



“THE HELM”

Newsletter of the Connecticut Council

Volume 2022 Issue 3

November 2022

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Upcoming dates of interest:

- **State and national elections:** Tuesday November 8th
-



Council President
Joe Latwin

Annual Dinner a success:

We were very pleased to have Vice Admiral Sean Buck, Superintendent of the Naval Academy, as our principal speaker at the Annual Dinner on July 26th.

This sold-out event was held at the Stamford Yacht Club, and was our first such dinner since the Covid pandemic caused us to cancel the spring 2020 one.

For details of Admiral Buck's impressive background, see our June newsletter [here](#).

We thank all those who contributed to hosting Sea Cadets, NJROTC Cadets, and SEAL candidates at no cost to them.

Please see page 2 for more dinner photos.



Vice Admiral Sean Buck, USN, speaking at Council dinner

President's Letter:

It was heartwarming to see your Connecticut Council at work. At our dinner featuring Naval Academy Superintendent Vice Admiral Buck, he took the time to speak with many Sea Cadets as well as NJROTC students from around the state on a one-on-one basis. The young folks were impressed and enthused by meeting and getting a chance to talk to him.

This was your Council at its best - facilitating senior Navy officers to meet and speak with our nation's future leaders and citizens, whether or not they chose to join the military. That is what your Council does. We sincerely appreciate your support to keep these types of events coming.

I invite you to volunteer to help out these youth programs. It will not only aid the youths to learn about the sea services and develop pride in our country, but will also give you a sense that the country's future will be in good hands, despite the things you may hear in the media.

As you know, our efforts go beyond these two programs. Board member retired Captain Drew Bisset leads an RDAC program that prepares local area SEAL candidates for arduous BUD/s training. That program has a success rate in excess of 70%, as compared to the overall BUD/s graduation success rate of about 30%. The RDAC program also produces a very high percentage of those selected for SEAL officer slots.

We also support our adopted ship, USS Winston Churchill (DDG 81), and adopted sub, USS Connecticut (SSN 22). We maintain regular contact with them and hope to involve them in some future Council events.

To keep up our good works, I strongly encourage you to maintain your membership, pay your dues, get active, and get friends and colleagues to join us.

Joe Latwin

Annual Dinner (continued):



Council website:

See our Council's award-winning website for special features and updates that occur between the editions of this newsletter at: www.navyleaguewestct.org



Website screen shot.



Sea Cadet news:

In keeping with a major part of the Navy League mission, to help build America's future through successful youth programs, our Council supports the four Sea Cadet units in the state: Barque Eagle Division (Plainville); Dealeay Division (Stamford); Edson Division (New Haven); and Nautilus Division (Groton).

Each unit is overseen by volunteer adult staff following national guidelines. Here are photos of some recent events at several of the units.



Nautilus Division cadets on the high rope course at the Naval Sub Base; building confidence and team work skills.



Photo above and right are from Dealeay Division training presentation night. Cadets got public speaking experience while discussing their summer training, which ran a gamut including basic training, to scuba qualification, to sailing, to serving on Coast Guard harbor craft in San Francisco, to drone flying.



Ms Bridget Fox of the Stamford Mayor's office, with some of the Dealeay cadets at the presentation night.

Adopted ship news:

USS Connecticut (SSN 22):

As previously reported, our sponsored submarine, USS Connecticut (SSN 22), is back in Washington state following an accidental collision with a sea mount on the bottom of the South China Sea in October 2021.

In July, we received the good news that the Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA) decided to completely repair bow and ballast tank damage and return the submarine to full normal duty. A timeline for that work has not yet been published.

Our Council "adopted" this Seawolf class nuclear fast attack submarine in 2016. There are 3 Seawolf class subs that are the quietest and fastest in the fleet. Our Council has been in contact with the new CO and XO, and we send them and their officers and crew our best wishes.



SSN 22 in Puget Sound in 2016.

USS Winston S. Churchill (DDG 81):

Our sponsored destroyer is currently undergoing scheduled repairs and upgrades at a shipyard in her new homeport of Mayport, Florida. All hands worked to successfully prepare the ship to withstand the effects of Hurricane Ian while pier-side in the yard in late September.

Training continues for the crew even in the shipyard—see photo at right.

The ship was recently selected for another award: SECDEF Maintenance Award for Field-Level Medium Category. There will be an awards ceremony in December. Our congratulations go out to CHURCHILL!

Our Council adopted this Arleigh Burke class guided missile destroyer, following her port visit to Stamford, CT in August 2003. After multiple overseas deployments for the ship, we wish Captain Anthony and all hands success in this lengthy overhaul period.



NJROTC news:

We are proud to support four Navy Junior ROTC units in CT high schools: Bethel High School, Bridgeport Military Academy, Brian McMahon High School (Norwalk), and New London High School. Nearby are examples of recent Cadet activities at two of the high schools.



50 Bethel sophomore Cadets passed the CT DEP Boating Safety exam



and are eligible for their boating safety license following hands-on learning in class and field trip practice aboard Schooner Soundwaters.



Top left and above: McMahon Cadets at mini boot camp in East Lyme. Top right, participating in "walk to end Alzheimer's" at Calf Pasture Beach in Norwalk.

RDAC/SEAL candidate news:

The local Navy SEAL Recruiting District Assistance Council (RDAC) candidate mentoring program, led by Council Board member and retired Navy Capt. Drew Bisset, continues to maintain its training momentum, preparing these young men for the arduous SEAL screening and training to come.



RDAC recently conducted a 30 straight hour Physical Screening Test with 38 candidates in western Mass. It included 500 yard swimming, pushups, sit-ups, and pull-ups, and running with and without rucksacks. Many of the exercises were conducted at night with low temperatures, but with safety as a key consideration; also included finding a "downed and injured pilot" in the woods, and transporting him to safety. Nearby photos show some of the exercises.



An earlier RDAC candidate, Shane Terwilliger, was recently named Top Honor Recruit out of 819 recruits at Great Lakes Training Center, and is currently at SEAL BUD/s screening in Colorado.



Help recruit new League members:

The Navy League was founded in 1902 with a clear mission: to support the members of the sea services; to educate the American people and their elected leaders on the critical importance of sea power; and to help build America's future through successful youth programs. Over 200 Councils around the world continue to carry out this mission. Membership is open to all interested citizens, whether they ever served in uniform or not. There is strength in numbers.

Please renew your membership and help recruit new members. Renewal is online at our Council website, www.navyleaguewestct.org then click "join/renew" at the top. Thank you.

Our Connecticut Council has 234 members.

There is an optional \$25 reduced annual NL dues rate, that substitutes online SeaPower magazine in place of the mailed paper copy. All other benefits are the same.

2022 Council Board

OFFICERS

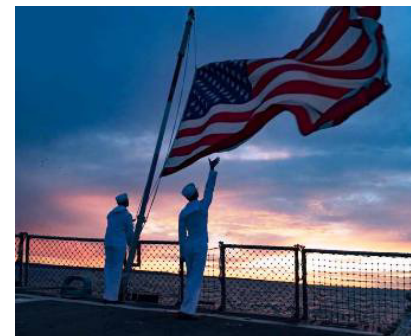
- President..... Joseph Latwin
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- VP Membership.....R. (Pete) Kenyon III
- VP Youth Programs...Stephen Gravereaux
- Secretary.....Tara Louise Edwards
- Communications.....Edward Fitzgerald
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- P. Alan Gerard, CO Dealey Division Stamford
- Colin Bernard, CO Edson Division New Haven
- Keith Cross, CO Nautilus Div. Groton
- Stephen Smith, CO Barque Eagle Div. Plainville





**Connecticut Council
Navy League of the United States**
www.navyleaguewestct.org



Midshipmen and boats from US Naval Academy sail training squadron visited Stamford in June.

A sailor assigned to the Virginia-class fast attack submarine USS North Dakota (SSN 784) is greeted by his wife and newborn daughter during a homecoming event at Naval Submarine Base New London in Groton, on October 27th. The sub was returning from overseas deployment, and is one of 14 based in our state's Sub Base.

