



“THE HELM”

Newsletter of the Connecticut Council

Volume 2025 Issue 1

July 2025

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Upcoming dates of interest:

- **Council dinner:** Friday September 12 in Stamford.
- **Barque Eagle:** Sept 13, Cadet Birthday Ball at the Lake House in Wolcott.

Council Dinner September 12th

Your Council Board is pleased to announce that we will hold an annual meeting and dinner, at the Serafresca venue of the Italian Center in Stamford, on Friday evening September 12th.

We are doubly pleased to report that our principal speaker will be Commander Pat Cerone, USN, Commanding Officer of our "adopted" nuclear attack submarine USS Hartford (SSN 768).

A dinner flyer, including menu, cost, how to make reservations and a summary of CDR Cerone's background, is included as the last page of this newsletter.



USS Hartford, on the surface through the ice in the arctic in 2018.

We encourage members to attend and invite family and friends who have an interest in the vital role our submarine force plays in our defense, and who wish to support our Council's multiple youth programs. To encourage attendance, our Board decided to partially subsidize the cost of attendance (our dinner in 2022 was \$65 for members and, with high inflation since then, would be considerably more costly now; but we held the cost to \$60 for this nice dinner).

President's Message

I am honored and pleased to invite you to attend CT Council's two exciting upcoming events. On Sept 12, please join us for our Annual Meeting (see story above). We will host the Commanding Officer of adopted boat, USS Hartford. He will make a presentation with Q & A's. We hope to have some of the crew attend, too. I met the CO and some of the crew in May and was impressed. Join us and be similarly impressed.

The next evening, Sept 13, please join the Sea Cadet Barque Eagle Division for their Ball (see page 2 for details). This dinner and dance will let you see these young patriots, provide you the chance to feel young again, and restore your faith in the future of our country. It is an opportunity to have a night out with your significant other for a good dinner, music and dancing.

We also have been accomplishing our goals. We helped establish a new Sea Cadet unit in Bridgeport. It is so successful that in its first year, it had a company honor cadet for the Sea Cadet "boot camp" and another for the League Cadet Recruit Orientation. We also supported the Sea Cadet Regional Flagship competition at Joint Base Cape Cod where the cadets competed in Signal Flags, Morse Code, Firefighting, Military Drill, and other events.

Our RDAC Seal Candidates outperformed the rest of the nation having an 80% success rate at BUD/s while the average rate is 25%.

Please join us in these events and show your support for our ship and our Sea Cadets.

Joe Latwin
Rye NY



Council President
Joe Latwin

2025 Council Board

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 VP Youth Programs...Stephen Gravereaux
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SEA CADET CO BOARD MEMBERS

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 Sean Molinari, CO Edson Division New Haven
 Keith Cross, CO Nautilus Div. Groton
 Stephen Smith, CO Barque Eagle Div. Plainville
 Sean Jones, CO Bundy Division Bridgeport



Barque Eagle Division "Sea Cadet Ball":

The Barque Eagle Sea Cadet Division, based in Plainville will hold its annual "Ball" celebrating the anniversary of the Sea Cadet program. It will be held at the Lake House in Wolcott, CT on Saturday September 13th.

For more information (including menu, cost, etc.) of this highly worthwhile and fun event, see the event flyer on our Council website at:

www.navyleaguewestct.org/EagleBall25.pdf

To make reservations, please use this Barque Eagle Division link:

<https://forms.gle/YyVA7NjBT12byGkP6>



Coast Guard Cutter Barque Eagle underway.

Council Website



Visit our Council's award-winning website for special features and updates occurring between the editions of this newsletter at:

www.navyleaguewestct.org

Website homepage
screen shot.



Sea Cadet News

Our Council is pleased to serve as a prime sponsor and advocate for the State's five US Naval Sea Cadet units, located in:

- Bridgeport (Bundy Division)
- Groton (Nautilus Division)
- New Haven (Edson Division)
- Plainville (Barque Eagle Division)
- Stamford (Deale Division)

With schools out for the summer, many of the cadets are away on formal Sea Cadet training at various military bases around the country. This training is a major part of the Sea Cadet program and provides the Cadets valuable lessons they can use in the future whether or not they later volunteer to serve in the military.

Elsewhere on this page are photos of recent events involving several of the five units.

Finally our Council thanks the adult staff volunteers at each of the units for their dedication to the important goals of the program.



Above are 2 sample pages from a newspaper fully produced by Barque Eagle cadets who attended journalism training at Camp Nett in Niantic.



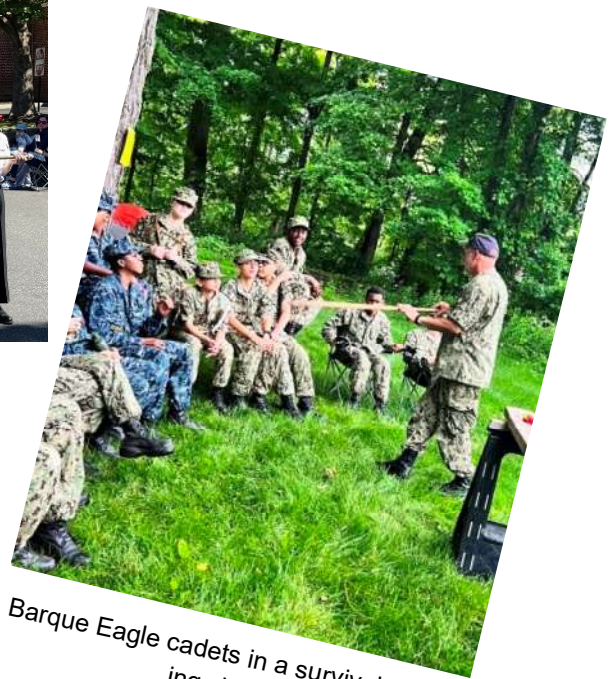
Above: 3 graduating Deale Division Cadets at ceremony in June. 2 off to college and 1 enlisted in the Army.



Deale Division Cadets at New Canaan Memorial Day parade.



Cadets prior to "Flagship" competition versus other Northeast units.



Barque Eagle cadets in a survival training class.

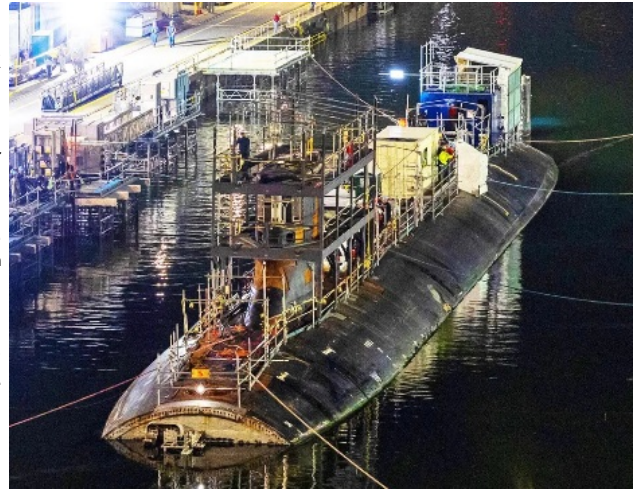
Other Adopted Ship News

USS Connecticut (SSN 22)

The Navy announced earlier in July that our adopted nuclear attack submarine USS Connecticut (SSN 22), heavily damaged in a collision with a sea mount in the South China Sea, is now expected to return to operational service in late 2026; a delay of about a year from prior news.

Photo at right is our Seawolf Class sub, one of only three of this advanced type, moored in the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard on July 12th while undergoing major repairs.

Long shipyard periods are challenging and we send our best wishes to the commanding officer, Commander Andrew Ra, and to his officers and crew.



USS Winston S. Churchill (DDG 81)

Our adopted destroyer, USS Winston S. Churchill, departed her homeport of Mayport, Florida, on June 21st, to join the USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) task force for a multi-month deployment. The ship hosted families onboard for breakfast and farewells before getting underway.

The ship had a stop in Rota Spain on July 18-19, and passed east-bound through the Strait of Gibraltar on July 21st.

Our Council "adopted" this Arleigh Burke class guided missile destroyer, following a port visit to Stamford, CT in August 2003. Since then, the ship has earned many operational excellence awards. We wish the CO, Captain Patrick O'Loughlin, and his officers and crew, a successful and safe deployment overseas in our defense.



Photo at right is crew manning the rails getting underway in June.

NJROTC News:

Our Council proudly supports the four state high schools that have Navy Junior ROTC (NJROTC) programs. These high schools are in Bethel, Bridgeport, New London, and Norwalk.

Before these schools closed for summer vacation, Council representatives presented Teddy Roosevelt leadership awards to deserving cadets at Bethel and Brian McMahon (Norwalk) High Schools during their annual award ceremonies..

Notably, at Bethel High School, three graduating seniors received full four year Navy ROTC college scholarships (photos at right).



Roosevelt award at
McMahon H.S. in
June



Three Bethel Cadets
received Navy ROTC
college scholarships
in June.



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

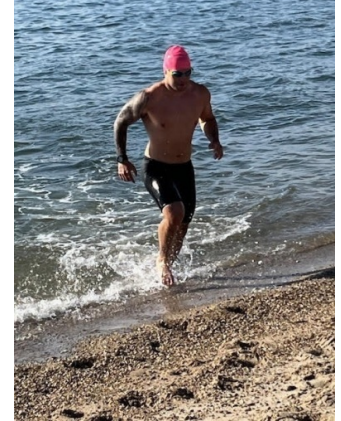
SEAL Candidate Mentoring News

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

In one recent event, held July 19th, four of the Candidates competed against approximately 100 swimmers in the Greenwich One Mile Swim, hosted by the Greenwich YMCA. In a very competitive field including endurance racers, Candidate Liam Bogart finished second overall.



SEAL Candidate competitors.



Liam Butler after finish line.

All four swimmers completed the one mile at a pace that demonstrates their ability to pass the Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL (BUD/S) screening two mile open ocean swim that is one requirement of becoming a SEAL.

Short Bursts

- Our thanks to Council member Elizabeth Getrost for volunteering to assist with this edition of the Helm and who will take over the lead for upcoming editions!
- Interested in a brief daily dose of unofficial but knowledgeable news and opinion on key maritime affairs? Consider subscribing to the free online podcast of "CDR Salamander" at <https://cdrsalamander.substack.com/>
- New London will be hosting its annual "Military Appreciation Day" at Ocean Beach Park on August 16th from 10:00 to 15:00. Attendance is free for active duty and veterans. See details at:

www.navyleaguewestct.org/MilitaryDay.pdf

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

**The Connecticut
Council
includes 217
members.**

Also available 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.



The Connecticut Council invites you to join us for our

Annual Meeting and Dinner

Friday Sept. 12th; 6:30pm social time/appetizers, 7:15 pm dinner

Serafresca venue of the Italian Center, 1620 Newfield Ave. Stamford, CT

**Principal Speaker: Commander Pat Cerone, USN,
Commanding Officer, USS HARTFORD (SSN 768)**



Commander Cerone, a native of Annapolis, is a 2008 graduate of the Naval Academy. Before joining USS Hartford (SSN 768) as commanding officer in May 2025, he held positions of increasing responsibility including: chief engineer on USS West Virginia (Gold SSBN 736); executive officer on USS Helena (SSN 725); and undersea/carrier programming officer in the office of the Chief of Naval Operations in Washington DC, supporting all submarine and carrier procurement programs.

In addition to his Bachelor of Science degree in applied math from the Naval Academy, he holds a masters degree in Business Administration from the University of Virginia.

We expect Commander Cerone to make a highly informative and topical presentation concerning our vital submarine service, with a question and answer period.

Social time at 6:30pm will include hors d'oeuvres, complimentary soft drinks, and open cash bar. Sit down for dinner will occur at 7:15pm

Member / Non-Member Dinner menu will be Caesar Salad, Steak and Salmon Entree, and Dessert. Vegetarian option will be available if chosen with reservation.

Sea Cadet / SEAL Candidate Dinner will be Caesar Salad, Chicken Parmesan with penne, and dessert.

Cost: \$60 for Navy League members; \$75 for non-members*; \$40 for Sea Cadets and SEAL Candidates.

Only one person of a couple needs to be a member to get member rate.

***non-members may easily join for as little as \$25 per year at our website: www.navyleaguewestct.org**

To make your reservation and pay online go to: www.navyleaguewestct.org/dinner2025.html

You may pay with a credit card or PayPal on this secure site.

Deadline for making reservations and payments is August 25, 2025.

We ask that, in addition to your own dinner(s), you consider hosting one or more Cadets and/or SEAL Candidates at \$40 each. This can also be done online. *Please consider hosting even if you cannot attend yourself.*

If you have any questions, please email: contact@navyleaguewestct.org