milwaukee is via the waterways. We'll sail through downtown Milwaukee and the revitalized Historic Third Ward neighborhoods on the Milwaukee River and the Port of Milwaukee into Lake Michigan with beautiful views of the Milwaukee skyline. The boat offers indoor and outdoor seating. Cash bar available on the boat.

**9:30am - Depart Hotel**

**10:00am - Captain Frederick Pabst Mansion**

**11:30am - Lunch at Mader's German Restaurant**

**1:30pm - Sightseeing Cruise**

**3:30pm - Return to Hotel**

**COST: 140.00 EA**

## U-505—GERMANY'S CURSED U-BOAT

### Episode Two—the Hunter Becomes the Hunted

Even before the United States entered the war, the German U-Boat fleet was cruising along the Atlantic Coast searching for British shipping that had stopped to refuel, and replenish at ports such as Mexico and some Caribbean British Crown Colonies. They knew that some American ships were carrying supplies and war materials to Britain, but since America was ostensibly a neutral non-combatant, they could not touch them. It was a situation that frustrated the Kriegsmarine to no end but there it was. That all changed several days after Pearl Harbor when Hitler declared war on the United States and issued a unrestricted warfare notice on all American shipping and warships of the US Navy.

Grand Admiral Doenitz welcomed the order with reservations. One, he did not have enough U-Boats at the time to effectively carry out a successful campaign against ships coming to the aid of a beleaguered Britain, and two, the Kriegsmarine had almost no-up-to-date maps of the Atlantic seaboard and ports along the coast line. It turns out they didn't need them. For the American navy, like just about all branches of its military, was totally unprepared for war.

The Navy had exactly two old destroyer escorts for defending the coast from Maine to the south of Georgia. That's two as in 2. All available ships were sent to Pearl Harbor. When the U-Boats were cruising off the coast of New York and New England, they marveled at the bright lights and almost white background of the big city shorelines. The ships that steamed out of New York, New Jersey, Boston, and even Philadelphia were silhouetted perfectly against the almost blinding light of the skyscrapers completely unfamiliar to small town sailors. Who needed a map to track their targets. Doenitz decided to send a preliminary wolfpack to the edge of Long Island to see how a planned attack would do. There were only five boats available, as Hitler would not chance more in order to defend Norway against British Commando attacks, and to insure that supplies would make it to the Mediterranean to supply Rommel's North Africa campaign. The five U-Boats left at staggered departure dates for secrecy, to rendezvous further out at sea. However the British knew all about it.

Thanks to French resistance working at all the U-Boat ports, the departure dates and times were surreptitiously transferred to British agents working in nearby Spain and Portugal. The British had been fighting the German U-Boat menace since 1914. The U-Boat war had almost starved Britain, and the Allies to death. Grand Admiral Doenitz was in fact a young U-Boat commander in the First war. The British Admiralty with years of experience fighting the U-Boat war, set up a joint alliance with the Naval brass in the Pentagon to coordinate the two navies to combat the coming battle of the Atlantic. Admiral Earnest King, Commander-in-Chief, Atlantic Fleet wanted nothing to do with it, he did not like the British, and that was that. The British, with the help of the aforementioned resistance, knew the five U-Boats were coming, they tracked their course, and where they were headed. They even knew the names of the U-Boat skippers! All this information fell on deaf ears. Finally, the mini-wolfpack arrived on station, assembled, and began their war patrols. The result was sheer devastation. Ships that left port just hours ago, were sunk within sight of land. The bright lights and big city of New York silhouetted every ship perfectly, who need a lengthy firing solution, when ship after ship came into range. The 123 boat came so close to shore in pursuit, it almost ran aground off Long Island. The Navy wanted a complete black out of the Manhattan skyline, to help stop the silhouetting the ship outlines. It was defeated, bad for business the bar and supper club owners argued. They did get a "partial" black out later. Talk about being unprepared.

In the two week offensive, the U-Boats had to conserve fuel for the return, over thirty ships were sunk. All bound for Britain. The shore lines were littered with twisted metal, lifeboats that were never lowered, the ships sank so fast, and the bodies of hundreds of sailors. Something had to be done, and done fast. Churchill conferred with Roosevelt and pleaded for more cooperation from the US Navy. Adm. King was summoned and in effect read the riot act and told to start coordinating with the British or else. He did, and slowly the tide began to change. This time is known in German accounts of the Battle of the Atlantic as the "Happy Time." It was about to end.

The situation looked bleak for the Allies in early 1942-43, but like everything else in the war, once they got up and running, the Battle of the Atlantic was beginning to turn the tide. New inventions, some from the Americans and others from the Brits, were beginning to even the odds. ASDIC, an advanced sonar, and High Frequency Direction Finding fixes, "HUFF-DUFF" made the searches easier. Even the so called "Death Zone," the area in the middle of the Atlantic, beyond the range of land based aircraft was solved by the introduction of escort carriers that had the once obsolete F4F Wildcats, refitted for longer range and with bombs and depth charges evened the odds even more. Finally, the breaking of the Enigma code in Bletchley Park, drove the final nail into the Kriegsmarine U-Boat arm. The codes breakers could intercept messages from Berlin, thought unbreakable by the Germans, and in almost real time find where the U-Boats were headed. By the end of 1944, Germany was losing more U-Boats than it could build.

Task Group 22.3, commanded by Captain Daniel Gallery, consisting of the escort carrier USS Guadalcanal, and destroyer escorts, Pillsbury, Pope, Flaherty, Chatelain, and Jenks under Cdr. Frederick Hall was patrolling the East Atlantic off the Spanish Sahara .

So it happened at 11:09 on 4 Jun 1944, that TG 22.3 made contact with U-505 off Rio de Oro (and only 800 yards off the starboard bow of the Chatelain). The other escorts immediately moved in for the attack, and Guadalcanal moved away to launch her Wildcats. The Chatelain was too close to the U-505 to drop depth charges, so fired off a salvo of hedgehog depth charges, (that only explode on contact) and turned sharply to starboard to begin a depth charge attack. One of the Wildcats strafed the water to mark the position of the diving 505, and Chatelain dropped a spread of depth charges. Almost immediately after the charges exploded, one of the pilots exclaimed, "You struck oil" as a huge oil slick rose to the surface. Less than seven minutes after Chatelain's attack, the badly damaged 505 surfaced less than 600 yards from the task force. All the ships in the task force opened fire, further damaging the U-505, and Oberleutnant Lange ordered abandon ship. The crew immediately obeyed, but in their haste did not successfully scuttle the ship. They opened the valves, but left the engines running, did not destroy the Enigma machine and codes.

Captain Gallery, had always wanted to capture a U-boat, and had actually trained his crews for such an opportunity. He ordered the Chatelain and Jenks to rescue the U-Boat crew, (only one 505 crew-member died in the battle) Signalman First class Fischer. Meanwhile, an eight man boarding party from the Jenks, led by Lt. Albert David, came along side and entered 505 through the conning tower. They secured the Enigma machine, all the charts and code books, closed the scuttling valve, disarmed the scuttling charges and stopped her engines. The 505 was low in the water and down by the stern due to the flooding of three compartments. The Guadalcanal's chief engineer, Cdr. Earl Trosino joined the salvage party and disconnected the diesel engines from her electric driving motors leaving them attached to the propeller shafts. Meanwhile the 505 was rigged by tow line to the Guadalcanal, this allowed the motors to act as electrical generators, charging the batteries. With power restored somewhat, the water was cleared from the flooded compartments and 505's air compressors blew out the ballast tanks, bringing her to full service trim. Now the question remained, what do we do now? Even though French Morocco was Allied controlled, spies were everywhere. The final decision was made. The Guadalcanal would tow the 505 to Bermuda and transfer the U-Boat crew to a POW camp in the US.

The long voyage back home was beginning but more tribulation awaited from all places, Atlantic Fleet C-in-C Ernest King.

**The Final Chapter: No Good Deed goes Unpunished.**

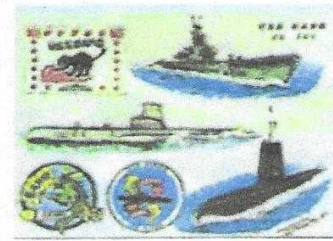
### Top Quality BANG Merchandise at Rock Bottom Prices!

Orders are normally sold at our reunions or shipped via USPS Priority Mail. Send your order to Isaac Cohen with your check payable to **USS BANG** and be sure to add extra bucks to cover the postage. Please include your phone number in case of discrepancies.

Mail to Isaac (Ike) Cohen  
**CALL OR EMAIL ME TO GET MY ADDRESS SINCE I AM A SUNBIRD (OPPOSITE OF SNOWBIRD)**  
 908-334-0927  
 ikecohen415@gmail.com



\$25.00 ea  
Solid or Mesh Top



6" decal: \$6.00



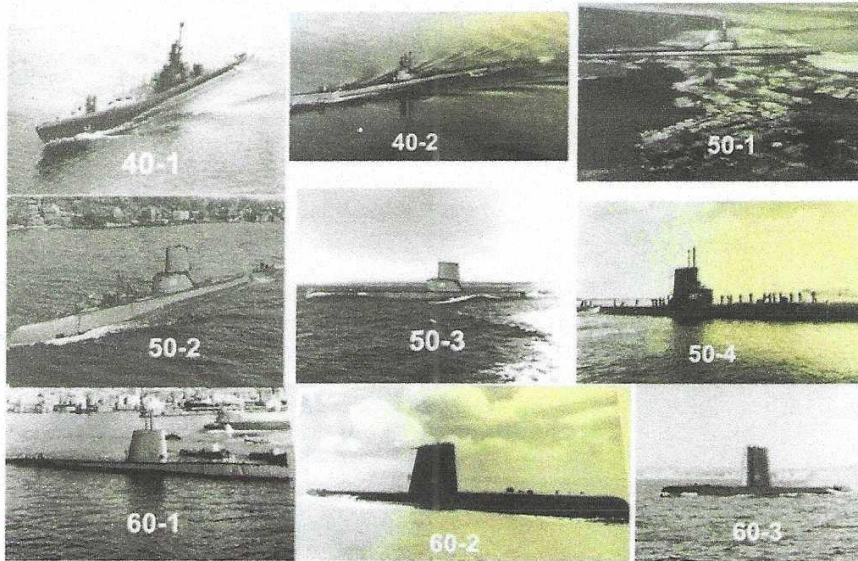
Challenge Coins: \$15.00 ea  
Order By Number



5" Embroidered Patches: \$5.00 ea  
1" Lapel/Hat Pin: \$6.00 ea



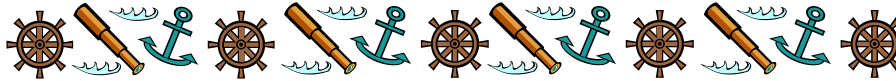
75th anniversary  
Hat/Lapel Pin  
\$5.00



11x17 (some 11x14)  
Black & White Photos  
40's 50's 60/70's  
\$5.00 ea



# LOST AND FOUND



**This page is dedicated to informing you of any additions, deletions, or corrections to our active roster.**  
It has been brought to our attention that the following shipmates have passed away and will be placed on Eternal Patrol.

**LEONARD (LEN) FAGOTTI 63-66 EN**

**DEAN LANPHERE BURDICK 65-67 TM**

**THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE HAVE GENEROUSLY  
DONATED TO THE BANG GANG SLUSH FUND**

**FRANK & CLAUDIA STEINMATZ  
GABE & PAM LEWIS  
ERIC & SALLY ERICSON  
LARRY SCHAFFER  
DAVID KOTTKE  
CONNIE & GERALD SIMPSON**



### EDITORIAL CORRECTION

IN THE LAST ISSUE OUR SHIPMATE ROBERT ASHLEY ETR, WAS MISTAKENLY LISTED AS DECEASED. THE EDITORIAL BOARD WAS NOTIFIED THAT IN FACT ROBERT IS STILL ALIVE AND KICKING. WE SINCERELY APOLOGIZE FOR THIS MISTAKE, AND ROBERT CAN TAKE SOME COMFORT IN JOINING ERNEST HEMINGWAY AND MARK TWAIN IN READING THEIR OWN OBITUARY. AGAIN, OUR SINCEREST APOLOGY, AND THE OFFENDING STAFF MEMBER HAS BEEN PLACED ON PERPETUAL MESS COOK DETAIL.





# ETERNAL PATROL

**There is a port of no return where ships may ride at  
Anchor for a little space, and then some starless night  
The cable slips, leaving only an eddy at the mooring place.  
Gulls veer no longer. Sailor rest your oar.  
No tangled wreckage will be washed ashore.**

Leonard (Len) Fagotti— Our shipmate Len singled his lines and shoved off for eternal patrol after a three year long and courageous battle against cancer which he lost on 25 February 2026. Len was a constant attendee to our reunions, so many that if there was a reunion Len was sure to be present and accounted for. He was always smiling and had a good word or joke to liven up any hospitality room. Very patriotic, he would be the first at attention for the Pledge of Allegiance, and would always be counted on to say a few words about our departed shipmates and would have a hundred different sea stories about life on the BANG. Len was a member and retired from IBEW 351. He also received during his time on the BANG, his Honorable Discharge, the Good Conduct Medal, and the National Defense Service Medal in addition to a Letter of Commendation. Len served on the BANG 1963-66.

Dean Lanphere Burdick— Shipmate Dean deployed on Eternal Patrol at the age of 81 on 30 September 2025 after a long illness. He served on the BANG from 65-67 as a torpedoman and duty diver (scuba). After leaving the service, Dean started an arborist and tree service business in Guilford, CT. which he ran his entire life.



# THE LUCKY BAG

JUST WHEN YOU THOUGHT IT  
WAS SAFE TO GO TOPSIDE !



Hello loyal readers,

I hope you enjoyed the reunion issue. I have extolled the virtues of Milwaukee, and I hope everyone who still hasn't signed up will do so quickly, July 13, is the cut off date. A little snippet on Milwaukee from my Grandfather, who served on the Monaghan DD-32 and was a plank owner on the Nevada BB-36. He mustered out as MoM1 (Motor Machinist Mate, now Engineman). I went to see him after I enlisted, and he gave me the age old story of Navy life, mainly the most important part... liberty call. He said the best liberty ports (during his service, he fought against Pancho Villa, and was a decorated veteran of the Mexican Border War), were Havana, for obvious reasons, and Milwaukee. While in MoM "A" school at Great Lakes, they would take the train to Milwaukee, (you still can) and enjoyed the sights, sounds, and very friendly people in Milwaukee. If my Granddad gave Milwaukee a 5 star rating in the original Yelp! It's good enough for me.

On a very happy note, we had only three newsletters returned for last quarter, so everyone seems to have received the memo on "returned due to non deliverable" Bravo Zulu to everyone, you saved us a lot of money!

Several items that bear repeating, remember the cut off date is 13 July, so get your registration forms in ASAP.

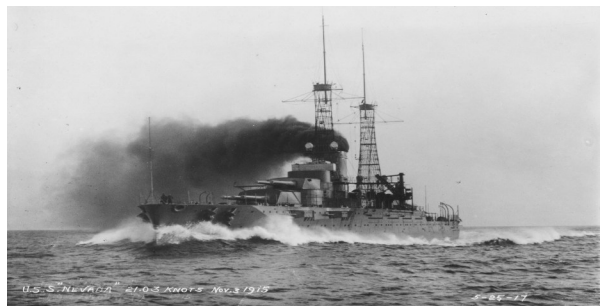
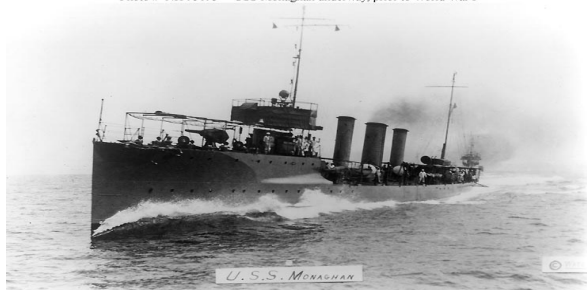
If you are going to the Harley-Davidson tour, courtesy of host John Kraft, email or call me with the name (s) of the attendees and I'll pass them along to John. He'll be up to his neck in last minute preparations so I thought I'd help him out. They have a nice cafeteria where you can get lunch there also.

I'm sure you noticed the small stores page in the newsletter, we want everyone to have the best "liberty" uniform elements for our tours and ventures about town. Please call or email SK2 Ike and he will fill your order, also he wanted to say that if the prices have risen on some items, he will let you know. He will of course, as always, have a variety of items at the reunion.

That's it for now, I hope to see everyone in Milwaukee, and until then, as always, Fair Winds, and Following Seas!

As an added "bonus" after writing about my Grandfather, I thought I might put in a couple pictures of his "rides" while on active duty. Enjoy!

Photo # NH 95195 USS Monaghan underway, prior to World War I



Eric H. Ericson, III-Editor  
Bang Gang Newsletter  
926A Savannas Pt. Dr.  
Ft. Pierce, FL 34982-5163



FIRST – CLASS MAIL  
FORWARDING SERVICE  
REQUESTED



PRAISE OUR MILITARY! - AND PRAY FOR THEM TOO.

