

What to Expect at a USS L. Y. SPEAR Reunion

We thought it might be helpful to newly located shipmates and to those who have never attended a reunion to touch on some of the things about a USS L. Y. SPEAR reunion that you might have questions about.

DATES: When we list the dates of the reunion, we typically list a 5-day period going from noon on Wednesday until noon on Sunday. Someone from the Association will be there for that entire time, and the Hospitality Room will be open unless we are away on tours or during dinner functions at the hotel. You are more than welcome to arrive at any time that your schedule will allow.

HOTEL ARRIVAL: When you arrive at the hotel and get checked into your room, you will want to come to the Hospitality Room. The location should be posted in the Lobby or the hotel desk can direct you. Once there, we will have a check-in table set up to welcome you with a Welcome Packet and some goodies. All shipmates and their guests will get a name badge to wear throughout the reunion.

HOSPITALITY ROOM: We ALWAYS have a hospitality room in the hotel where we all gather together. That is the highlight of the reunion for many of us - it's where we meet our old friends and make many new friends. It's where all "sea stories" are once again told, and we realize many are fabricated or embellished by now. That's perfectly acceptable. In our Hospitality Room will be displayed all the raffle prizes that have been donated by many of our shipmates and their families. It's also where raffle and "50-50" tickets will be sold to anyone wishing to purchase them. We will have plenty of complementary snacks and beverages for everyone to enjoy, and our Ship's Store items will be available for purchase. Also in our Hospitality Room you will want to visit the tables where we have displayed a great deal of history, pictures, write-ups, etc. about the SPEAR. We encourage all shipmates to bring in their memorabilia from their time aboard the ship for us to display.

Regarding food and beverages in the Hospitality Room, the Association will provide non-alcoholic beverages and dry snacks. These are paid for using some of the money collected from the **Reunion Registration Fee**. The Association will NOT provide alcohol during the reunion due to liability issues. However, if anyone wants to purchase a drink at the hotel bar, they can bring it to the Hospitality Room to consume. If anyone wants to bring a cooler to the Hospitality Room with a few beers or a bottle of wine, that may be acceptable depending on the hotel. **Please check with the reunion planner before bringing any alcohol into the Hospitality Room** to make sure that we are not in violation of the contract. This also goes for hot food (such as pizza). Some hotels are very strict as to what food can be brought in by our reunion group. Our Association does not have deep pockets, so a lawsuit for these violations of the contract would be very costly.

ACTIVITIES: Our group activities and tours typically take place on Thursday and Friday. If a tour is scheduled, your itinerary will display the time to board the motor coach that takes us to and from our destination. The motor coach will either be parked outside the main Lobby of the hotel or outside the Conference Center (in cases where an overhang prevents the bus from loading). The Registration Form will be available long before the reunion to sign up for the activities you would like to participate in. This allows us to have a head count of all going

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on the trips so we can arrange for transportation. On Saturday we hold our business meeting in the morning leaving the rest of the day for "free time" until the evening's Final Banquet.

BANQUET DINNER: Our final evening's Banquet Dinner is always held on Saturday night and is a tremendous way to wind up our reunion. It's a great time with everyone looking fabulous and pictures are taken constantly. Prior to going into the banquet room for Cocktail Hour, we take two group photos: One of just the shipmates and one with shipmates and their guests. (Photos will be made available for viewing and purchase on our website.)

Our banquet is a sit-down plated dinner which is paid for and ordered long before the reunion using the **Reunion Registration Form**. During our banquet, we honor those shipmates who are no longer with us with a Moment of Remembrance and "Missing Man" table. We also try to have some form of entertainment or guest speaker to enjoy during our banquet. After dinner, special recognitions and presentations are made, and we wrap everything up with our raffle, 50-50, and other prize drawings.

DRESS CODE: We have absolutely NO dress code, and most everything we do is "casual". The only activity we do that people dress up for is our banquet dinner and that's because everyone is having their picture taken for the website. The guys typically wear a nice dress shirt or polo shirt, and slacks with a jacket and/or tie. The gals typically wear a dress or a pantsuit. (Feel free to check out past reunion group photos on our website to see how folks dressed.) Once again, that is NOT a dress rule or dress code. You can wear whatever you are comfortable in. The important thing is that YOU are there.

PLEASE NOTE: To attend ANY part of the reunion, you MUST submit a Reunion Registration Form. Unregistered guests are not permitted in the Hospitality Room for liability reasons (hotel policy). The deadline for submitting your registration form, along with all instructions, is noted on the official website for the USS L. Y. SPEAR (www.usslyspear.org).

We hope this will give anyone with questions an insight into our reunions. The L. Y. SPEAR gave us all a common bond and we share that at the reunions. Many old friendships are renewed and new friendships are made. Everyone leaves for their homes on Sunday morning to await the next reunion that brings us back together.

If we have omitted something you would like to know, please feel free to ask, as we will help in any way we can.

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