



# "THE HELM" NEWSLETTER OF THE WESTERN CONNECTICUT COUNCIL

Volume 2014 Issue 3

September 2014

## Gary Williams to speak:

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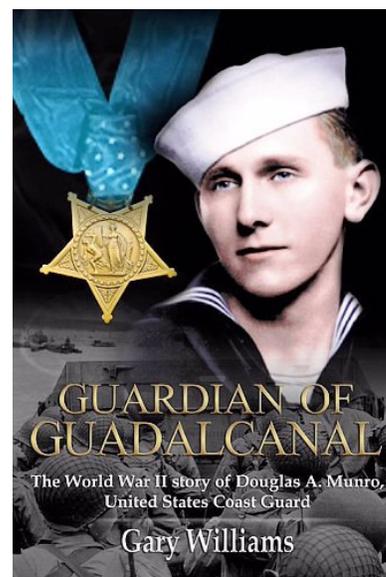
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Author Gary Williams will speak at a Council dinner on October 11th. His latest book, released this month, is "Guardian of Guadalcanal". It is about Coast Guardsman Doug Munro who received a posthumous Medal of Honor for extraordinary heroism under fire.

Special guest at the dinner will be Doug Sheehan who is Doug Munro's nephew.

We will also honor the 75th anniversary of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary. The "Coast Guard Reserve Act" was passed by Congress in 1939 with WWII on the horizon. What started as the "Temporary Reserve" became the Auxiliary in 1942, with 50,000 volunteers serving during the war. There are today 32,000 members

*(Continued on page 2)*



## President's Letter

### Upcoming dates of interest:

- **Speaker and dinner:** Oct 11th; see page 1 story.
- **Cadet Training Presentations night:** Oct 6th at Stamford Government Center at 7pm. See page 3.
- **Annual holiday dinner:** mark your calendars for Dec. 3rd. Details will be sent to all Council members.

Greetings to all as Fall approaches.

School is back in session, and with fond memories, I bid farewell to a wonderful summer.

On October 1, our Council's past President and current Board member, Rear Admiral John Weigold will be promoted and receive his second star. John currently serves as the Deputy Director, Operations at U.S. Pacific Command. Congratulations RADM Weigold.

Our next Navy League Council Distinguished Speaker dinner will be on Saturday, October 11<sup>th</sup>. We are very fortunate to host author Gary Williams at Giovanni's Water Edge Restaurant in Darien. Gary will discuss his newest book, "Guardian of Guadalcanal", about Doug Munro, the Coast Guard's only Medal of Honor winner. Please get your RSVP in today to beat the September 30th deadline and

then join us on the 11th!

Also come support the Sea Cadets during their Training Presentation night at Stamford Government Center on Monday Oct 7th at 7pm. See page 3 for details. Always fun and interesting to hear the cadets' take on their away-from-home summer training.

Mark your calendars for December 3<sup>rd</sup> for our annual Holiday dinner. We are looking at different venues, and will send out details well in advance.

I look forward to seeing you soon at one of our upcoming events.

All the best,

Gerry Tighe, CAPT USN (ret)  
President, Western Connecticut Council

## Williams to speak (con't):

*(Continued from page 1)*

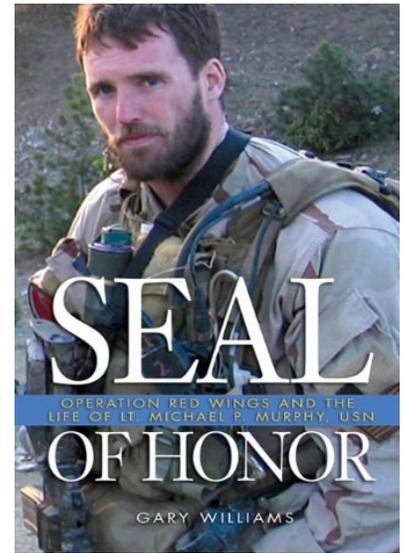
acting as a force multiplier for the USCG.

One of Gary's earlier books was "SEAL of Honor" about Medal of Honor recipient Navy SEAL LT Michael Murphy.

The dinner will be at Giovanni's Water Edge Restaurant in Darien. Details, including a reservations form, were previously sent to all Council members. A copy of the dinner flyer is on the internet at:

[www.navyleaguewestct.org/NLspeakerinviteOct14.pdf](http://www.navyleaguewestct.org/NLspeakerinviteOct14.pdf)

Reservation forms are due no later than September 30th, for what should prove to be a patriotic, informative, and enjoyable evening.



## Annual SEAL Picnic a success again:

Sold out again, the annual SEAL candidate picnic was held at the Riverside Yacht Club on July 23rd for our annual Picnic. Area SEAL candidates demonstrated swimming and physical fitness tests that are part of their quest to become Navy SEALs; and several of them spoke on why they want to become SEALs.

Nearby photos are from the picnic, that was well received by the large group.

In other local SEAL news, Council Board Member CAPT Drew Bisset obtained sponsorship for 6 Dealey sea cadets to attend Camp Trident, a SEAL type youth training run by former SEALs. While not part of the official Sea Cadet training, each Dealey cadet who attended gave enthusiastic reports on the week-long experience and a number hope to return next year.



## Sea Cadet news :

### Summer Training Presentations Oct 6th:

Dealey cadets attended summer trainings from 'Boot Camp' (Recruit Training) to Seamanship, Damage Control, Coast Guard Orientation, Leadership Academy, Field Training.... the list goes on. A number of the cadets distinguished themselves at the Trainings. The cadets report all trainings were interesting, challenging, and well received. Monday, October 6<sup>th</sup> at 7pm, the cadets will provide brief presentations on their trainings at the Stamford Government Center. Come support the cadets and learn about their activities - Government Center Lobby, 888 Washington Blvd. in Stamford - free parking.

### Joint Training with Edson Division

LCDR Stannard and a number of cadets journeyed to Sleeping Giant State park in Hamden for an orienteering training with the cadets of the Edson Division cadets who are based in New Haven. The cadets enjoyed the day, hiking to the top of Sleeping Giant where they dined on standard military MRE's (**Meals Ready to Eat**). Traversing back down, they practiced the 'injured man' scenario, carrying one of their shipmates the entire length of the passage. A highlight of the evolution was a round of "pugil sticks" pitting like-sized cadet volunteers in a simulated combat exercise. Cadets Stanley Villard and Kyle Kutz represented the unit in the competition and overcame their opponents with great ferocity (and big smiles and handshakes afterward!)

### Marine Center Base Update

Dealey CO Stannard, Council President Gerry Tighe and Council Youth Chairman Steve Gravereaux met with the city of Stamford facilities Manager and staff regarding space allocations and building conditions at the Magee Ave. Marine Center site. Agreement was reached on some rehab projects that will be undertaken by the city in addition to furniture replacement. Petty Officer Country suffered a burst pipe in the ceiling some time ago and the city has almost completed renovation of the space with a new ceiling, floor, and coat of paint. The Petty Officers anxiously await returning to a much improved working space! And the entire unit looks forward to additional space as we are in great need.

### Support Needed:

The cadets need **YOU!** Looking for an Instructor for the League Cadet program (ages 11 – 13) teaching basic military nomenclature, customs and courtesies, rates and ranks for the upcoming training year. Beginning in November through April, two Mondays a month from 7 – 8 pm. Course materials provided.

If you can assist, please contact LCDR Jennifer Stannard at: [jenniferstannard@hotmail.com](mailto:jenniferstannard@hotmail.com)



Cadets during 2013 Presentation Night.



Pugil stick contest.

### Possible threat to Sea Cadet meeting space abated:

This topic has been covered in detail in recent past editions of the Helm newsletter. Since the June Helm edition, the planned tenant for the originally proposed BLT building, Bridgewater Associates, announced their decision not to relocate to Stamford.

This effectively ends the threat to the Marine Center for now. BLT still owns the land of the former Yacht Haven boatyard, so a future threat is still possible but much less likely than it was previously.

Our Council website has a section to provide detailed news on this issue, at:

[www.navyleaguewestct.org/center.html](http://www.navyleaguewestct.org/center.html)

# USS Churchill news:



Our Council-adopted ship, the Arleigh Burke class guided missile destroyer USS Winston S. Churchill (DDG-81), was underway in early September from her Norfolk homeport to a port visit in Key West.

Selected other recent ship events are highlighted in the accompanying photos.



Churchill crew volunteers working on a Habitat for Humanity house project in August.



Churchill CO CDR Christine O'Connell awarding one of a number of Navy & Marine Corps Achievement Medals in an all-hands ceremony on deck.



Churchill sailors taking Navy-wide advancement exams.



Churchill's four selected Sailors of the Quarter. Our Council sends a hearty Bravo Zulu for their accomplishment to FC1 (SW/AW) Cooper, LS2(SCW) Nielsen, HM3 (SW) Cavanaugh and GMSN Campos.



Sunset at sea.



Securing mooring lines in Key West.

# 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 about the critical importance of sea power; and to help build America's future through successful youth programs. 270 Councils throughout 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 in accomplishing our important mission.

Please renew your membership and help recruit new members. Invite potential new members to attend Council events. Membership sign-up and renewal forms are available online at our Council website, [www.navyleaguewestct.org](http://www.navyleaguewestct.org) then click "join/renew". Or ask any Council Board member for a form. Thank you.

**Our Western Connecticut Council has 119 active members.**

## Book reviews:

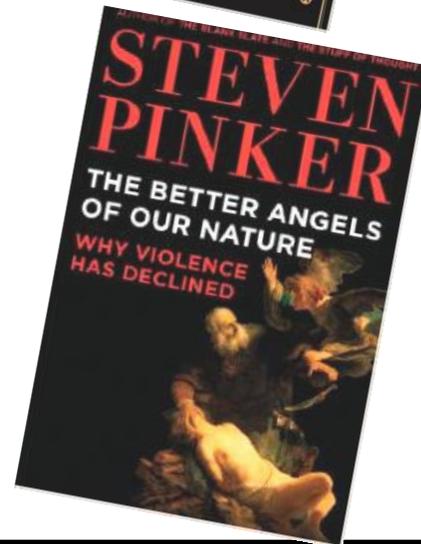
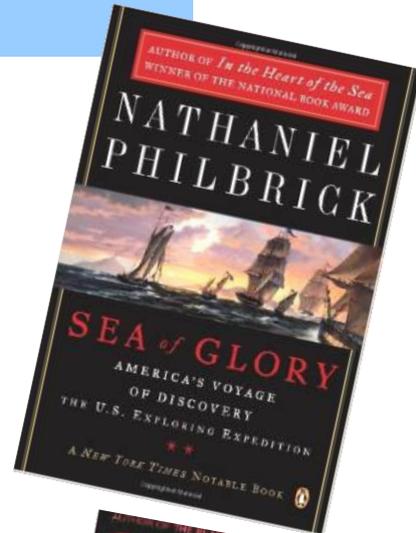
### “Sea of Glory” by Nathaniel Philbrick:

Everyone knows about the Lewis and Clark Expedition of 1804 to 1806. But most Americans have never heard of the U. S. Exploring Expedition. Composed of six magnificent sailing vessels with a crew numbering in the hundreds, it set out in 1838 to 1842 to map the entire Pacific ocean, first to explore the Antarctic coast, and came back with a massive collection of artifacts and specimens that became the basis for the Smithsonian Institution. With a brilliant but overbearing commander, the story is rich in personal conflict, culminating in his court martial upon return.

Nathaniel Philbrick is a best selling author of many books, including *In the Heart of the Sea*, *Mayflower*, *The Last Stand*, and *Bunker Hill*. His research of original sources is thorough and fascinating. The vast Pacific was as much of a frontier as the American West in the 19th century and this book brings it to life. The book is available in paperback and at area libraries.

### “The Better Angels of Our Nature; Why Violence has Declined” by Steven Pinker:

Watching daily cable news, we’ve all asked “what is the world coming to?” But in this startling book, cognitive scientist Steven Pinker shows that the world of the past was much worse and that we may be living in the most peaceable era yet. He quantifies that tribal warfare was nine times as deadly as war and genocide in the 20th century; and that the murder rate in medieval Europe was more than 30 times what it is today. What accounts for these changes? The author argues that the spread of government, literacy, trade, and cosmopolitanism helps develop empathy for others, debunking toxic ideologies, and reducing the temptations to violence. Available in paperback, audio tape, and at area libraries.



See our Council’s award-winning website for special features and timely updates that occur between the quarterly editions of this newsletter at: [www.navyleaguewestct.org](http://www.navyleaguewestct.org)

## 2014 Council Officers and Board:

### OFFICERS

President.....Gerard Tighe  
 Treasurer.....David Martin  
 VP Sea Services.....Andrew Bisset  
 VP Membership.....Robert Kenyon III  
 VP Youth Programs...Stephen Gravereaux  
 Chaplain.....Deacon Louis Howe  
 Judge Advocate.....Douglas Brown  
 Secretary.....Peter Brown

### BOARD MEMBERS

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 Michael Case  
 Louis DiGiusto  
 Peter Dixon  
 Edward Fitzgerald  
 William Grep  
 Joseph Latwin  
 Don Logan  
 Robert Perkin  
 Jennifer Stannard  
 John Weigold



**Western Connecticut Council  
Navy League of the United States**

c/o E. Fitzgerald  
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Ridgefield, CT 06877



**Navy in action again: two F/A 18 fighters taking off from USS George H. W. Bush (CVN 77) on mission to bomb ISIS terrorist targets in Iraq.**

