

Honored Shipmates Awarded Navy Cross, Silver Star, and Bronze Star

<https://www.laffey.org/Shipmates/Awards.pdf>

These awards honor the bravest of the heroes of USS Laffey DD459 and DD724 during World War II. These awards document the extraordinary courage and sacrifice of USS Laffey crew members. The award citations also give us a glimpse of the intensity of the battle on 16 April 1945. See the Hall of Valor: The Military Medals Database <https://valor.militarytimes.com/>.

NAVY CROSS




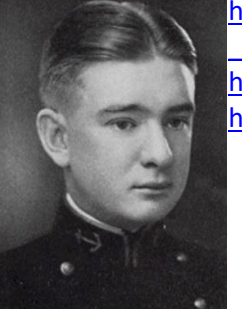


The Navy Cross is the second highest military decoration that may be awarded to a member of the United States Navy, U.S. Marine Corps, (and to members of the Coast Guard when operating under the authority of the Department of the Navy). It is awarded for extraordinary heroism:

- While engaged in action against an enemy of the United States;
- While engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing foreign force; or
- While serving with friendly foreign forces engaged in an armed conflict against an opposing armed force in which the United States is not a belligerent party.

Actions that merit the Navy Cross must be of such a high degree that they are above those required for all other U.S. combat decorations but do not merit award of the Medal of Honor. The Navy Cross is equivalent to the Distinguished Service Cross (Army) and the Air Force Cross (Air Force).

Name	Photo	Links	Notes
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Comman der F. Julian Becton		https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frederick_J._Becton https://valor.militarytimes.com/hero/20208 https://www.laffey.org/Shipmates/AdmiralBecton.pdf	Silver Star for Battle of Norman dy and Battle of Okinawa
Ensign Robert Thomsen		https://usnamemorialhall.org/index.php/ROBERT_C_THOMSEN_ENS_USN https://valor.militarytimes.com/hero/21144 https://www.laffey.org/Shipmates/RobertThomsen.pdf	Killed in Action 16 April, 1945
Lt Ted Rudd		https://valor.militarytimes.com/hero/20140 https://www.laffey.org/Shipmates/TedRunk.pdf	Retired as US Navy Captain
LCDR William Edwin Hank	 <small>Midshipman William Edwin Hank Photo thanks to Bill Gonyo.</small>	https://usnamemorialhall.org/index.php/WILLIAM_E_HANK_LCDR_USN https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Hank https://valor.militarytimes.com/hero/20489	Comma nding Officer USS Laffey DD459 Killed in Action 14 Novemb er 1942





SILVER STAR




The Silver Star is the third-highest military combat decoration that can be awarded to a member of the United States Armed Forces. It is awarded for gallantry in action:

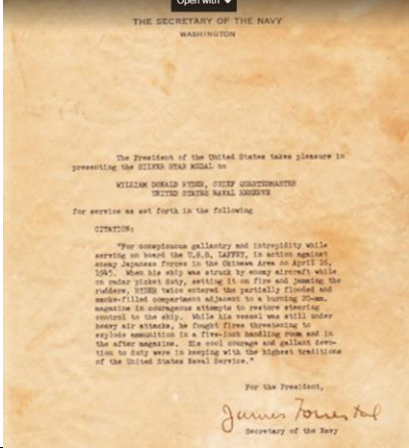


- While engaged in action against an enemy of the United States;

- While engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing foreign force; or
- While serving with friendly foreign forces engaged in an armed conflict against an opposing armed force in which the United States is not a belligerent party.

Actions that merit the Silver Star must be of such a high degree that they are above those required for all other U.S. combat decorations but do not merit award of the Medal of Honor or a Service Cross (Distinguished Service Cross, the Navy Cross, or the Air Force Cross).

Name	Photo	Links	Notes
Thomas B Fern	 <p>Thomas B. Fern, S2c Plank Owner and Survivor of April 16, 1945 Awarded the Silver Star</p>	<p>https://www.laffey.org/Shipmates/ThomasFern.pdf</p> <p>Thomas B Fern Silver Star Citation has been submitted to The Military Medals Database https://valor.militarytimes.com/ .</p>	40mm Gun Crew
LtJg James William Fravel		<p>Received the Silver Star per https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/55923293/james-william-fravel and https://valor.militarytimes.com/hero/309842</p>	Assistant Engineer Officer Killed in Action
MM3 Arthur Ernest Hogan		<p>Received Silver Star https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/134073078/arthur-ernest-hogan</p>	Machinist's Mate 1st Class

James M. LaPointe		<p> https://www.honorstates.org/index.php?id=81922 https://www.laffey.org/Shipmates/JamesLaPointe.pdf https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/56122895/james-marcelle-lapointe </p> <p>Need to find Silver Star documents to send The Military Medals Database https://valor.militarytimes.com/ </p>	Killed in Action 16 April 1945
Ltjg James A. Parolini Geacom Arturo G. Parolini on Silver Star Award		<p> https://valor.militarytimes.com/hero/20759 https://www.laffey.org/Shipmates/JamesParolini.pdf </p> <p>James A. Parolini, Lt.Cdr. USN (ret) at age 66, living at Barrington, RI, passed away the first week in May, possibly while we were aboard the Laffey painting. Ironic!! During his 30-year naval career, he received a Purple Heart and a Silver Star. He served aboard the USS Laffey approximately one year and participated in the "D" Day invasion of Europe. He left his wife, Harriet, 3 sons and 8 daughters. I understand he and Harvey Shaw married sisters and both had large families. Mrs. James H. Hudgens of Louise, Miss., notified me that Jim had passed away on December 28, 1981. Need FindAGrave</p>	Ltjg Machine Gun Control Officer
Joseph Rogowski		<p>Received the Silver Star per https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/129762669/joseph-rogowski and https://valor.militarytimes.com/hero/309937 </p>	Coxswain Killed in Action
William D. Ryder		<p> https://www.laffey.org/CQM%20William%20Ryder.html https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/188459910/william-donald-ryder https://russpickett.com/history/laffey.htm </p> <p>does not show Silver Star Request sent to Military Medals Database https://valor.militarytimes.com/ to add William D. Ryder </p>	Chief Quartermaster, Repair Party Leader

			
Lt Paul Smith		https://valor.militarytimes.com/hero/56463 https://www.laffey.org/Shipmates/PaulBSmith.pdf	Retired as US Navy Captain
Ltjg James Townsley		https://valor.militarytimes.com/hero/56563 https://www.laffey.org/Shipmates/JamesTownsley.pdf	Machine Gun Control Officer on April 16, 1945 Silver Star Recipient



Per John Wukovits, Hell from the Heavens (p. 264). Hachette Books., Boatswain's Mate 1/c Coffman, Kenneth D. received the Silver Star Award. No record in The Military Medals Database <https://valor.militarytimes.com/>

Bronze Star






The Bronzer Star is the fourth-highest military combat decoration that can be awarded to a member of the United States Armed Forces. It is awarded for gallantry in action:












- (a) while engaged in an action against an enemy of the United States;
- (b) while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing foreign force; or
- (c) while serving with friendly foreign forces engaged in an armed conflict against an opposing armed force in which the United States is not a belligerent party.



Name	Photo	Links	Notes
TM3c Edward John Brown		https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/56116442/edward-john-brown	Received Bronze Star Killed in Action
Joseph Ford Cain		Coxswain https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/137090830/joseph-ford-cain	Received Bronze Star Killed in Action
Cdr Henry J Conger		https://www.laffey.org/obituary_cdr_henry_j_jack_conger_usn_ret.htm	As commanding officer of the U.S.S. LAFFEY, his ship received several citations for knocking out shore batteries in Wonsan Harbor during the longest ship to shore battle of the Korean War. CDR Conger was awarded the Bronze Star with a "V" for valor for this engagement.

Lawrence R. Delewski		https://www.laffey.org/lawrence_r.htm https://www.laffey.org/Oral%20Histories/ohbertr.htm https://www.laffey.org/Sept%202007/ww_ii_veteran_keeps_the_story_al.htm	Died September 15, 2010. GM 2/c Plank Owner, Bronze Star Medal, Survivor of April 16, 1945. Awarded Bronze Star and Purple Heart for bravery during the Okinawa Battle.
COX Bernard Edwards		https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/56129432/bernard-edwards	Received Bronze Star Killed in Action
George Falotico		https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/56129915/george-falotico	Received Bronze Star Missing in Action
Fireman 1st Class Conley Eugene Fowler Jr.		https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/56130600/conley-eugene-fowler	Fireman 1 st Class Awarded Bronze Star Killed in Action
Fireman 1st Class Francis Ray Hallas		https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/56109652/francis-ray-hallas	Awarded Bronze Star Killed in Action
Torpedoman's Mate 1 st Class Raymond Andrew Hansen		https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/39351054/raymond-andrew-hansen	Awarded Bronze Star
Machinist's Mate 3/c LaVerne George Hazen		https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/56110329/laverne-george-hazen (National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific) and https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/82511174/la_verne-george-hazen	Awarded Bronze Star Killed in Action

Lt Lloyd Nelson Hull		https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/244788243/lloyd-nelson-hull	Awarded Bronze Star
SF1c Madoc Kenyon Irish		Shipfitter 1st Class https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/56111695/madoc-kenyon-irish	Awarded Bronze Star Killed in Action
John Albert Johnson		https://www.laffey.org/widows%20letter.htm https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/56112119/john-albert-johnson	Killed in Action 16 April 1945
F1c Paul Butler Johnson		https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/102649223/paul-butler-johnson https://www.laffey.org/Shipmates/PaulButlerJohnson.pdf	Awarded Bronze Star Killed in Action
Rm3c Lawrence Francis Kelley		https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/56112746/lawrence-francis-kelley	Awarded Bronze Star Killed in Action
Andrew J. Martinis		https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/138452006/andrew-john-martinis	Died 10/24/14 RM3 Served aboard 45-46 Okinawa Survivor Awarded Bronze Star
TM3c Jack Harris Ondracek		https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/56118240/jack-harris-ondracek	Awarded Bronze Star Killed in Action

EM1c Ross Epworth Peterson		https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/56119037/ross-epworth-peterson	Awarded Bronze Star Killed in Action
F1c James Trenton Rothgeb		https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/56120983/james-trenton-rothgeb	Awarded Bronze Star Killed in Action
LtJg Jerome Butler Sheets		https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/56122149/jerome-butler-sheets https://www.laffey.org/J%20B%20Sheets.htm	Awarded Bronze Star Killed in Action
Stephen J. Waite		https://www.laffey.org/Oral%20Histories/ohwaite.htm https://www.laffey.org/81%20Reunion.htm (Photo of 1981 Reunion with many WWII veterans.	On board April 16, 1945. MM1/c he placed Laffey into commission in 1944 onboard late 1945. He was awarded the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star medals for bravery on Radar Picket Station #1 on 16 April 1945. He enlisted in the Navy 1935, serving in Atlantic and Pacific campaigns. After his discharge in 1945, he was a framer in Iowa the worked for the State of Oregon and also in underground excavating and construction.
Warren G. Walker		https://www.laffey.org/Newsletters/news42.htm	Received Bronze Star Medal for bravery 16 April 1945. Chief Gunners Mate Plank owner, survivor of April 16, 1945 Recipient of the Bronze Star

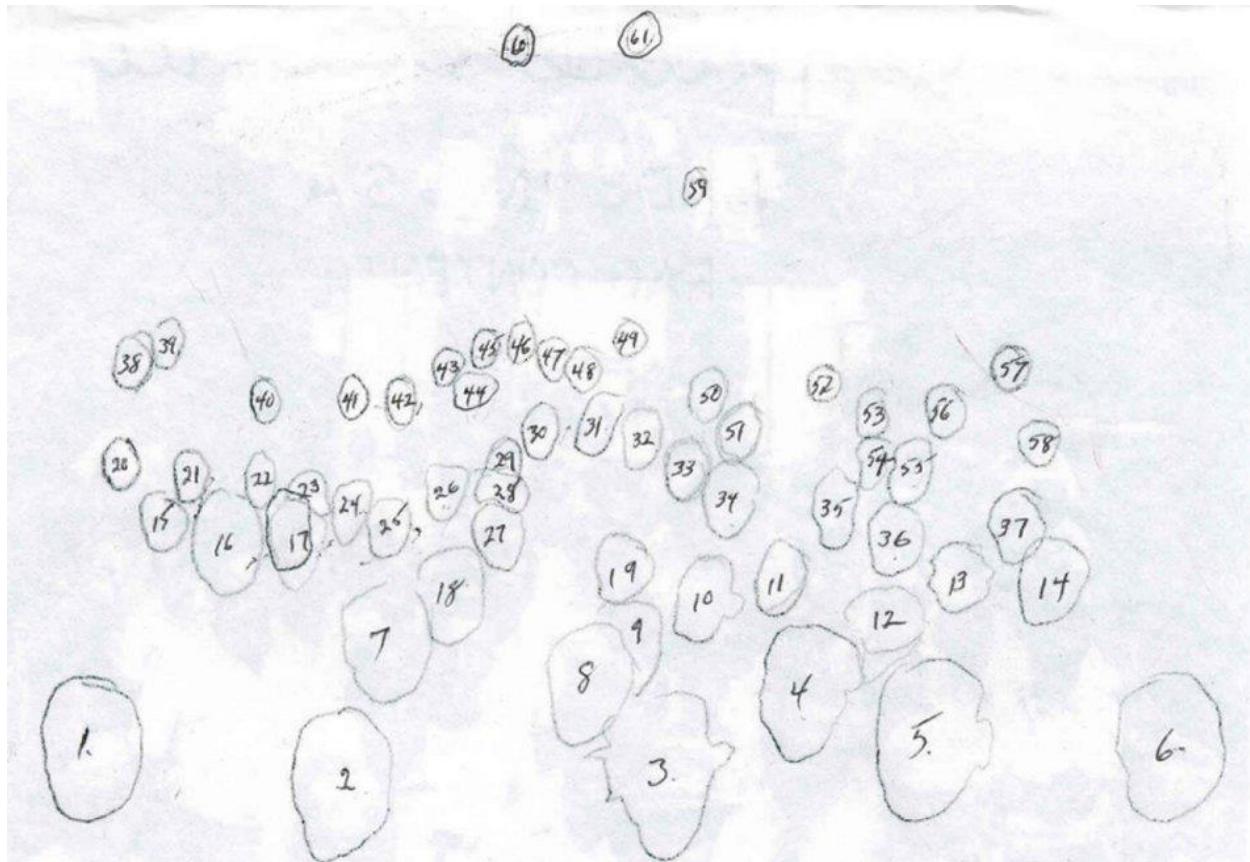
<p>Stanley Wismer</p>		<p>https://www.laffey.org/wismer.htm</p>	<p>Awarded Bronze Star Killed in Action 16 April 1945</p>
<p>William Harvey Shaw</p>		<p>https://www.laffey.org/shaw.htm https://www.laffey.org/harveyshawobit.htm</p>  <p>Harvey Shaw, LTJG Being awarded the Bronze Star by his Commanding Officer, O.D. Waters Pearl Harbor, 1945</p>	<p>Died October 27, 2004. Passed away in St. Petersburg, Florida. Plankowner and on board April 16, 1945. Recipient of Bronze Star. Retired as US Navy Captain. https://www.laffey.org/shaw.htm</p>
<p><u>ELVIN A HENKE</u></p>		<p>HTTPS://WWW.LAFFEY.ORG/NEWSLETTERS/96FALL.HTM HTTPS://WWW.LAFFEY.ORG/ORAL%20HISTORIES/OHHENKE.HTM HTTPS://WWW.FINDAGRAVE.COM/MEMORIAL/154462769/ELVIN-ALFRED-HENKE HTTPS://WWW.ANCESTRY.COM/SEARCH/?NAME=ELVIN_HENKE&BIRTH=1920&DEATH=1996</p>	<p><u>LT ENGINEERING OFFICER RECEIVED BRONZE STAR MEDAL FOR BRAVERY 16 APRIL 1945</u></p> <p><u>SENT TO</u> HTTP://RUSSPICKETT.COM/HISTORY/LAFFEY.HTM</p>
<p>Dr Matthew Cotton Darnell</p>	 <p>Doc Darnell, Al Csiszar, Debbie Csiszar, Charlotte Simonis</p>	<p>https://www.laffey.org/darnellaletala.jpg , https://www.laffey.org/laffey_attacked_off_okinawa_wwii.htm, https://www.laffey.org/newsletters/92aprmayjun.htm Sent to http://russpickett.com/history/laffey.htm</p>	<p>On board April 16, 1945. Bronze Star and Purple Heart. Physician who treated wounded during and after the attack</p> <p>https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/236815724/matthew-cotton-darnell</p>

Joel C. Youngquist		https://www.laffey.org/youngquist.htm Sent to http://russpickett.com/history/laffey.htm	Lt(jg), Supply Officer Pickett no
Walter William "Walt" Hoch		https://www.laffey.org/walter_william_walt_hoch.htm Sent to http://russpickett.com/history/laffey.htm	Fire Control Man Third Class
Edward Vincent Zebro		https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/240438169/edward-vincent-zebro	Awarded Bronze Star

1981 Photo of USS Laffey Association Reunion with Many WWII Crew Members

<https://www.laffey.org/81%20reunion.htm>





1. Frank Manson	16. Edward Kycia	31.	46.
2. Mathew Darnell	17. Larry Delewski	32.	47. Frank Laskowski
3. Frederick Julian Becton	18. Olivion Marini	33.	48. Slavomir Vodenhal
4.	19. Robert Daugherty	34. Robert McGinnis	49.
5. Cy Simonis	20.	35. Andy Anderson	50.
6. Frank Kodman	21. Francis Gebhart	36.	51.
7. Joe Edmonds	22. Bob Karr	37.	52. Jim Cox
8. Robert Donstrom	23. Ben Broome	38. Gus Englehardt	53. Paul Smith
9. Al Csiszar	24.	39. K.D. Jones	54. Joe Doria
10. Ari Phoutrides	25. Ramon Pressburger	40.	55. Warren Walker
11.	26. Louis Nordstrom	41. Bill Welch	56.

- | | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|---------------|
| 12. Steve Waite | 27. | 42. Jim Spriggs | 57. |
| 13. | 28. | 43. Sam Wingrove | 58. |
| 14. | 29. | 44. Tom Fern | 59. Dan Essig |
| 15. | 30. Bert Remsen | 45. | 60. |

Large Posters of WWII Veterans in Chief's Quarters aboard USS Laffey

These posters commemorate WWII Veterans on 16 April 1945 attack on the USS Laffey in the Battle of Okinawa.

"White water no longer curls back from our Laffey's high proud bow. There are no men at her throttles or on her bridge, and her guns no longer speak. But she is alive with shades and memories of the brave deeds and the brave Americans who did them they are still with her and will be always. It is my hope that those who visit her, most especially the young, will come to know and perhaps be inspired by them."

F. Julian Becton, RADM



Bell, Charles W.

Sonarman
Second Class

Survivor



Hazen, LaVerne G.

Machinist's Mate
Third Class

KIA I6 April 1945



Eastham, Lonnie H.

Seaman
First Class

Survivor



Jackson, Ralph D.

Electrician's Mate
Second Class

Survivor



Fern, Tom B.

Seaman
First Class

Survivor

Silver Star Recipient



Johnson, John A.

Machinist's Mate
Third Class

KIA I6 April 1945



Flint, Chester C.

Coxswain

KIA I6 April 1945



Kennedy, Earl R.

Yeoman
Third Class

Survivor

Typed AAR of the Attack



Giles, Louis F.

Seaman
First Class

Survivor



McBryde, Luther B.
"Luke"

Seaman
First Class

Survivor

"Fighting ships to me are human. Without a crew,
they are like bodies with out life."

-Aristides "Ari" Phoutrides



Parolini, G.A.G

Lieutenant
Junior Grade

Survivor

Silver Star recipient



Spriggs, Oliver J.

Fireman
First Class

Survivor



Petersen, Ross E.

Electrician's Mate
First Class

KIA 16 April 1945



Thomsen, Robert C.

Ensign

KIA
16 April 1945

Navy Cross Recipient



Phoutrides,
Aristides S. "Ari"

Quartermaster
Second Class

Survivor



Welch, William H.

Baker
First Class

Survivor



Radder, Owen G.

Gunner's Mate
Third Class

Survivor



Wismer, Stanley

Gunners Mate
Second Class

KIA 16 April 1945



Runk, Theodore W.

Lieutenant

Survivor

Navy Cross Recipient



Youngquist, Joel C.

Lieutenant
Junior Grade

Survivor

Bronze Star Recipient



See "The Ship That Would Not Die" by F. Julian Becton and Joseph Morschauser III and "Hell from the Heavens: The Epic Story of the USS Laffey and World War II's Greatest Kamikaze Attack" by John Wukovits.

USS Laffey WWII Killed in Action, Missing in Action,
Wounded in Action, and Survivors

U.S.S. LAFFEY (DD-724)

" THE SHIP THAT WOULD NOT DIE ! "



Official U.S. Navy photograph USN 1100870
Public Domain
U.S. S. Laffey

Listing created by: Russell S. " Russ " Pickett
Webmaster: www.russpickett.com

" Click-Here "
To see other WW II listings !

Site is from Russ Pickett

<http://russpickett.com/history/laffey.htm>

USS Laffey DD459 WWII Memorials <http://www.russpickett.com/history/laffeydd459.htm>

For Investigation: John Wukovits "Hell from the Heavens" (p. 264). Hachette Books. lists the following additional Bronze Star Recipients:

Hintzman, Machinist's Mate 3/c Donald J.

Hogan Machinist's Mate 1/c Arthur E.

Hungerpiller, Chief Machinist's Mate Marcellous D.

Hutchins, Seaman 1/c Charles W.

Logan, Motor Machinist's Mate 1/c George S.,
<https://www.laffey.org/Oral%20Histories/ohwaite.htm>

Matthews, Ship's Serviceman 2/c Jim D.
www.laffey.org/matthewalbum1.htm

Parino, Machinist's Mate 2/c Frank F.
<https://www.laffey.org/parinoobituary.htm> and
<https://www.laffey.org/Newsletters/98summer.htm>,

Peeler, Machinist's Mate 1/c Elton F.
https://www.laffey.org/laffey_attacked_off_okinawa_wwii.htm

Zebro, Gunner's Mate 2/c Edward V.

Tasks: Monitor The Military Medals Database <https://valor.militarytimes.com/hallofvalor@militarytimes.com> and cdouglassterner@gmail.com for Thomas Fern, James M. LaPointe, William D. Ryder additions. Upload photos and award documents to major genealogy websites Family Search and Ancestry.

Information Sources: <https://www.laffey.org/Shipmates/Taps.pdf>,
<https://www.laffey.org/Sept%202007/taps.htm>,
<https://www.laffey.org/Sept%202007/laffeycrewfotos.htm>,
<https://www.laffey.org/Oral%20Histories/ohindex.htm> ,
<https://www.laffey.org/81%20reunion.htm>
<https://www.laffey.org/2002%20reunion%20-%20dw/2002reuniondwp5.htm>,

Google Books search <https://books.google.com/>
https://books.google.com/advanced_book_search

Books: The Ship That Would Not Die by F. Julian Becton and Hell from the
Heavens by John Wukovits

<https://www.findagrave.com/> , <https://www.familysearch.org/en/>,
www.ancestry.com
<https://www.laffey.org/Shipmates/Awards.pdf>

National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific
Honolulu, Honolulu County, Hawaii, 96813 USA
<https://www.cem.va.gov/cems/nchp/nmcp.asp>

USS Laffey DD724 WWII Memorials <http://russpickett.com/history/laffey.htm>

USS Laffey DD459 WWII Memorials <http://www.russpickett.com/history/laffeydd459.htm>

For corrections or updates, contact President, USS Laffey Association
president@laffey.org and webmaster@laffey.org