

Mayport Plans For Stark Remembrance

From Staff

NS Mayport will host a memorial ceremony on May 17 at Mayport's Memorial Park. The ceremony will be at 10 a.m. and guest speaker for this year's event is retired Rear Adm. George A. Huchting.

On May 17, 1987, while on patrol in the Arabian Gulf, 37 Sailors died when two Iraqi missiles struck USS Stark. Despite the severe damage inflicted, the heroic efforts of Stark's crew saved the ship. Stark was decommissioned at Mayport in 1999.

In order to preserve the tradition once the ship was retired, the Naval Order of the United States, North Florida Commandery, assumed sponsorship for the memorial service.

Several members of the 1987 crew of Stark will attend the service. The service will feature accounts of some of the events that occurred following the attack, both aboard ship and here in Mayport, from crew and volunteers who worked to provide information and

support services to the families of crew members.

Mayport's Memorial Park was established Aug. 1, 1987, with the dedication of the Stark monument.

Huchting retired from the United States Navy in January of 1999 after 36 years of service. From 1999 until early 2006, he was employed with Cypress International, Inc. in Alexandria, Virginia as Vice-President of Navy Programs, consulting with Defense firms. While with Cypress

International, and subsequently, he participated in various panels supporting the Missile Defense Agency focus areas. He remains a Defense consultant.

Rear Admiral Huchting's last active duty assignment was as the Program Executive Officer for Theater Surface Combatants within the office of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development and Acquisition. During his last year, the development of both the Navy

Area and Theater Wide Ballistic Missile Defense systems and the engineering to resolve the fleet interoperability issues were critical new items on his list of responsibilities.

Huchting commanded the cruiser USS Wainwright (CG 28) and the destroyer USS Charles F. Adams (DDG 2),

including a deployment with the NATO Standing Naval Force, Atlantic. Afloat, Admiral Huchting served on the staff of the Commander Sixth Fleet as the ACOS for Strategy and Tactics and the staff of Commander Carrier Group Five/CTF-70/CTF-77 as the Surface Operations Officer.