

# THE DESTROYERMAN

NEWSLETTER OF THE USS ARLEIGH BURKE ASSOCIATION

VOLUME 14, ISSUE 1

FEBRUARY 2026

Dedicated to preserving the heritage of Admiral Arleigh A. Burke and USS Arleigh Burke

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

USS Arleigh Burke Association Members, Family and Friends,  
**Happy New Year and Welcome 2026!!** I hope everyone



had the chance to spend the Holidays with their loved ones, and enjoy personal time with family, friends and perhaps even a bit with yourself!

As of the end of 2025, I have stepped aside as our Association President, in order to spend more time on a number of projects that I have in work, to include the Admiral Arleigh Burke Foundation (AABF) and the National Museum of the Surface Navy (NMSN). While the New President Search Committee continues to look for and find a volunteer to lead the USS Arleigh Burke Association, our Secretary, Corey Keniston, and Treasurer, Rob Jobrack, will keep their hands on the Association's Helm. If you are interested in contributing more to our Association, and willing to step forward, please put your hat in the ring to be our next President, and let Corey and Rob know of your interest.

**2026 Significance.** We mark two important milestones in our Nation's History this year -- both the celebration of the 250th Anniversary of the Independence of the United States of America, as well as USS Arleigh Burke's 35th Commissioning Anniversary!! I am so proud of the Admiral's Destroyer, forward in the fight for stability and freedom, and an important Fleet asset in the European Theater as part of Sixth Fleet! All Arleigh Burke Sailors, past and present, have made a difference to our Nation's security having chosen lives of consequence as Arleigh Burke Sailors!

### USS Arleigh Burke 35th Commissioning Anniversary Celebration Update.

At the end of last year, our Association Board charted the course to mark USS Arleigh Burke's 35th Commissioning Anniversary Celebration this year, making the decision to join the Tin Can Sailors Association Annual Meeting and Reunion in Warwick Rhode Island 22-28 August 2026. In addition to the events that the Tin Can Sailors Association plans across all five days, the USS Arleigh Burke Association will sponsor an exclusive dinner for USS Arleigh Burke Association Members, current and former USS Arleigh Burke Sailors and

## OFFICERS

### President

Rick Easton

[Email](#)

### Secretary

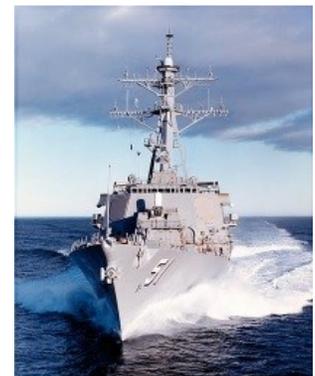
Corey Keniston

[Email](#)

### Treasurer

Rob Jobrack

[Email](#)



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### USS Arleigh Burke 35th Commissioning Anniversary Celebration:

Warwick Rhode Island 22-28 August 2026. Arleigh Burke 35th Commissioning Anniversary Celebration Dinner— Sunday 23 Aug.

### Annual Membership Meeting: 1930-2015

Thursday 22 October 2026 - the 4th Thursday of October

Families, as well as other Association Friends. One highlight of our 35th Commissioning Anniversary Celebration will be the unveiling of Peter Hsu's original 35th USS Arleigh Burke Commissioning Anniversary Drawing – making it his 5th USS Arleigh Burke Commemorative Drawing!! The dinner will be on Sunday 23 August. Other advantages of joining the Tin Can Sailors Association Annual Reunion for the USS Arleigh Burke 35th includes moving to a different geographic location which may make it easier for Sailors who have not been able to join us in Norfolk due to distance but can join us in Rhode Island, and we can focus our Association efforts on the Celebration Dinner as the rest of the events will be planned by the Tin Can Sailors Association. Also, USS Arleigh Burke represents the over 75 Arleigh Burke Class Destroyers in commission today – all “Tin Cans.” We certainly look forward to Arleigh Burke Sailors, Families and Friends, from across the globe, joining us for the Admiral's Destroyer's 35th!! Please look at Corey's and Rob's Sections in the Newsletter for additional background information and details. If you are interested in helping with the 35th – getting the word out, Dinner details, etc., please let us know.

**USS Arleigh Burke Update.** Under the leadership of her Captain, Commander Ethan Reber, the Admiral's Destroyer completed her post Patrol Six maintenance availability at the end of the 2025 Holiday Season Standdown. Since then, she has been finishing up Strike Group recertification. For those who tracked my comments in the October 2025 Newsletter, we were not able to find a convenient time to get together with the Crew during the very limited time she had in port Norfolk this Winter. The Ship is now on Patrol 7. As the oldest DDG51 to ply the high seas, she is formidable, and proudly leading the most powerful Class of Destroyers ever built.

**2025 Annual Association Membership Meeting.** The 2025 Annual Association Membership Meeting was conducted 1930-2030 on Thursday 23 October 2025. I am very happy to report that the Association is in

good shape, met for the most part all of our 2025 Goals, elected our 2026 Secretary and Treasurer, establish our 2026 Goals very similar to past years, as well as established a “New President Search Committee.” Corey has captured the details of the 2025 Annual Membership Meeting in the Secretary's Report Section of the Newsletter, and in the Meeting Official Minutes posted on the Association Website.

**Oral Histories.** While admittedly moving more slowly than we want, we are still very interested in recording and/or receiving written Histories from the Association Membership, Families and Friends. Anything that contributes to USS Arleigh Burke's noteworthy Fleet Introduction and Service History. We also want your input regarding individuals you recommend be included on the “Oral” History Interview list. As stated previously, this is important work to capture those pearls of historical knowledge before they are lost due to the passage of time. Also, we are looking for volunteers to help with conducting Oral History Interviews. I have done a few and they are a lot of fun! Please let Kenyon and/or Corey know if you are interested in helping out here.

**Anchor Scholarship.** We are on track to support award of the 2026-2027 Academic Year USS Arleigh Burke Association Anchor Scholarship which will occur in June of this year. This will be our Association's Tenth Anchor Scholarship. Our Treasurer will provide the funds to the Anchor Scholarship Foundation in February 2026. My sincere appreciation to all the Association Members who contributed in 2025 to make our Tenth Scholarship a reality. Thanks, and BZ!! Please see Rob's section for details.

**National Museum of the Surface Navy (NMSN) Update.** October 13th 2025, the Surface Navy's 250th Birthday, the NMSN officially opened, aboard the Battleship Iowa in the Port of Los Angeles, the first Showcase – the Great Ships Experience! As agreed in the Admiral Arleigh Burke Foundation/NMSN MOU, both Admiral Burke and USS Arleigh Burke are prominently featured in the NMSN: The Great Ships Showcase conspicuously displays USS Arleigh Burke as one of 15 Feature Ships out of

approximately 400 total ships in the Exhibit. USS Arleigh Burke represents both today's and tomorrow's Navy!

As mentioned in previous Newsletters, the key theme for our Surface Warrior Museum is "Freedom of the Seas" and its importance to both our National Security, National Prosperity, and American Way of Life. In addition, during the recent Surface Navy Association Annual National Symposium in Crystal City, Arlington, Virginia 13-15 January 2026, the NMSN had a Kiosk. We continued to sign up new NMSN Plank Owners, as well as a number of "Individuals" to lead the charge to make their ship interactive as either an "Identifier Ship" or a "Fleet Ship" in the Great Ship's Experience. If you might be interested in joining as a Plank Owner or Sponsoring a Ship, please reach out to me directly. I am happy to send you the NMSN Executive Brief and set up a time for review it if you would like. Send me a note to: [EastonAdvisors@gmail.com](mailto:EastonAdvisors@gmail.com) or give me a call at: 703-226-9461 (M)

**Closing.** I close by thanking all of you who actively support and participate in the USS Arleigh Burke Asso-

ciation, whether it be paying your dues, making a donation to the USS Arleigh Burke Association Anchor Scholarship, participation directly in our Board of Director's Telcons, help recruit new Association Members, or in any other way. Thanks to Kenyon for keeping the Website and other Media Matters going, special thanks to Ron Struewing who again has made our outstanding 'The Destroyerman' Newsletter happen to get the word out and who has made a real difference over the Associations many years, and thanks very much to Rob and Corey who do the important work to keep all the details on track. The Team has accomplished a tremendous amount since we kicked things off in 2009 and officially established the USS Arleigh Association in conjunction with the USS Arleigh Burke 20th Commissioning Anniversary Celebration over the Fourth of July Weekend in 2011. I am very fortunate to have had such a Great Volunteer Team!! You have made a difference for USS Arleigh Burke and the Navy.

Be safe this Winter! My best to all for a Happy and Prosperous 2026!

Rick



RADM (Ret.) Mike Shatynski and Rick Easton at the NMSN Kiosk at the January 2026 Surface Navy Association Annual Symposium.

## TIN CAN SAILORS BY ROSEN GIPE - TIN CAN SAILOR ASSN. PRESIDENT

Tin Can Sailors continues to host the quarterly Coffee Hour at the Headquarters in Somerset, Massachusetts. This program brings together members and friends in the area for presentations and conversations about destroyer history, the active fleet, destroyer museum ships, and current news for veterans. Admission is free. Call 508-677-0515 for information and to register.

Tin Can Sailors is an organization for destroyer sailors, family, friends, and history enthusiasts. "The Tin Can Sailor," the quarterly magazine, contains historical articles, current news, and sea stories, as well as meeting and reunion listings. To become a member, call 508-

677-0515 or visit the website at <https://www.destroyers.org/membership/>. To keep up with Tin Can Sailors, follow us on Facebook [@tincansailorsdestroyers](https://www.facebook.com/tincansailorsdestroyers).

Full article can be seen in the June 2025 issue of *The Destroyerman*.



Photograph from the 31st Commissioning Anniversary Celebration Dinner

### The ASSOCIATION STORE IS OPEN

Ball caps (30+ years as shown and blue 25th anniversary ball caps: Crew ballcaps: \$20; O5/O6/Flag ballcaps: \$25. This includes shipping costs.

25th anniversary T-shirt for only \$5.



# TREASURER’S REPORT BY ROB JOBRACK

Because I am a lucky person I get to see former ARLEIGH BURKE shipmates in the Fredericksburg-Dahlgren area of Virginia, at either Navy facilities or if they are passing through town on the Interstate 95 corridor. And I get to meet Arleigh Burke sailors who served after my time on her had ended. Many of us now work on newer ship classes for the Navy or the Coast Guard.



Interestingly, we never sugarcoat our history of our time on DDG51. We sort of relish the discussion of things that went south during our time aboard, whether it had to do with people, hardware or just circumstance. A few days ago, I had lunch with an old friend who was a Gunner’s Mate when we served together. For some reason we were laughing about inadvertent sprinkler activation that caused a lot of wet Sailors in the pallet staging area and in Mount 51 while we were doing some testing on the gun weapon system. What we also discussed was how quickly the shore technical community worked to resolve problems, whether they were fundamental design issues, faulty parts, improper documentation or computer program bugs. Kenyon Hiser, our social media czar, talks and writes about this a lot: how the entire technical and programmatic community was aligned for the success of the ship class. I like to think I’m doing my part to pay it forward as I work on newer ship classes and I get the same attitude from the DDG 51 Sailors I encounter on the way.

I said earlier that I am lucky. I could have said “fortunate” or “blessed” and it all comes down to the fact that life has been really, really good to me. A large part of that is due to the people I’ve worked with on active duty and as part of the Navy technical community. The USS Arleigh Burke Association is one means to stay in touch with those people and maintain the relationships that are still important today.

## ANCHOR SCHOLARSHIP

Each year, the association provides for a \$3,000 annual scholarship awarded to an applicant who is the depend-

ent (child or spouse) of a current or past USS Arleigh Burke (DDG-51) sailor (officer or enlisted). To qualify:

- The applicant’s sponsor must be a current Arleigh Burke Association member.
- Recipient must meet all Anchor Scholarship Foundation (who administers our scholarship) application requirements

Thank you to those who have fulfilled their pledge to support the Arleigh Burke Association Scholarship run by the Anchor Scholarship Foundation. We have received over half of the funds we need to make the \$3000 scholarship happen. It’s not too late: we provide the funds to the foundation in February so please be generous and support our efforts.

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## MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Our membership categories and dues for 2026:

- USS ARLEIGH BURKE (DDG 51) Ship’s Company: Free
- Member: \$20
- Sustaining Member: \$125 (10 year sustaining equals Lifetime)
- Lifetime Member: \$1000

The USS Arleigh Burke Association is recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a tax-exempt non-profit organization under section 501(c)(19) of the internal revenue code.

Payments and donations to the association can be made in two ways:

- 1) Using PayPal via the association website, [USSArleighBurkeAssociation.org](http://USSArleighBurkeAssociation.org)
- 2) Send a check made out to USS Arleigh Burke Association to:

USS Arleigh Burke Association  
32 King Georges Grant  
Fredericksburg, VA 22405

## FROM THE SECRETARY BY COREY KENISTON

USS Arleigh Burke Association  
Members and Friends,

Happy New Year and Happy 250th Birthday to the United States of America! At our 2025 Membership Meeting we acknowledged meeting all goals for 2025 and established our goals for 2026. A big one is to increase the number of “Members in Good Standing.” If you don’t know your status, . . . I do! Reach out to me at [secretary@arleighburkeassociation.org](mailto:secretary@arleighburkeassociation.org) and I’ll confirm you are current in your dues. Annual Membership is \$20.00, if you would like to be a Sustaining Member it is \$125.00, and a cumulative contribution of \$1000 achieves a Lifetime Membership. Your membership dues help sustain our administrative costs, maintain our online presence, provide the annual USS Arleigh Burke Association Anchor Scholarship, and allow us to provide support to the ship’s crew. Do you know someone who served on the Admiral’s Destroyer or contributed to the success of the Ship Class? Please share our webpage with them (<https://arleighburkeassociation.org/>) and invite them to join by clicking on the “Association” tab and following the instruction under “Membership.”



Rick Easton assumed President of our Association when it was formed in 2011 and has successfully led the organization for the last 15 years. We owe him a great debt of gratitude for all he has done to bring us together and keep us fair in the channel over the years. He stepped aside as anticipated on 01 January 2026, but remains active advising our Board of Directors as Immediate Past President and continues leading the USS Arleigh Burke Foundation. We are actively searching for the next President. If you have a candidate in mind, please send me a nomination for consideration (self-nominations are especially appreciated!)

In October 2025, the National Museum of the Surface Navy hosted a “Freedom of the Seas” Gala to celebrate the Navy’s 250th Birthday. [Home Page - Surface Navy Museum](#). This amazing event onboard the Museum Ship Iowa in the Port of Los Angeles also served as a

soft opening of their Phase 1 displays. I was proud to see USS ARLEIGH BURKE prominently displayed in the Wall of Great Ships and the ship class is represented with a detailed model and cut away representation in the Life of a Sailor exhibit. It is a world class museum and on track for a Grand Opening during LA Fleet Week this Memorial Day Weekend. Something I highly recommend you consider attending – I hope to see you there!

Please take a moment to visit our website. [USS Arleigh Burke Association – Professional Association For Arleigh Burke Crewmembers and Supporters](#). It is a treasure trove of information about the Admiral, the Ship, the Ship Class, and news about our Shipmates. My favorite portion is the History Interviews collected from those who made significant contributions to the success of the ship and class. Our website is being seen as an authoritative resource for historical research and we are always looking for others who should be interviewed to have their stories incorporated into the project. Please let me know if you, or someone you respect, should be added to our list of those to interview.

DDG 51 remains forward deployed to Rota, Spain and assigned to Forward Deployed Naval Forces-Europe (FDFNF-E) homeported in Naval Station Rota, Spain as part of Task Force 65. Under the direction of Naval Forces Europe/Africa, TF 65 ships execute operations from as far north as the Norwegian Sea and south to the Cape of Good Hope. They are involved in missions that include Ballistic Missile Defense, Sea Lines of Communication enforcement, Maritime Interdiction Operations, direct support to NATO combined and Joint operations and exercises, Counter-terrorism operations, Counter-piracy operations, Africa Maritime Law Enforcement Partnership operations, whole of government Africa Partnership Station deployments, Safety of Life at Sea, and Theater Security Cooperation activities both inport and underway. The ship recently conducted two trans-Atlantic crossings to complete a major training and re-certification event off our east coast in 2nd Fleet waters. She is back on station standing the watch in these challenging times and representing us well. The ship is built to fight and this crew knows how!

In Arleigh Burke Class news, the U.S. Navy has accepted

delivery of the 78th ship of the class, future USS Ted Stevens (DDG 128), the third Flight III Arleigh Burke-class destroyer.

22-28 August 2026 - Save the date! We will partner with the Tin Can Sailors Association to celebrate our 35th Commissioning Anniversary during their 50th Annual Reunion at the Crown Plaza Hotel in Warwick, Rhode Island. We are today's "Tin Can Sailors" and it will be great to interact with those who served on Destroyers no longer in service. You can learn more about the Tin Can Sailors organization at <https://www.destroyers.org/> or follow them on Facebook [@tincansailorsdestroyers](https://www.facebook.com/tincansailorsdestroyers).

The details of the reunion agenda are being worked out, but the main events are:

Aug 22 (Saturday) Evening "Welcome Reception", the Navy Band Northeast is invited.

Aug 23 (Sunday) Evening Arleigh Burke 35th Commissioning Anniversary Celebration Dinner

Aug 24 (Monday) Day tour Newport, RI (potential visit to the Naval Station Newport Rhode Island)

Aug 25 (Tuesday) Day tour Battleship Cove and Tin Can Sailors Library/Museum

Aug 26 (Wednesday) Last Night Diner in the Hotel's Grand Ballroom

TCS reunions strike a great balance between scheduling interesting group events and providing individual venues for attendees to socialize with their shipmates. Our Association compliments TCS and we support their efforts to raise awareness of the overall community among current Destroyer Associations.

2026 is full of potential and your Association leadership encourages you to join us for our Board of Director's Association meetings on the third Thursday of each month at 1930 (EST). When we discuss the Association's business, the more participation in the conversation, the stronger the Association will be. We need your time, talent, and knowledge – especially if you'd like to be the next President!

Please use the Zoom link to join: <https://us05web.zoom.us/j/84945831836?pwd=xRMpeJHoWGEkz17TrmqVjcaDa9CCen.1>

Meeting ID: 849 4583 1836

Passcode: 552200

All the best wishes for a happy and prosperous 2026.

Sail safe Shipmate!

Very respectfully submitted,

Corey

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## ORAL HISTORIES

We continue to move forward with the collection of Oral Histories. You can view a number of them posted on our Association Website! Our Secretary, Corey Keniston, is keeping the prioritized Oral History Interview List of those we are currently pursuing. I am presently working with Martin Weaver, Admiral Burke's Great Nephew, on the Burke Family history as it pertains to Admiral Burke. That said, we are very interested in input from our entire Association Membership, to include Families and Friends, on any stories or artifacts that contribute to USS Arleigh Burke's Design, Construction, Fleet Introduction and Service History. We also would appreciate any thoughts

you have regarding individuals you recommend be included on the Oral History Interview List. This is important work. Every time we lose an Arleigh Burke Sailor before they have had a chance to share their unique perspective of, and contribution to, the Ship we forever lose those pearls of historical knowledge. Please help us here before the passage of time makes it too late. Note: To move this forward faster, we need more volunteers to both take and transcribe Oral Histories. If you are interested, please reach out to our Secretary, Corey Keniston.

## ARLEIGH BURKE CLASS UPDATE

### BY CAPTAIN JAY YOUNG, DESTROYER SHIPBUILDING PROGRAM MANAGER

As the new calendar year begins, I am pleased to report that we have a healthy demand signal of destroyers in production at both shipyards. With 24 ships under contract and 11 progressing through various phases of construction, shipbuilding milestones continue to be achieved at a steady pace.

The USS John Basilone (DDG 122) successfully completed Post Shakedown Availability (PSA) on 6 October 2025. DDG 122 met the Obligation Work Limiting Date (OWLD) 25 days later signaling the transfer of custody and financial responsibility for maintaining and operating the ship from the Shipbuilding Program to the Large Surface Combatant Modernization and Sustainment Program.

Delivery of the future USS Harvey C Barnum (DDG 124) was formally accepted by the Navy on 17 November 2025, marking the official transfer from the Shipbuilder to the Navy. The Ship's namesake Col. Harvey C. Barnum, Jr. was recognized with a Medal of Honor for his extraordinary heroism and valor during the Vietnam War. Col. Barnum closely followed the construction of DDG 124 to include participating in sea trials and firing the first shot from the ship's five-inch gun. The ship will be commissioned on 11 April 2026 in Norfolk, VA.

The USS Jack H. Lucas (DDG 125), the first Flight III ship, completed phase two of Developmental Trials on 25 November 2025. This phase of Initial Operational Test and Evaluation assesses the effectiveness and suitability of military systems before deployment.

General Dynamics, Bath Iron Works (BIW) hosted the Mast Stepping ceremony for the future USS Louis H. Wilson (DDG 126) on 26 September 2025 and Christening ceremony the next day. The ship's sponsors, Janet Wilson Taylor, daughter of the namesake, and Dr. Susan J. Rabern, former Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Financial Management and Comptroller were present. The ship's namesake is General Louis H. Wilson Jr., USMC.

He served as the 26th Commandant of the Marine Corps from 1975 to 1979 and is a Medal of Honor recipient for his actions during the Battle of Guam. Christening marks a significant milestone in the ship's life as DDG 126 continues through construction towards sea trials and delivery to the Fleet. DDG 126 was launched on 10 October 2025.

The future USS Ted Stevens (DDG 128) was delivered at Ingalls in Pascagoula, MS on 29 December 2025. Since the last update, DDG 128 has passed through various tests and trials to facilitate delivery. Prior to delivery, DDG 128 successfully completed Builder Trials and Acceptance Trials between September and November 2025. The ship will undergo a Full Ship Shock Trial in 2026 which will be the first Full Ship Shock Trial on a DDG since USS Winston S. Churchill (DDG 81) completed shock trials in 2001.

Ingalls Industries Shipbuilding hosted the Keel Laying Ceremony for the future USS Thad Cochran (DDG 135) on 23 October 2025. The ship is named in honor of Thad Cochran, who served a four-plus decade congressional career representing the state of Mississippi, including five years in the U. S. House of Representatives from 1973 to 1978 and 40 years in the U. S. Senate from 1978 to 2018. He was commissioned as an Ensign in the Naval Reserve in 1959 and served as Legal Officer in the USS Macon (CA-132) for 18-months followed by a short time on the Eighth Naval District staff in New Orleans, Louisiana before completing his 2-year service with the United States Navy in 1961. Throughout his career, Senator Cochran secured critical defense funding for shipbuilding in Mississippi. He sadly passed away in May 2019, a year after retiring from Congress. At the Keel Laying Ceremony, the ship's sponsor, his widow Kay Bowen Webber Cochran welded her initials onto a steel plate declaring the keel of DDG 135 to be "truly and fairly laid".

These accomplishments underscore the commitment of the Shipbuilders, Sailors, and Program Teams who support our DDG 51 Shipbuilding Program. The Program closed out 2025 with the delivery of two destroyers, marking the first time in several years we have delivered

multiple hulls in one calendar year. As 2026 begins, the Program remains on a solid footing, with continued progress across construction, testing, and delivery.

## CHARTING A COURSE TO SUCCESS: THE USS ARLEIGH BURKE (DDG 51) LEGACY OF EXCELLENCE AND INNOVATION

BY LT ADEWALE GIWA-ALAKA

USS ARLEIGH BURKE (DDG 51) has distinguished herself through unwavering dedication and exemplary service. Her crew's commitment to the Navy's core mission—winning wars, deterring aggression, and maintaining freedom of the seas—embodies the essence of maritime excellence.

Recent operations have showcased America's Lead Destroyer's remarkable capabilities. During her sixth Forward Deployed Naval Forces-Europe Patrol, ARLEIGH BURKE stood as a testament to our Navy's prowess and our nation's will, achieving historic operational milestones. Most notably, her successful ballistic missile defense operations supporting Israel against Iranian aggression led to innovative adaptations of the AEGIS weapons system, shaping the future of strategic and theater missile defense. Additionally, Team 51 successfully executed Freedom of Navigation Operations in the Gulf of Sidra, navigating critical geopolitical waters near Libya with skill and precision—the first U.S. warship to traverse those contested waters in four years.

Following this high-intensity patrol, the crew faced new challenges during the inter-patrol period. Despite her years of service, ARLEIGH BURKE set records in material readiness. The crew's resilience was tested during both the Type Commander's Readiness Evaluation 2 (RE-2) and the Board of Inspection and Survey (INSURV) Material Inspections, which occurred within a three-week window of her return from patrol. Against all odds, the Admiral's Destroyer scored above the class average. Assessors, including INSUR-

V's Senior Inspector, and Director of Inspections, CAPT Michael Concannon, noted the excellent standards maintained aboard and praised the crew for their positive culture, stewardship, and hospitality.

In another historic first for the ARLEIGH BURKE, two crew members were consecutively named Missile Defender of the Year by the Missile Defense Advocacy Alliance (MDAA). FCA1 Julian Smith earned the 2024 award for his technical expertise during ballistic missile defense operations in support of Israel. LT Grace Lawrence followed for 2025, recognized for her outstanding performance operating the ship's missile defense systems during the "12-Day War" and her contributions to improving ballistic missile defense doctrine.

As the inter-patrol period concluded, ARLEIGH BURKE transitioned into the recertifying in Basic Phase mission areas by validating proficiency through a series of certification events, prior to departing Rota, Spain to join George H.W. Bush Carrier Strike Group (GHWBCSG) for their Composite Training Unit Exercise (COMPTUEX) in the Second Fleet. This next chapter aims not only for operational excellence but also to honor the legacy of her namesake. Admiral Arleigh Burke famously remarked, "This ship is built to fight; you'd better know how"—a challenge the crew embraces as they prepare for upcoming operations.

The legacy of ARLEIGH BURKE is a testament to innovation, skill, and dedication. Team 51 honors this legacy by continuing to shape the future of naval operations and secure America's maritime interests worldwide.

## 2026 BOD Meeting Dates

Jan 15 Feb 19 Mar 19 Apr 16 May 21 Jun 18 Jul 16 Aug 20 Sep 17 Oct 15

Oct 22 – Annual Association Membership Meeting Nov 19

### Teleconference for BOD/ Annual Meetings:

**Zoom link:** <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84945831836?pwd=xRMPeJHoWGEkz17TrmqVjcaDa9CCen.1>

**Phone:** 301-715-8592, Meeting ID: 849 4583 1836, Passcode: 552200

**All Telcons kick off at 1930 EST**

### WE'RE ON THE WEB AND SOCIAL MEDIA!

[.ArleighBurkeAssociation.org](https://ArleighBurkeAssociation.org)



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### USS ARLEIGH BURKE OFFICIAL WEBSITE

[HTTPS://WWW.SURFLANT.USFF.NAVY.MIL/DDG51/](https://www.surflant.usff.navy.mil/DDG51/)



The purpose of the USS Arleigh Burke Association is to represent the professional values of all those who have served onboard USS ARLEIGH BURKE (DDG 51) or have an ongoing interest in promoting the ship and crew, the Arleigh Burke Class of Aegis Guided Missile Destroyers, as well as the United States Navy. Toward that end, this Association serves as the professional association for all ARLEIGH BURKE crewmembers and their supporters, past, present and, future.

