



SIXGUN Winter 2026

Official Newsletter of the USS Charles S. Sperry DD 697 Association

President's Message – Tom Brinkman: Happy New Year!! I am looking forward to the reunion this year in Wilmington NC! And especially to our visit to the USS North Carolina BB-55! When I was young, our family toured this ship two different years! My father served aboard her from 1942-1946 in R division, damage control. The USS North Carolina saw plenty of action during the war. According to my dad, a rumor on board said the surrender was supposed to be on the USS North Carolina. President Truman was from Missouri, and the USS Missouri BB-63 was the newest battleship in the fleet, and the last battleship to be commissioned... so history tells the rest! Hopefully we will all get together and have a good time at the reunion! See you all in Wilmington!!

Vice President's Message – Robert Dykes: Hope everyone had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, I know we did. Counting down the days until reunion time. Hope to see everyone in April.

Secretary's Message – Barbara Auty: A reunion is a time to *reunite, relax and recharge* with friends. The Sperry Reunions are a wonderful opportunity to gather again to enjoy the many wonderful activities and new experiences planned for our group. Lots of activities are planned, including our fun-filled game night and silent auction. Please be on the lookout for items to add to our auction. Bill and I were just in Wilmington in the fall for a wedding. It's a cute little riverfront town with great shops and a river walk. Here's hoping all our *regulars* and some new attendees will be joining us this year!

Chaplin's Message - Joe Friend: The Sperry Chaplain hopes that everyone had a great Christmas, Holiday Season, and New Year. I hope that you and your family stay healthy, happy, and prosperous in 2026. Jo-Ann and I are looking forward to seeing everyone at the April reunion in North Carolina. We had a wonderful year. We spent a lot of time with family and friends. The period between Thanksgiving and Christmas was very busy. All 5 bands that I play in had about 15 performance concerts during that time. I enjoy playing but I am glad that it is over. Again, stay healthy until we see you in April.

Webmaster – Gary Chesser: Linda and I had a great time in Covington! We're looking forward to being with everyone in Carolina Beach. We haven't received any death notices since the last newsletter, so that's a good thing. We're still praying for those that couldn't travel to Covington. May God grant you all good health and protection until we meet again.

Treasurer's Report- Ron LaPlaca:

DATE	CHK TYPE	MEMBER OR PAYEE	DUES YEAR	DUES PAID	SHIP STO.	REU. FEES	INC EXP	TRANS.
		<u>3RD QTR ENDING BAL</u>						\$13,718.18
		OCTOBER 2025						
	DEP	NO ACTIVITY		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$13,718.18
		NOVEMBER 2025						
	DEP	NO ACTIVITY		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$13,718.18
11/15/25	1141	FALL SIX GUN		(\$401.45)			(\$401.45)	
	EXP			(\$401.45)	\$0.00	\$0.00	(\$401.45)	\$13,316.73
		DECEMBER 2025						
	DEP	NO ACTIVITY		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$13,316.73
12/31/25		<u>4TH QTR ENDING BAL</u>						\$13,316.73

Reunion Coordinator - Ann Marano:

2026 Reunion in Carolina Beach, NC April 12 – 16, 2026



Make your reservation now. Send in your registration form now.

**COURTYARD BY MARRIOTT
100 CHARLOTTE AVE., CAROLINA BEACH, NC 28428
1-910-458-2030**

The 2026 reunion is another joint reunion with the USS Conway CVA and is being planned by the USS Conway's Reunion Coordinating committee.

The room rate for King/2 Queens will be \$124.00 + taxes per night. Breakfast is NOT included. All rooms are ocean view. To reserve a room, call 910-458-2030 and make reservations directly with hotel staff or use the link on the registration form to make an online reservation. The rate is also good for 2 days **after** the reunion ends (**not before**) due to it being just after Easter week.

HERE ARE THE DETAILS OF WHAT HAS BEEN PLANNED FOR THIS YEAR'S REUNION.

Carolina Beach is a hidden treasure in North Carolina. It is just 20 miles south of Wilmington, NC. The beach is tucked in between the Cape Fear River and the Atlantic Ocean. Located approximately 20 minutes away from Wilmington, The Courtyard by Marriott hotel is situated right on one of the most beautiful beaches in the state. There is a boardwalk to enjoy along with a variety of shops and restaurants. The hotel provides beautiful indoor and outdoor lounge areas, and outdoor/indoor pools. Rooms are spacious and newly remodeled. You can enjoy a scenic southern drive along the peninsula to visit the beach, Civil War Fort Fisher and Kure Beach with a beautiful fishing pier.

SUNDAY – A **WELCOME buffet** will be available to all at no charge. Information will be at front desk.



MONDAY – A must see in Wilmington. The USS North Carolina (BB-55) is recognized as one of the most decorated battleships in WWII. On December 7th 1941 it was in the Atlantic and immediately sailed toward Hawaii. The ship was torpedoed in 1942 by a sub but was recovered in time to serve in the war. Aboard the Carolina you can visit EVERYWHERE...Engine room, boiler room, bridge, 16inch inner magazine, hospital, you name it. **A catered buffet lunch will be served** in the ward room on the first deck midship. We will travel by car pool from the hotel.



TUESDAY – We will again carpool to Wilmington for our Cape Fear River boat cruise on The Henrietta. This will be a beautiful three-hour trip along the famous and scenic Cape Fear River. You can sit in the lower or upper deck to enjoy. The trip will be narrated with all points of interest, and we will enjoy **a catered lunch during the trip**. Cape Fear is also off the Atlantic Shore of North Carolina. It is estimated that over 200 boats sank from running aground in shallow shoals. Many of these ships were during the Civil War, German U-Boats in WWII, and other commercial ships.

A buffet dinner at the hotel is planned (see registration form) with our Fun and Games night and live and silent auctions to follow. **Please remember to bring items to donate for our Silent Auction.**

WEDNESDAY – Our General Meeting for all to attend will be at 9 am. At this meeting we will present the options for our next reunion and vote on where our next adventure will be. You will have free time to explore on your own after the meeting. **A Banquet dinner is set for this evening** followed by the Two Bell ceremony. All of these events are on the registration form. A detailed Schedule of Events will be included in your Welcome Packet, received upon check-in.

If you have been to a previous Sperry reunion, we welcome you back! If you have never been to a Sperry reunion, **WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR???** All First Timers are welcome to come. **ALL FAMILY MEMBERS ARE ALSO WELCOME.** Please don't miss out. Your fellow shipmates look forward to seeing each and every one of you there.

REUNION LOCATIONS SINCE 2010

H	C	A	E	B	A	N	I	L	O	R	A	C	
W	P	C	N	A	S	H	V	I	L	L	E	W	
A	S	H	E	V	I	L	L	E	H	E	C	E	
S	R	A	I	E	B	W	O	S	U	L	O	L	
H	D	R	Y	L	R	O	U	U	L	I	V	L	
I	S	L	K	K	A	E	O	B	U	R	I	I	
N	I	E	N	L	N	D	E	M	X	T	N	V	
G	L	S	O	O	S	R	E	U	E	U	G	N	
T	O	T	L	F	O	N	I	L	O	N	T	O	
O	P	O	A	R	N	A	N	O	P	D	O	S	
N	A	N	F	O	A	D	V	C	E	H	N	K	
D	N	N	F	N	T	U	R	E	T	O	I	C	
C	N	E	U	Q	R	E	U	Q	U	B	L	A	
B	A	E	B	L	O	C	A	T	E	D	H	J	
M	Y	R	T	L	E	B	E	A	C	H	M	M	
M	Y	T	I	C	A	M	O	H	A	L	K	O	

ALBUQUERQUE
 ANNAPOLIS
 ASHEVILLE
 BRANSON
 BUFFALO
 CAROLINA BEACH
 CHARLESTON
 COLUMBUS

COVINGTON
 JACKSONVILLE
 MYRTLE BEACH
 NASHVILLE
 NORFOLK
 OKLAHOMA CITY
 PHILADELPHIA
 WASHINGTON DC

Find the words listed above in the word search. The words can be read forward, backward and diagonally. Once you find all of the words, take the leftover letters in the order they appear from top row to bottom row to fill in the spaces below.

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When you figure out the question, please email me YOUR answer to:
ANNIEM1505@AOL.COM.

Thanks for playing along.

2026 Reunion Registration Form
USS Charles S. Sperry DD 697 Association /
Courtyard by Marriott 100 Charlotte Ave, Carolina Beach, NC 28428
Apr 12 – 16, 2026

DEADLINE FOR HOTEL REGISTRATION IS: March 10, 2026

Name: _____ Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: _____

Date of arrival: _____ FIRST TIMER: Y _____ N _____

E-mail address: _____ Confirmation of receipt will be emailed back to you

<u>No. Persons</u>	<u>Unit Cost</u>	<u>Total</u>
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Early Arrival

_____ Saturday, April 11th Please contact me about hotel option.

Reunion Hospitality Room

_____ Sunday April 12th Welcome Party Dinner **Fee waived but must register!**

Trip to USS North Carolina Battleship in Wilmington, NC

_____ Monday April 13th 10:15 am depart hotel (Carpool volunteers needed)
 Catered Lunch in the ship Wardroom X \$50 = \$ _____

Cape Fear Riverboat Lunch Cruise aboard the Henrietta 101 South Water St, Wilmington, NC

_____ Tuesday April 14th 9:30 am depart hotel Lunch Cruise 11 pm – 2 pm X \$80 = \$ _____

Dinner Buffet at Hotel

_____ Tuesday, April 14th 6 pm Cash Bar
 Grilled Salmon, Chicken Piccata salad and sides, coffee, tea, water X \$52 = \$ _____

Banquet Meal Wednesday, April 15th 6 pm Cash Bar

Plated dinner includes Salad, Chef's choice starch & vegetable, rolls, dessert, coffee, tea, water
 _____ Tuscany Grilled Chicken w/shaved prosciutto and mozzarella in sundried tomato cream sauce **Fee**
 _____ Sliced Flank Steak in red wine demi glaze **waived by BOD**
 _____ Island Mahi Mahi Pan seared and topped with tropical fruit salsa **but must register!**

Membership Dues: \$ _____

Grand Total \$ _____

REMINDER: If your **2026 membership dues** have not been paid, please fill out the included application and mail along with your registration fee.

Mail registration forms and membership application with your check or money order made payable to:

USS CHARLES S. SPERRY DD 697 ASSOCIATION

MAIL TO:

RON LaPLACA, TREASURER
 25196 ZODIAC LN.
 PUNTA GORDA, FL 33983

PLEASE NOTE:

Each individual is responsible for booking lodging
 The hotel is 19 miles (35 min) from Wilmington ILM Airport. No hotel
 shuttle available. Use UBER or Taxi. Airlines serving Wilmington are
 American, Delta, United, Breeze, Avelo, Jet Blue and Sun Country

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION
USS CHARLES S. SPERRY (DD697) ASSOCIATION

Application for the following category (*) of membership (**check one**):

Initial Membership () **Membership Renewal** () **Associate Membership** () **Widow** () **Lifetime Membership** ()

If Associate Member, please enter the name of Sperry Relative: _____

DATE OF APPLICATION: ____/____/____ **FOR CALENDAR YEAR** _____

NAME _____

SPOUSE'S NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ **ST** _____ **ZIP** _____

TELEPHONE _____ **CELL PHONE** _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

DATES SERVED ABOARD: FROM _____ **TO** _____

ENLISTED RATE (MM2; BMSN; ETN3; EN; SN): _____ **OFFICER RANK:** _____ **DIVISION:** _____ **DEPT:** _____

DUES ARE PER CALENDAR YEAR AND MAY BE PAID BY PERSONAL CHECK OR MONEY ORDER.
MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: USS CHARLES S. SPERRY (DD 697) ASSOCIATION.

MAIL PAYMENT WITH APPLICATION TO:
USS CHARLES S. SPERRY (DD 697) ASSOC.
% RON LaPLACA, TREASURER
25196 ZODIAC LANE
PUNTA GORDA, FL 33983 Phone: 516-380-3327

DUES & CATEGORIES OF MEMBERSHIP :

Initial Membership: **\$10.00** (This is for former Sperry crew joining the association for the first time.)

Membership Renewal: **\$10.00 / year** (Please use annual renewal form to update contact information,)

Associate Membership: This is for relatives of current or former members. **\$10.00 / year**. (Sperry officers to verify relationships.) (Please use annual renewal form to update contact information,)

Lifetime Membership: Dues for Lifetime membership is a onetime payment of **\$100.00** (Please use annual renewal form to update contact information,)

Widow Associate: There are **no dues required** for this membership type. (Please use annual renewal form to update contact information,)

Associate Membership: This is for relatives of current or former members. **\$10.00 / year**. (Sperry officers to verify relationships.) (Please use annual renewal form to update contact information,)