

PRESS RELEASE



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Gay, Lesbian & Bisexual Veterans of America, Inc.

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USS LEXINGTON (CV-16) AGAIN MAKES HISTORY

Commissioned in 1943, the USS Lexington (CV-16) served longer and set more records than any aircraft carrier in the history of the United States Navy. During World War II, she saw action from Tarawa to Tokyo and earned the nickname "Blue Ghost" from Tokyo Rose after repeatedly defying reports that she had been sunk. Now, 54 years later, the USS Lexington again wrote her name into the history books on President's Day weekend as she hosted the biennial convention of the GAY, LESBIAN & BISEXUAL VETERANS OF AMERICA (GLBVA).

GLBVA members from across the country converged on Corpus Christi, Texas for a weekend of networking, educational seminars, speeches, planning sessions and the election of national officers. And for the first time in history a gay, lesbian and bisexual veterans service organization used the facilities aboard a U.S. Naval vessel for their plenary session.

The Officers Ward Room aboard the World War II aircraft carrier was decked out in the finest of military tradition with the American flag, the rainbow flag, several military banners and the flags of all branches of the U.S. Armed Forces. After arriving for the Sunday morning plenary session, some convention attendees toured the aircraft carrier while others swapped "war" stories and spoke of their dedication to continuing the fight for the right of gays, lesbians and bisexuals to serve openly in the military. Later in the day members were served a meal from a traditional "chow-line", listened to speeches from the organization's leaders and then began the nominating process which would culminate in the election of the officers who will govern the organization for the next two years.

During the session a special award was presented to outgoing President Nancy Russell honoring her for all her hard work over the past four years in building the organization and establishing a viable presence on the national political scene. Under her administration the organization saw a significant increase in membership, obtained its 501(c)3 status, testified before numerous committees during the 1993 LIFT THE BAN campaign and established a solid financial footing which will ensure the organization's long-term survival. A plaque was presented as a small token of the groups appreciation and a standing ovation demonstrated the respect and admiration the members have for Ms. Russell and her dedication to their cause.

GLBVA, Inc. is the only national non-profit organization for gay, lesbian and bisexual active duty, reserve and veteran members of the United States Armed Forces, their families, friends and supporters.