

METRO

NOT CONCERNED

POLITICS Co-hosting a job fair, U.S. Rep. Corrine Brown defends her record **B-2**

CRIME Grave marker vases swiped **B-3**

Sailors honor memories of missile attack on Stark



Photos by **JOHN PEMBERTON/The Times-Union**

At a memorial Monday, John Kiser rings the bell once for each of the 37 men killed during the attack on the USS Stark 23 years ago. He was 5 when his father, Senior Chief Petty Officer Stephen Kiser, was killed during the Iraqi missile attack.

Dozens remembered the 37 lives lost on the frigate 23 years ago.

By **JAMES CANNON**
The Times-Union

An earth-shattering hit to the hull, large clouds of smoke and a frantic dash to the ship's firehoses are just some of the memories that retired Navy Capt. Matt Schellhorn remembered of the May 17, 1987 attack on the USS Stark.

Schellhorn, the lieutenant in charge of the helicopter attachment at the time, said from inside the hangar bay he didn't know what happened at first, but after he noticed smoke he began damage-control efforts.

"Even though I was an officer, you were a hose handler, and you took a hose and were under the leadership of the

guys who were well-trained," he said.

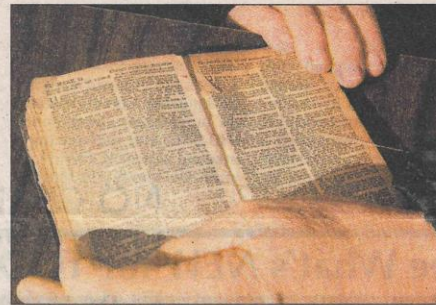
Schellhorn was one of more than four dozen in attendance Monday at Mayport Naval Station for the 23rd anniversary of the attack on the Stark. In the attack, two Iraqi missiles slammed into the starboard side of the ship while on patrol in the Arabian Gulf.

The Mayport-based guided-missile frigate was one of several peacekeeping forces attacked in support of the Reagan administration's policy to keep the shipping lanes open.

Monday, many active and retired Navy personnel were scattered throughout the crowd of families left behind by the 37 sailors who died that day.

Barbara Kiser, widow of Senior Chief Petty Officer Stephen Kiser, said she considered her-

STARK continues on B-3



Barbara Kiser holds the bible she recovered from her husband's berthing aboard the USS Stark when the ship pulled into Manama, Bahrain.

THE VICTIMS

View the names of the 37 sailors who died that day with the story online.

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Stark

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self more fortunate and blessed because she was able to see her husband frequently while the Stark was in port.

Kiser, who had living been in Bahrain with her 5-year-old son for about a month before the attack, was even able to see and say goodbye to her husband the morning of the attack.

After the attack and cleanup on the ship began, Kiser said she was the only civilian al-

lowed onboard.

"I was able to see everything firsthand, myself, before things were cleaned up," she said. "It was unbelievable, the heat from the missiles was 12 million British Thermal Units and ... 600 pounds of missile propellant ignited.

"Everything combustible within seconds burst into flames, and that was in the compartment where my husband was sleeping."

She also mentioned hardships she underwent raising a child as a single parent but said she owed everything to God.

"The Bible says God is a father to the fatherless, and I was so thankful for Scripture promises and God's faithfulness," Kiser said.

But she also said the network of families and the anniversary ceremony helped her and others cope with the loss.

The ceremony also included remarks from Capt. John Mitchell Jr., then commanding officer of Mayport Naval Station, as well as several other former Stark crewmen.

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