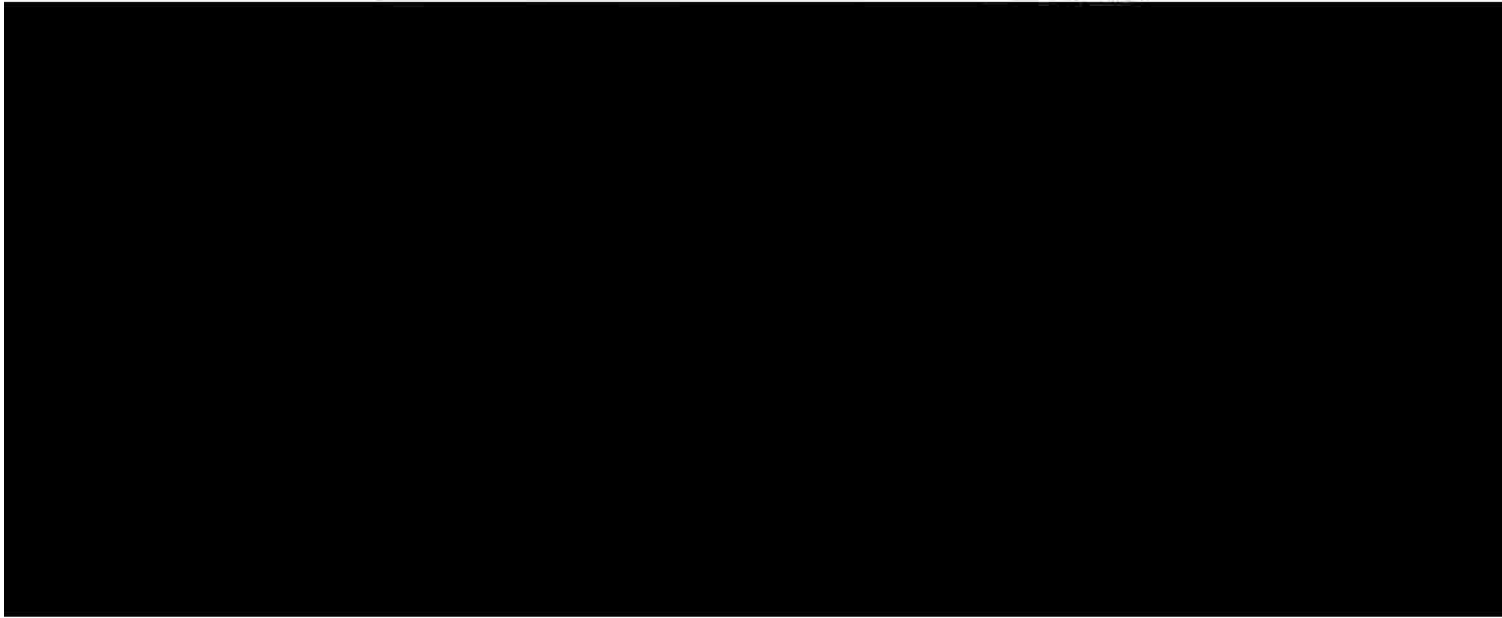
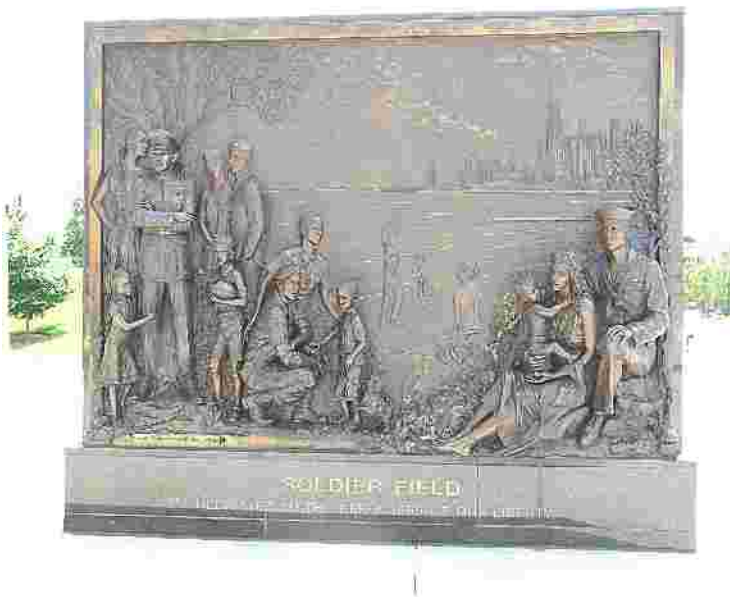


USS Lawrence Association 2008 Chicago, IL Reunion



Thursday was a trip south to Chicago and started with a stop at the Museum of Science and Industry. The highlight of the museum is the German 505 U-boat. The 505 was captured during WWII. If you think water hours were tough on our ships, the U-boats had no showers or places to wash up. Can you imagine everyone after 90 days at sea with out a shower and having to hot rack with a shipmate? The rest of the museum was geared more toward kids giving them a hands on approach to science and industry. After lunch we headed for a tour of the city. we made several stops for photos of the famous Chicago Skyline, Soldier Field, and Millennium Park. The park had several interesting areas to it including a concert venue, garden, and several works of art. The art was very unique. One of the items was what appeared to be a mirrored bicycle helmet. The other was two tall structures that had water pouring over the top to the ground below where the kids waded without their shoes. Every so often the water would stop and images of different area people would appear on the structures. Then out of the lips of the image would be a stream of water that would blast the kids waiting below. We then drove State Street and Michigan Avenue and stopped at the Elks National Memorial, which is a tribute to all veterans.



Friday we attended Recruit Graduation at Great Lakes. Gone are the days of graduation being held out on the "grinder". We were ushered in to a brand new state of the art drill hall. Once graduation started, each individual ship reunion groups were welcomed by RTC's Commanding Officer. When it came time for Pass In Review the Admiral walked the distance of the drill hall to review the companies. RTC has undergone major changes. Gone are the light tan brick barracks and the chow hall. There is no more service week. It is all handled by private contractors. The new barracks are made like a ships interior with class rooms and mess decks at each "ship". There is little marching and the main focus is on training. There is a mock up of a ship where during the last week of training the recruits spend the night. During the middle of the night all hell breaks loose and they must save the ship and treat the injured. The recruits must pass this phase of training in order to graduate. After graduation we toured "Mainside". Many of the older buildings are gone, have had major remodeling done, and the green glass Gunnners mate School is slated to be dismantled. The "Strip" outside the North Chicago gate is now a level lot and awaiting development. We had lunch at the "Port of Call" and had a chance to shop in the new Navy Exchange



Saturday was a day where everyone could go out on their own. In the evening was our annual banquet. In order to raise money for the Association we held a gift basket raffle, 50/50 raffle, and a special raffle that consisted of a special bottle of USS Lawrence Fleet Reserve wine, olive oil set, and a "Don't Give Up the Ship" flag. Before saying goodbye, many photos were taken. Everyone is looking forward to 2009 in Charleston.

