

USS FRANK E. EVANS DD 754

WWII KOREA VIETNAM



FOOTLOCKER TALK NEWSLETTER NUMBER 99 — FOURTH QUARTER 2025

Shipmates, Family and Friends,

It is unbelievable that 2025 is rapidly coming to a close. On behalf of the Board of Directors we want to wish everyone a very blessed and healthy holiday season. To the right is the Christmas Card that was created circa 1968. Shipmate Tom Vargo sent this card out to his grandmother for Christmas 1968. If any shipmates have other Christmas or holiday memorabilia to share in the newsletter please send to Dulce Huggins she can be reached via email at dulce92@juno.com



By now most of you know that we currently have stand alone legislation in both the house and senate. The bills are labeled “The USS Frank E. Evans Act.” If you have yet to reach out to your congressional representatives please do so and ask them to vote yes on the bill when it is presented for vote. If your representative sits on the Armed Services, Energy, Natural Services, or Veterans Affairs Committees they may be likely to review the bill in detail and make the decision to move the bill to the house or senate for a vote. Very important that these representatives are well informed.

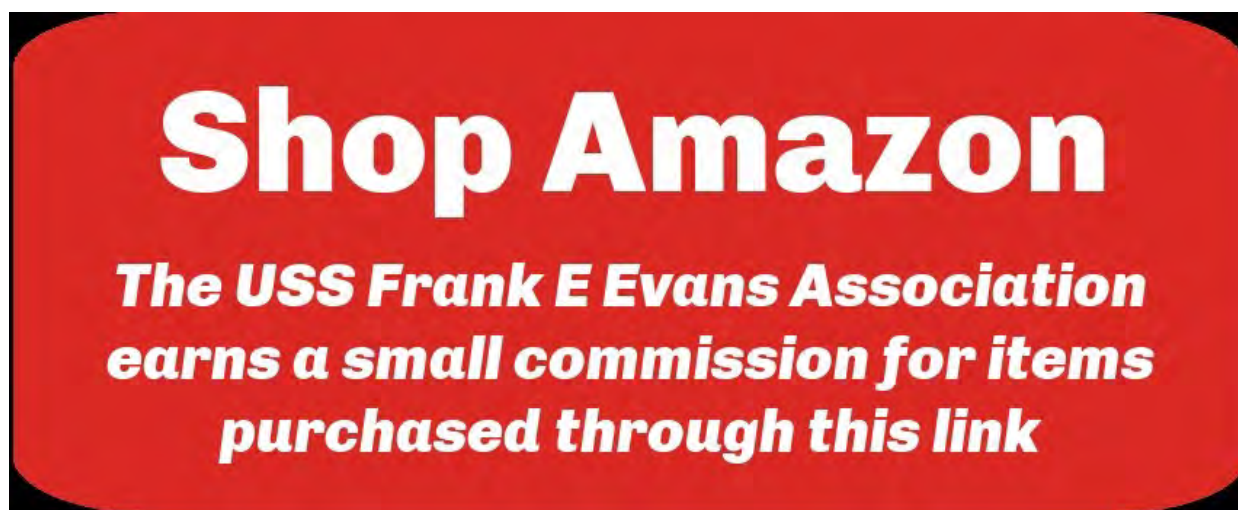
Again, Happy Holidays to Everyone, Stay Safe and Healthy!

Steve Kraus
Association President

Terry Vejr
Vice President

**PLEASE SUPPORT OUR ASSOCIATION
WHEN YOU BUY THROUGH AMAZON**

The word “AMAZON” has become a household word, not only in the United States but across the world. Now you can help support the Association by simply going to our website and clicking on the link at the top of our home page.



Once you click on this link you will be directed to your own Amazon Home Page, then shop as usual.

Please note; unfortunately you must preform this function each time you shop. We suggest you book mark ussfee.org with your Amazon account, it will be a reminder to open ussfee.org FIRST then click on the link, then shop.

If you should request any assistance reach out to Larisa Reilly-Thomas at larisajoythomas@gmail.com

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Reunion 2025 Oklahoma City, OK

September 18—21, 2025

A fun time was had by all at the 2025 Reunion this year. Below are some highlights of the different events. If you were in attendance, it was lovely to see each and every one of you. If not, please know you were thought of and missed.

The week was filled with many events, Pup Crawl, Memorial Ceremony, Game Night, Museum Tours, along with 2 banquets, an auction and a casino night.



Steve & Donna Kraus at Happy Hour, OKC visitor representatives, Emily Carter and Lydia Watkins



Bob Berweger, Bob Mason & Joe Clark



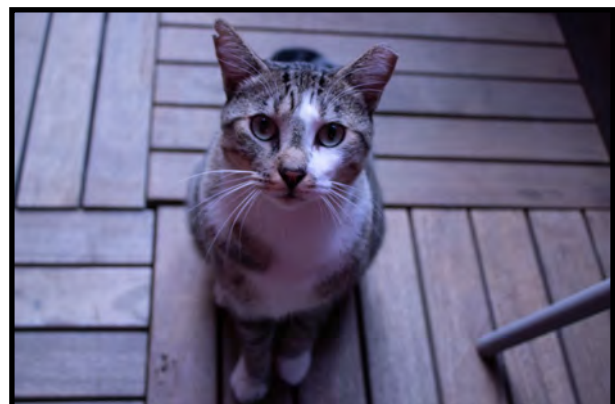
Flo Hoog, Julie Rayfield, Debra Donze Pat & Wendy Richardson



Dan & Linda Krizan, Ben & Pam Chilcutt, Terry & Susan Vejr



Donna Kraus, Kim McFadden, Pam Chilcutt....This looks like trouble!



John Coffey said he would show up one way or the other

Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum

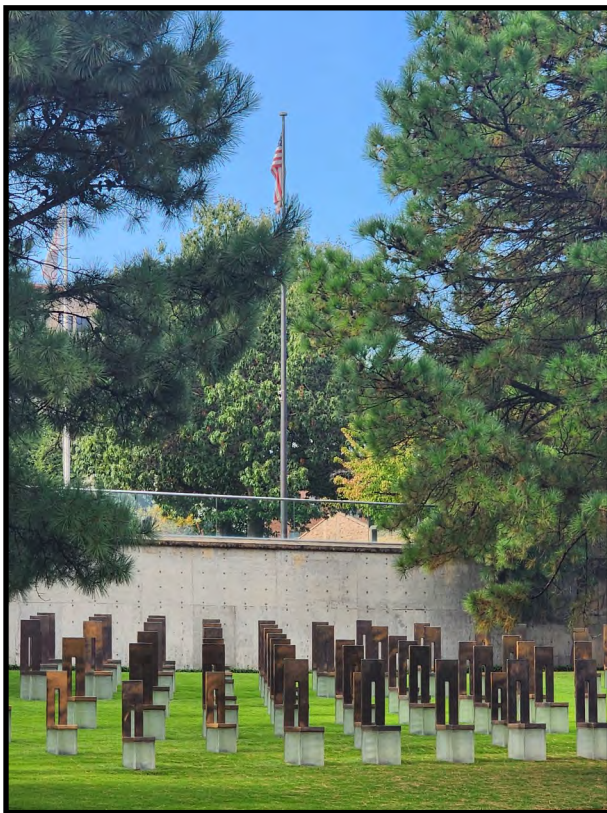
(This was also the location of our Memorial Ceremony)



Right to Left: Wall showing the time the bomb hit the Federal Building; Evans Members visiting while waiting for the ceremony to start; Ceremony MC—Casey Sage.

This location was the scene of the OKC bombing, One hundred sixty-eight lost their lives that sad day. In the back ground is the individual monuments in honor of the 168, men, women and children. It was an honor for the USS Frank E. Evans Association to hold our ceremony on these hallowed grounds.

OKLAHOMA CITY NATIONAL MEMORIAL & MUSEUM (cont.)



Top Left: The "Jesus Wept" statue in Oklahoma City is a memorial to the 1995 bombing victims, located at St. Joseph Old Cathedral across from the Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum. Erected by the Catholic Archdiocese, the statue depicts a weeping Jesus with his head bowed and face in his hand, a tribute inspired by the Bible verse John 11:35 ("Jesus wept"). It stands on the site of the church's old rectory, which was demolished after being damaged in the bombing, and includes a granite wall with 168 indentations representing each of the lives lost.

Top Right & Bottom Left: The chairs sit where the Federal Building once stood. Each chair represents one of the persons lost.

CASINO NIGHT— A FUN TIME WAS HAD BY ALL!



Entertainment for Saturday's evening banquet was a casino night. A variety of games were offered with the opportunity to win tickets for prize drawings.

Top Left, Holiday Geiger learns about how to win at roulette. Top Right: David Fyffe & Julie Rayfield try their luck at black jack.

Middle Left, Two of a kind, Kim McFadden and Doug Sage try to break the bank, Middle right: Marc and Vickie Rosen push the dealer out of the way to show him how its done.

Bottom Left Joe Bob looks on while Tom Ralston and Deb Grant place their bets.

Dinner Banquets



The dinner banquets were a wonderful evening of memorial programs and time to visit. In the photo (top left) is a room shot that reflects our comradery.

In recognition for her service to the association, Dale Mann received recognition (photo top right) at Friday evenings banquet. Dale has been responsible for set up of the flags, table of the missing, Former shipmates candles, Friendship remembrance with USS Kidd and the founders table since their conceptions. In addition Dale and Joe Bob hold the record for most reunions attended. They have missed only one reunion since 1994.

Sondra provided a video recap of last years reunion and various events throughout the year. Sondra received a special recognition award (photo bottom right) for her excellence since she assumed the communication Directors roles and responsibilities in 2024.

As most of you know, Donna was hospitalized in OKC in 2016 upon return from the Buffalo reunion. Dr Aloj Mohammad was the responsible physician who saved Donna's life. In recognition of Dr. Mohammad, he was our guest of honor and received a recognition award. Dr. Mohammad also presented this years Presidents Award for her 20 years service to the Association. Donna stepped down this year and relinquished her Treasurer duties to Kim McFadden.

The Fight Continues to Recognize Our Lost 74 **By Tim Wendler**

Under the leadership of our President Steve Kraus, our organization continues our efforts to add the names of the Lost 74 to the Vietnam Memorial Wall where they belong.

Regulatory: Our recent efforts have focused on a refinement to the Department of Defense's criteria for adding names to the Wall to include those who were participating in a nearby military exercise with plans to return to the combat zone after completing the exercise. On September 25, 2025, Steve Kraus, David Grannis (Senator Schiff's Senior Policy Advisor), and I had the opportunity to meet with Mr. C. Scott Duncan, The Assistant Secretary of the Navy, and members of his staff.

The meeting lasted an hour and a half – quite a long time for the Navy to listen to us. Steve told our story, and it was clear from the questions asked that they had done their homework. We went into the meeting with a full understanding that the Assistant Secretary probably would not share his opinion or make any commitments at this time. He did seem intent on finding a resolution, and pledged to brief the Navy Secretary on his return to Washington.

Legislation: In parallel, we have continued our bipartisan legislative efforts with amendments to the National Defense Authorization Act introduced by Senators Cramer and Schiff and plans for stand-alone legislation in the Senate and House with sponsors/cosponsors for the amendment: Flood (R-NE), Chu (D-CA), Bacon (R-NE), Barragan (D-CA), Self (R-TX), and Tenney (R-NY). Please reach out to your Congressman to encourage them to co-sponsor.

Visibility: In addition, in Long Beach we received word during our reunion that signs have gone up at the newly named 710/1 Interchange and the bridge to Highway 1 – the USS Frank E Evans Lost 74 Memorial Interchange and Bridge, thanks to the efforts of California Senator Lena Gonzalez. Our home port of Long Beach has also included the USS Frank E Evans and Radarman 2nd Class Ron Thibodeau in their annual veteran's road banner program.



Senator Adam Schiff & Tim Wendler



Deputy Secretary of the Navy C. Scott Duncan,
Steve Kraus & Tim Wendler

MEMORIAL SIGNS ARE INSTALLED



This photo was taken by member Kyra Kraus traveling at 55 MPH headed west on Interstate 710 and Pacific coast highway.



This is a picture taken while headed east on Interstate 710 and Pacific Coast Highway.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Joe Bob and Dale Mann



Joe Bob and Dale Mann have demonstrated unwavering commitment to the Association, having participated in every reunion since the organization's inception. The only gathering they missed was the year they attended the Australian Reunion, an event they both consider particularly memorable.

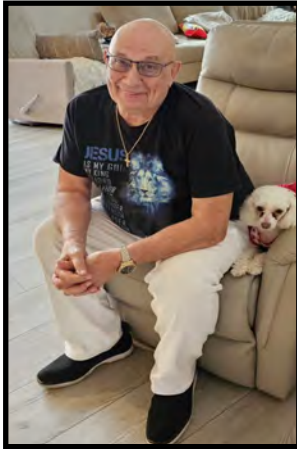
Joe Bob began his service aboard the USS Frank E. Evans in March 1969, immediately after completing boot camp. Serving as a Machinist Mate, he had been with the ship for four months when the collision occurred. At the time of the accident, he was asleep in the aft section of the vessel. Following his time on the Evans, Joe Bob continued his naval career on two additional ships before his honorable discharge on December 8, 1972. He subsequently embarked on a successful career as an auto mechanic.

On June 11, 1971, Joe Bob married Dale, and together they raised two sons. Their partnership has been a cornerstone throughout their years of Association membership and beyond. When asked about their favorite reunion, Joe Bob and Dale both named the Australian Reunion as their most cherished experience. For Joe Bob, the memory of the very first reunion stands out, especially the joy of reuniting with friends from his time aboard the Evans. Dale's fondest memory is the opportunity to connect with the families of fellow members, building lasting relationships within the Association community.



IN MEMORIAM

Chaplain, Al Collins



It is with deep sadness we share the passing of our beloved Chaplain, Al Collins in July. His presence was a cornerstone of comfort, strength, and faith in our community, and he will be deeply missed.

Al's legacy lives on through the lives he touched with compassion, kindness, and unwavering service. A Celebration of Life was held on Saturday September 6, 2025 at the Veterans of Foreign War Hall in Hawthorn, CA. We invite you to hold his family and loved ones in your thoughts and prayers during this difficult time. Condolences can be sent to Nancy at:

eacollinsjr@yahoo.com



Duane (Butterball) Conely (Survivor)

Duane Conely, Machinist Mate Third Class, of Sun City, CA formerly of El Segundo, CA passed away unexpectedly on Saturday August 2nd at his home.

Born on November 16, 1946 to the late Dennie and Elsie Conely. He was married to Jo Anne and spent most of his adult life in the beach community of El Segundo. He was a 1964 graduate of Warren High School. Duane was a Vietnam Navy Veteran and served on the ship, USS Frank E. Evans which he reported to on May 27, 1967.

No services were held per his request.



Ron Stomp (Brother of Mary Gregg)

Ron Stomp passed on August 10, 2025 after battling cancer. Ron was born December 3, 1941.

Ron started working at age 15 at the only Marine hardware store in Newport Beach. Upon graduating from Pepperdine University, Ron managed a boat building and sales company in Orange County, CA where he worked for 45 years. Ron was also a reserve police officer with Costa Mesa Police Department. Condolences can be sent to Mary Gregg at:

marystomp@att.net

IN MEMORIAM

Diane N. Cahalane (Sister of Christine Stone)



Diane N. Cahalane, 84, of Manchester, NH, passed away peacefully on August 8, 2025, after a period of declining health.

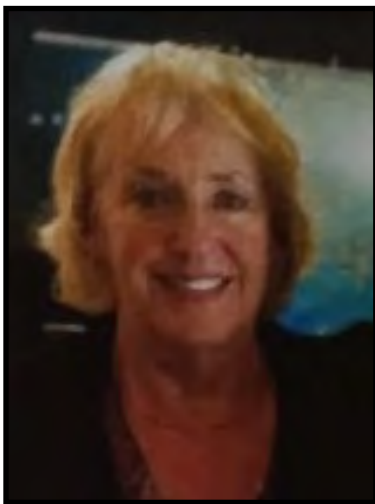
Born in Manchester on August 28, 1940, she was the daughter of John and Phyllis (Marshall) Pettengill. Diane was a lifelong resident of Manchester, with the exception of twenty-three cherished years spent in The Villages, Florida, where she embraced the sunshine, friendships, and community spirit before returning to her hometown.

Diane's career was marked by dedication and leadership, serving for many years as a human resources manager at Modu Tec before retiring.

A woman of boundless energy and curiosity, Diane found joy in traveling the world, visiting thirty countries and collecting not just souvenirs, but treasured memories. Diane will be remembered for her generous heart, her unwavering kindness, and the love she poured into her family, especially her grandson, Braden, who was the light of her life.

She was predeceased by her beloved husband, Frederick "Ted" Cahalane, who passed away on March 12, 2021; and by her sister, Susan Demarais.

Kathleen Kraus-Thein (Cousin of Steve Kraus)



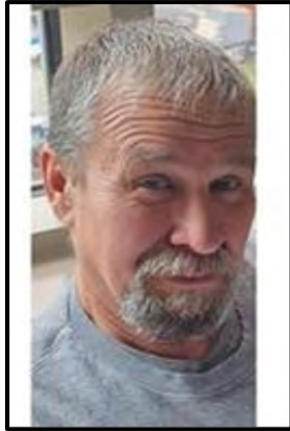
Kathy passed away on August 29, 2025 following a 15-year battle with Alzheimer's Disease. She was born on August 2, 1942 in Alhambra California to a family of twelve. She attended Catholic schools in her primary and secondary grades, then graduated in 1961 for Alhambra High.

Kathy married Larry Thein on June 2, 1962. They were married for 52 years when her husband passed away unexpectedly. She had twin sons Terry & Larry, then a third son, Greg. She had 8 grandchildren and 1 great grandson.

Kathy was a vibrant, outgoing, kind and fun-loving woman. She enjoyed serving others and valued her time with her family and friends. She enjoyed most outdoor sport activities and most of all getting together with her seven other sisters.

IN MEMORIAM

Alann Fagan (ROL of Stephen Don Fagan)



The world bids farewell to Alann Fagan of Huntingdon, Pennsylvania, departing on August 26, 2025 at the age of 64. Alann is the brother of our “Lost 74” Stephen Don Fagan. Alann leaves behind memories cherished by the community. You can send your sympathy to his sister Jana Fagan-Wilson at: janabeth213@gmail.com.

He was predeceased by: his parents, Don A. Fagan and Roberta E. Fagan (DeArmitt); and his brother Stephen Don Fagan. He is survived by: his children, Dale A. Fagan, Heather L. Fagan and Zoey D. Delozier; his stepdaughter Stazia Stallman; his granddaughter Eowyn T. Delozier; his siblings, Wayne M. Fagan, Jeffrey P. Fagan and Jana B. Wilson (Fagan); and his close friend David "Dave" Clark.

Aurora Ledesma (Mother of member Suzi Summers)



Aurora Mercado Ledesma mother of member Suzi Summers passed away peacefully on July 19, 2025, at the age of 94. A cherished daughter, sister, wife, mother, grandmother, aunt, godmother, cousin, and friend, she dedicated her life to faith, family and service.

She graduated from Chaffey High School in Ontario, CA. Aurora was deeply rooted in her Catholic faith—she sang in the choir and played the organ at her parish. She married the love of her life, Felipe “Phil” R. Ledesma in 1948, together they shared 76 beautiful years of marriage, raising 8 children.

She is survived by her 8 children and their spouses. She leaves behind 57 grandchildren, 65 great-grandchildren and 10 great-great-grandchildren.

Jane Cinciarelli-Brunst (Friend of Donna & Steve Kraus)



Association member for several years, Jane Brunst passed away quietly in her sleep on August 18, 2025 after battling with cancer for over 10 years. Jane joined the association in 2023.

Jane came from a military family, her husband was a former marine and her father was a Brigadier General in the Marines. Jane knew just how important it was for the Association to work toward getting the 74 names of the lost added to the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial in Washington D.C.

She was predeceased by her parents and her husband, Steve Brunst. She is survived by her 2 children Steve & Chris, both planning their marriages in 2026. Rest in Peace Jane, thanks for all your love and support.