

The SEAWEED

Publication of the
U.S.S. CHAMPLIN REUNION GROUP

SPRING 2008

MILK CANS and a TIN CAN

By: Jack Brawdy TM

My mother had three sisters who never married and they all lived together; shared their resources and possessions, and took care of each other. As time passed by, they acquired some very nice household articles and collectible artifacts. As time tolled by, the Lord saw fit to call these three aunts of mine, one at a time until they were all gone.

Having no children of their own, the task of disposing of their small estate fell to their nephew (me), my wife, Ruth, and our kids. While sorting through their belongings, I found an old milk can probably 35 or 40 gallon capacity. As soon as I saw it, I wanted it. It was painted black and gold, with an American flag and eagle on one side. The can itself is in excellent condition. The aunts used it as a decorative piece in their living room.

The milk can now occupies a prominent place among my nautical collection. Every time I look at it, the memory of milk cans of a bygone era come flooding back. Ships, specifically destroyers, and milk containers at first glance do not seem to go together, but let me make the connection.

During World War II, I served aboard the USS Champlin DD601, a 1600 ton destroyer of the Benson class. Among its many assignments, the Champlin participated in a lot of convoy duties in the Atlantic Theater, escorting and protecting supply ships to Europe. As a consequence of this type

of duty, our ship would be at sea for long periods of time. Food and other supplies would run low, and sometimes we would run out completely. We always heaved a great sigh of relief when we got back to the states, 'cause we knew fresh food and provisions would be waiting for us. Fresh things like fruit and eggs and whole milk. Whole, white, cold Grade A milk! What a treat it was for us to taste the stuff. As the 601 tied up to the dock, the greatest sight in the world was to see people waiting with those huge milk cans to bring them aboard.

The first "chow down" after docking, the star item on the menu was milk. I drank this "nectar of the gods" until I thought I would burst. Every shipmate around me was doing the same thing. That powdered white substitute we got at sea, I could never learn to like it, but we had to use it or do without. I used to dream sometimes of a cold, tall glass of real milk while standing on my watches. I dreamed of other things, too (didn't we all?), but there were times when I would gladly have given them ten bucks for a glass of milk.

That scenario with the big milk cans was played out every time we returned to New York and the navy yard. It was always pure joy to see the white treat on our menu even if sometimes it was only for a short period of time. The big milk can that I have from my aunts can probably be classified as an antique by today's standards, but I intend to keep it with my other mementos. It's not a war relic, but it could be I guess.

It certainly is a connection for

me for the memory of those cold, tall glasses of milk along time ago aboard the USS Champlin DD601

Addendum: To this day, I drink a lot of milk, but it's only because I like it. I wonder?

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Never measure God's  
unlimited power by your  
limited expectations



TRAVEL IS  
MORE  
THAN THE  
SEEING  
OF SIGHTS:  
IT IS THE  
CHANGE  
THAT GOES  
ON, DEEP  
AND  
PERMANENT,  
IN THE EYES  
OF THE  
LIVING.

THE WORLD  
IS A  
GREAT  
BOOK,  
OF WHICH  
THEY  
WHO  
NEVER STIR  
FROM HOME,  
READ  
ONLY A  
PAGE

KEEP  
YOUR  
CHARACTER  
IN  
MINT  
CONDITION,  
AND IT  
WILL TAKE  
CARE OF  
ITSELF.

## The Story of 'TAPS'

*"Lord of our lives, our hope in death, we cannot listen to Taps without our souls stirring. Its plaintive notes are a prayer in music--of hope, of peace, of grief, of rest... Prepare us too, Lord, for our final bugle call when you summon us home! When the trumpet of the Lord shall sound and death will be no more."*

—From the invocation delivered by Chaplain (Colonel) Edward Brogan (USAF, Ret.) at the Taps Exhibit Opening Ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery 28 May 1999

Of all the military bugle calls, none is so easily recognized or more apt to render emotion than the call Taps. The melody is both eloquent and haunting, while the history of its origin is interesting and somewhat clouded in controversy. In the British army, a similar type of signal called Last Post has been sounded over soldiers' graves since 1885, but the use of Taps is unique to the United States military, since the call is sounded at funerals, wreath-laying ceremonies, and memorial services. A bugle call that beckons us to remember patriots who served our country with honor and valor, it is the most familiar call and one that moves all who hear it. On any weekday at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia, a military ritual occurs that is both familiar and moving.

An escort of honor comes to attention and presents arms. A firing party comes to attention, then fires three volleys. After the briefest of moments, a bugler sounds the twenty-four notes of America's most famous bugle call. The flag, held by members of the military honor guard, is then folded into a triangle reminiscent of the cocked hat from the American Revolution. That ritual is performed almost twenty times daily during the many funerals held at Arlington. How did these twenty-four notes we know as Taps come into being? Who wrote the melody? When was it composed? Where was it first performed?

What was the original use of the call and how is it used today?

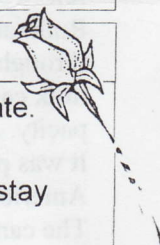
These questions have been asked by many over the past century. To date there has been no in-depth research published on the history of Taps. There are many stories, none confirmed as correct.

## CURBY LEE LANDERS GM 3/c

Among our Christmas mail we received the news of the death of our shipmate. Curby Lee Landers.

Curby Lee's departure on February 3, 2007 after a twenty-five day hospital stay was due to a staff infection.

His wife Mrs. Dorothy S. Lander is living at 1770 North Causeway Blvd. Apt. 103 Mandeville, La. 70471-3127. A donation to the Navy-Marine Relief Society was sent in Curby's name in January 2008.



## HAROLD C. HEIDER - COX as told by his daughter

My father passed away February 20th after a short illness. He served on the USS Champlin from 1942—1945.

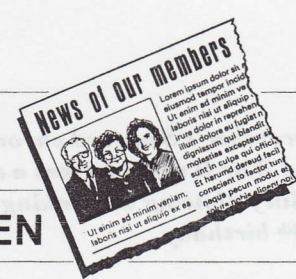
After the war he married Ruth. They were married for 50 years before she passed away 10 years ago. They lived in Hermansville, Michigan on the family farm. Here they raised three children. He not only worked on the farm but also at a lumber mill. He started out cutting logs and worked up to be a very well respected lumber grader.

He enjoyed gardening, traveling, his dogs and cats but most important to him was spending time with his family, especially his grandchildren.

He was very proud of his time aboard the ship. As I was growing up, many evenings were spent listening to his stories of his experiences during the war. He enjoyed reading the Seaweed and I would also read it. I became familiar with many names and stories in it. Laurie Heider (Laurie will carry Harold's membership)







## From the Son of KENNETH KOOKEN

Dad died last year on September 17th, at the age of 91. He was born on Oct. 14, 1914 in Piedmont West VA.

He spent the rest of his life (after marrying my Mother) in a little town across the Potomac called Bloomington, Md. He was a very unique guy, having only gone to the eighth grade. He quit school and did odd jobs until he was hired (at age 17) by Westvaco Corp. a paper mill in Luke, Md. Where his Father (my grandfather), myself and my son all worked (four generations in the same plant).

Dad was really pretty sharp. He always liked crossword puzzles and solved the cryptogram in the paper every day until he died. He was also a self taught musician who could play almost any instrument. When he retired, at age 62, he had gone as far as an hourly employee could go. Then he went back to school and got his GED.

As you know, He was a radioman on the USS Champlin. Dad was drafted in 1943 at age 29. My sister was born that year, and I was born in 1936. So you can see the country was running out of young single men.

I have a vivid memory of the morning of December 7, 1941. I was standing beside my Grandfather Kookon on the front porch of his house on a mountain side in a place called Cross, W.VA. When My Uncle Harry and Aunt June (Dad's sister) came up the "dirt"

road from Piedmont and stopped across the road. Uncle Harry jumped out and looked up at us and said, "Pop, turn on the radio, the Japs just bombed Pearl Harbor."

I remember my Grand-father went down in the cellar, cranked up the "Delco Plant" (which was a gasoline engine connected to a generator and a room full of huge "wet cell" batteries) came back upstairs and turned on the Montgomery Ward "Air Castle" radio, and we all sat and listened. I was 5 years old.

Dad was very proud of his time in the Navy, and told me many stories about it (one) I particularly remember is about capturing the turtle.)

When I found the Champlin web site, he was surprised to see the pictures, because he said they were forbidden to have cameras on the ship. Well, I could go on and on, but I guess I have written enough, and I am sure you could tell a lot of stories too. So take care,  
Tom Kogan (formerly Kookon)  
5430 Trevino Drive Haymarket, VA  
20169 Phone (703-754-6317)

Ken's Grandson, Thomas Kookon  
1522 Lynndale Road, Oakland, MD  
21550— has paid his dues to continue to receive the Seaweed. Attd Reunion?

LIFE IS SHORT.  
BREAK THE  
RULES.  
FORGIVE  
QUICKLY.  
KISS SLOWLY.  
LOVE TRULY.  
LAUGH  
UN-  
CONTROLLABLY.  
NEVER  
REGRET  
ANYTHING  
THAT  
MADE  
YOU  
SMILE.



### A NEW OLD RECIPE FOR COUGHING

During a lecture on Essential Oils, they told us how the foot soles can absorb oils. Their example: Put garlic on your feet and within 20 minutes you can 'taste' it.

Some of us have used Vicks Vapor rub for years for everything from chapped lips to sore toes and many body parts in between. But I've never heard of this. And don't laugh, it works 100% of the time, although the scientists who discovered it aren't sure why. To stop night time coughing in a child (or adult as we found out personally), put Vicks VapoRub generously on the bottom of the feet at bedtime, then cover with socks. Even persistent, heavy, deep coughing will stop in about 5 minutes and stay stopped for many, many hours of relief. Works 100% of the time and is more effective in children than even very strong prescription cough medicines. In addition it is extremely soothing and comforting and they will sleep soundly.

Just happened to tune in A.M. radio and picked up this guy talking about why cough medicines in kids often do more harm than good, due to the chemical makeup of these strong drugs so, I listened. It was a surprise finding and found to be more effective than prescribed medicines for children at bedtime, in addition to have a soothing and calming effect on sick children who then went on to sleep soundly.

A friend (the same guy that makes our shirts and hats) tried it on himself when he had a very deep constant and persistent cough and it worked 100%! He said that it was the first good night sleep he had in several weeks, the coughing stopped in a few minutes. Well, this past week Norm rubbed the Vicks VapoRub on my feet for three nights—worked like a dream. (Phyllis)  
If you have grandchildren, pass this on. If you end up sick, try it yourself and you will be absolutely amazed at how it works.



*Last December's Seaweed chronicled Harold Medvedeff's life from his birth in China, April 1 1918 through the end of World War II when he was a co-pilot of a B-50 based in Merced, California. It included his rescue by the USS Champlin following the sinking of the French vessel, Wyoming. This issue of the Seaweed should reach you around Hal's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday.*

## Happy Birthday Hal Medvedeff

Hal's story continues:

After World War II ended, I returned to Great Falls, Mont., and flew airplanes around for six months before being transferred to the Pentagon in Washington DC. It was only a couple of months later that an officer from personnel came and asked if I would be interested in going to Moscow and working in the Embassy as the Assistant Air Attaché. I agreed; and a letter was written to the Soviet Embassy for a visa to my diplomatic passport. Then came the wait. It took the Soviets eight months to grant me a visa. Then, it was good for 30 days. It had its moments.

Pulling into Helsinki, Finland at 9:00 pm, I was on deck looking at what might be a friendly face. I heard someone behind me say something which I ignored. The next I knew, someone grabbed my shoulder and yelled in my ear, "What are you pretending for? We know you speak Russian." That was one of the supposed "TASS Correspondents." Guess what the Soviets were doing the eight months I waited for a visa.

In Moscow, I was followed by two or three agents whenever I went for a walk. I was more fortunate than most of the people in the Embassy as I had to go to Europe to get my flying time. On one such occasion, I flew the Berlin Airlift from Wiesbaden to Tempelhof airfield in Berlin. The Soviets who worked in the American Embassy would not believe that I was an American. My Russian was as good as theirs, and no accent. I was using the Russian at home as both of my parents spoke it. After two years, I was assigned to the 93<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Wing SAC at Castle AFB, Merced, California.

I was sent to Castle as an Intelligence Officer, but I worked my way to be assigned as co-pilot on B-50 aircraft. After 1 year as co-pilot, I checked out as first pilot. After two years of B-50, I was assigned to Forbes AFB as they were getting the new jet B-47 bomber.

After flying for a year, I was reassigned as base Newspaper and Information Officer. From there, I was sent to Korea to be the Information Officer. This was to take care of all foreign service correspondents. First off, the next visitor was John Ford, the movie director to make a movie for the Air Force. When he left, on the next day, I was at the civilian air field to pick up John Secondari. He was to produce enough material for two one-hour TV shows for ABC. He was just wonderful to work with. He was in Korea for two weeks. After he got back to Washington, D.C., he got the Air Force to bring me back to the U.S. For almost three weeks. He put me up in the Wardman Park Hotel and gave me his convertible for running around. I was shortly assigned to the NSA and went to Alaska for four of my best years in the Air Force. I was the chief NSA Alaska.

My boss was at Fort Meade, so I did not have to answer to anyone in Alaska. I got in a lot of flying and fishing for salmon. Shortly after my return to Fort Meade, the Air Force decided I did not need to fly anymore, so they sort of took my wings. I had a wonderful boss, but I did like flying, so I retired from the Air Force after about 24 years of service.

I received a letter from Dick Roseman. He wrote to all of the officers that had been picked up by the Champlin [in March 1942] informing us of the annual reunion meetings of the crew. The next one was at Plymouth and my first. The next one was in San Diego, California, which I was able to attend as my son was employed by United Air Lines and provided me with a first class ticket. The next one was in Baton Rouge and the first my wife and I attended together.

We were booked for the 2001 reunion in Colorado Springs, however the [Sept. 11] bombing in New York cut





We left Baltimore in the morning and when we arrived in Atlanta, we sat on the runway for an hour and a half. We were not informed why. The cockpit did not give us a word. Passengers with cell phones found out why. We sat in Atlanta for three days and finally got to Colorado Springs. We were a small group and the meeting was pretty well cancelled. Colorado Springs was re-scheduled and this time it came off in spades. We are looking forward to the next one. Prior to the Springs, we had one in the D.C. Area that I was the host, but as it turned out that my bride did the whole thing since I was in the hospital with my third hip replacement.

After I retired, I was employed as a contractor at NISC (Naval Intelligence Support Center) thanks to a good Naval Intelligence friend and hunting buddy. When Victor Belenko defected from Siberia in a FOXBAT to Japan, I had the pleasure of being the Navy's interpreter. I found him to be very intelligent and a pleasure to talk to. I had the pleasure of hosting a five-day trip for Victor on the aircraft carrier Indy. He was mostly interested in the seamen's mess and was flabbergasted that the seamen ate better than officers in the Soviet Air Force. Our Navy Pilots were wonderful hosts and enjoyed his company. It's pilot to pilot. In three months, he was understanding the questions put to him.



## Happy Birthday Hal !!!

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## World War II Memorial



*Last year **Jack Brawdy** visited the World War II memorial in Washington DC.*

*Below are his brief comments.*

Back in November I had the wonderful experience of visiting the WWII memorial in Washington DC. A five-bus caravan totaling 250 WWII veterans attended in a group. The trip was sponsored and paid for by citizens and charitable veteran groups from the Pittsburgh area.

The memorial is inspiring and awesome to see and experience.

While there we learned all WWII veterans are eligible to be registered in the memorial; So all USS Champlin veterans are eligible. Information Jack got at the memorial says:

**Who may be honored:** Any one who served in the armed forces during World War II, and any American who helped on the home front is eligible for the Registry....You may register your own name, the name of a family member or friend.

You may enter a name in the registry via the internet or by mail. To register a name via internet go to <http://www.wwiimemorial.com>. Click on the "WWII Registry" button at the left. Follow the online instructions to enter the name you wish to honor. To register a name via mail, call 1-800-639-4992 and a form will be mailed to you with instructions.

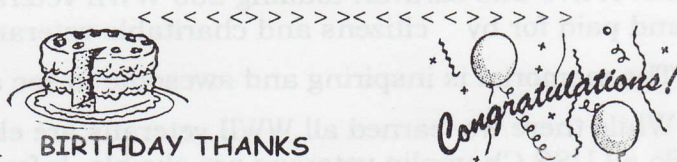
Editor's note: My son and I visited the memorial a couple summers ago and we reacted as Jack did. I was impressed by the size and scope of the monument; also by how user-friendly and easy to operate the registry technology is. I simply typed in the names of several friends and cousins and their service records instantly appeared on the screen.

When the Champlin Reunion Group stayed in Maryland and visited Washington D.C., in 2005, we all toured the WWII Memorial and also visited Navy Memorial when the Plaque of the USS Champlin was dedicated, .



age 82

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“Beauty is a reflection of all life’s moments,  
joys, sorrows, love. It begins inside long before it  
shows itself on the surface.”





## USS Champlin Web Site to Celebrate 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

I know it's hard to believe but we are rapidly approaching the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the USS Champlin Web site. There have been many changes to the web-site over the past 9.5 years, and it has grown into a very well visited site.

We are the #1 web reference listed when someone Goggles "USS Champlin" – in fact, we are listed ABOVE the Wikipedia entry! We continue to find relatives and 'lost' crew from entries on the Ships Log link at the Champlin Site.

It has been my pleasure to be the person behind the scenes for all of those years, maintaining the website, writing the coding for the various pages, and keeping things up and running.

I wanted to take the time to let you know about some exciting changes to the website, and some that are 'works in progress'.

1. I have recently been entrusted with a series of photo's from Goddard Beck's photo collection. These photos have been scanned into digital format, optimized as much as possible given their age and condition, and placed on the Photo page on the website.

2. It has always been quite difficult to get the Reunion Group Newsletter (The Seaweed), formatted for web display – therefore the Seaweed issues published on the site cover only the years 1999 – 2002. Good News! I now have a much easier way to publish the Seaweed on the web-site. Every issue from this day forth will be published to the Champlin Site.

I do not have access to issues of 'The Seaweed' from the Summer of 2002 to present – if you have any of these issues please send them to me (I'll return them), and I'll get them processed and published on the website.

3. The next exciting work in progress is the creation of 'Biographical' Pages for various crew and officers of the USS Champlin. These pages will feature a photo of the Veteran, and biographical information, as well as a narrative of the veteran's post WWII life experiences.

So – are YOU a former officer or crew member of the Champlin? Do you have a relative that served aboard the Champlin? Are you a friend of someone that served aboard the Champlin?

If you answered yes to any of the questions above – I need your help. Send me a photo and as much of

the following biographical information as you can, and I'll see that a new page is created.

Name of Officer/Crew

Date of Birth (if deceased – the date of death as well)

Spouses Name

Children's Names

Grandchildren's Names

Great Grandchildren's Names

High School and Date of Graduation

College / Trade School attended and Date of Graduation

Interests and Hobbies

Finally, include a short narrative of Life Experiences post World War II.

...oh, and for you Officers and Crew – you might even include your 'favorite memory' of your Champlin tour.

#### 4. Contact Information:

Gary S Gustin

11751 Tradewinds Blvd

Largo, Florida 33773

(727) 230-2972

Email: [photos@usschamplin.com](mailto:photos@usschamplin.com)

Drop me a line at the address above and I'll help you with various options for getting photo's to me in the proper format. I'm looking for photo's in uniform (particularly those 'portraits' taken during basic training to send home to the parents) – if you don't have a photo in uniform, I'll take whatever you'd like to have published.

So, in closing: I need your help – send me those old Seaweed issues, and get me some photo's and biographical information so I can create that special tribute page and ensure your legacy aboard the USS Champlin...

Respectfully submitted, Gary S Gustin



**U.S.S. CHAMPLIN (DD-601) 2008 MINI-REUNION**  
**C/O LAWRENCE J. SUTER**  
**14 DEVOE PLACE**  
**HAWTHORNE, NEW JERSEY 07506-1004**  
**(973) 427-2797**

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March 9, 2008

Dear Shipmates and Friends,

It is time to start planning for our Mini-Reunion again. For 2008 we have made arrangements with our friend, **Leon**, to return to **The Ocean Holiday Motor Inn**, 6501 Ocean Avenue, in Wildwood Crest, NJ, 08260. Should you need additional information, Leon can be reached at the hotel at 1-800-321-6232.

This year the reunion will start at 2:00 p.m. on **Monday, May 12<sup>th</sup>** until the morning of **Friday, May 16<sup>th</sup>**. This year's **double occupancy rate is \$230.00 per person, Single occupancy is \$280.00 per person and triple occupancy is \$215.00 per person**. Please note your choice of bed or any other special needs such as handicapped room when sending your deposit check to the hotel, as well as your return slip to me.

As always, our accommodations include a Hospitality Room, a block of rooms with your choice of beds, TV, refrigerator, etc...as well as 4 breakfasts, 4 dinners (which include entertainment at some dinners, plus music for our banquet night). ***To cover the cost of The Hospitality room, there is a charge of \$5.00 per person for the entire reunion. Please pay when you arrive. If you do not drink or do not plan to take advantage of the room, there is no additional charge.***

Daily activities will include a trip to Atlantic City (with some comps) followed by a dinner and entertainment. In addition there is general shopping and sightseeing in Cape May. Some of the amusement park in Wildwood may be open, although it's a little early in the season. Please send me your intent to come as soon as possible as well as send your \$100.00 deposit ***DIRECTLY TO THE OCEAN HOLIDAY MOTOR INN.***

***\*\*\*Mention Triple, Double or single occupancy with your deposit.\*\*\****

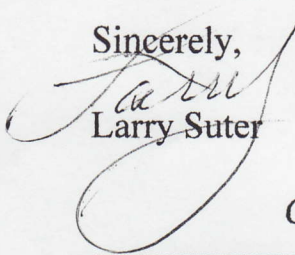


The Hotel would like to have the entire per person fee by March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2008. A full refund will be provided if notified at least two weeks before the date of the reunion.

If you **ARE** planning to attend, please use the cut off portions on the bottom of this sheet and mail them back to the appropriate addresses. (One to the hotel and one to me)

**IF YOU ARE NOT PLANNING TO ATTEND**, please give me a call at home (973) 427-2797 so I know for sure. Your prompt replies and payments will make my task much easier.

Sincerely,

  
Larry Suter

*Cut off and mail this with your deposit to the hotel:*

**DEPOSIT FOR: OCEAN HOLIDAY MOTOR INN**  
**6501 OCEAN AVENUE**  
**WILDWOOD CREST, NJ 08260**

**FOR: THE U.S.S. CHAMPLIN 2008 MINI REUNION**

**DATE: May 12-16, 2008**

**Names:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Occupancy: Single** \_\_\_\_ **Double** \_\_\_\_ **Triple** \_\_\_\_

**Special needs** \_\_\_\_\_

**Deposit amount \$** \_\_\_\_\_

*Cut off and mail this portion to me:*

**INTENT TO COME: LAWRENCE J. SUTER/2008 Mini-Reunion**  
**14 DEVOE PLACE**  
**HAWTHORNE, NJ 07506-1004**

**1. Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone** \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone** \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone** \_\_\_\_\_

**Occupancy: Single** \_\_\_\_ **Double** \_\_\_\_ **Triple** \_\_\_\_

**Special needs:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Will you use the Hospitality Room?** \_\_\_\_\_ **Will you play golf?** \_\_\_\_\_



## SHIRTS AND CAPS — PRICE LIST

**POLO SHIRTS \$25.00**

**SWEAT SHIRTS \$20.00**

**CAPS \$10.00**

Remember these are all stitched printing with the ship embroidered. The cost of shipping has also increased and we are advised that those prices are preparing to increase more.

**To ship shirts, send an additional \$5.00.**

**Shirts will be made to order in**  
White, Navy or Light Blue. S-M-L-XL

**We have the following:**

**Shirts on hand:**

**1 ea large White or Navy Sweatshirt  
\$20.00**

**1 each large Light Blue or Navy Polo  
shirt. \$25.00**

**Hats on hand: 2**

**Navy and 3 Light Blue  
\$10.00 ea. Shipping \$3.00**

**Also we have**

**6 White hats, these are  
stamped USS Champlin  
DD 601 w/o the ship.**

**To move these we will sell for  
\$5.00 with \$3.00 shipping**

**Also we have 4 Badges \$5.00**

**Orders should include  
payment & shipping**

**NORM PREWITT**

**2049 Eastridge Dr.**

**Excelsior Spgs, Mo. 64024**

**Phone 816-630-7272**

**Email: LilbitPBP@aol.com**

**Please use Champlin in**

**Subject. of email. Thank you.**