



"THE HELM"

Newsletter of the Connecticut Council (formerly Western CT Council)

Volume 2022 Issue 1

March 2022

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Upcoming dates of interest:

- **Zoom meeting with CDR Shanley:** Apr 6, 7:30pm
- **Brian Bill memorial golf event:** June 13th in Darien

Former WSC CO at April meeting:

Our Council is pleased to announce a virtual Zoom meeting for **Wednesday April 6th at 7:30 pm**; featuring as principal speaker CDR Tim Shanley, former Commanding Officer of our sponsored guided missile destroyer, USS Winston S. Churchill (DDG 81).

All members and interested friends are invited to attend. Specific sign-up information will be sent to our emailing list later, closer to the meeting date. In the meantime, please mark your calendars. For those not familiar with Zoom meetings, please see the sidebar box on page 2.

Commander Shanley was CHURCHILL's skipper from May 2020 to November 2021. Seven months of that time was spent on overseas deployment to the Mediterranean and Middle Eastern waters. His presentation will primarily

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CDR Tim Shanley addressing the CHURCHILL crew while in the Gulf of Aden in 2020.

President's Letter:

As the effects of the Covid-19 virus thankfully wane, your Navy League Council is gearing up to once again deploy in person programs. The Sea Cadet and NJROTC programs have returned to in-person drilling and training.

The four Connecticut Sea Cadet units will soon be traveling to Cape Cod to compete in the annual New England Regional Flagship competition. Your support of your Council helps us provide funds to these Sea Cadet Units so that the cadets can fully participate in this competition and other important events.

We also take this opportunity to congratulate LDCR Stephanie Hyland, former Commanding Officer of Nautilus Division and active Council member, on her retirement from the Sea Cadet program after 39 years. We wish Stephanie Fair Winds and Following Seas. We welcome new Nautilus Command-

ing Officer, Keith Cross and look forward to him continuing the tradition of excellence Stephanie built.

As detailed in the article above, we will hold a program on April 6th featuring the former commanding officer of our sponsored ship, USS Winston S. Churchill (DDG -81). You are all invited and encouraged to join in to hear all about the highly successful and notable recent deployment of *Churchill*.

We are also arranging for an in-person program with an active duty Vice Admiral in June. Stay tuned.

When your membership expires, please promptly renew so you may keep the Council's activities rolling and allow our Sea Cadets the full benefits of this outstanding program. Join us in our activities!

Joe Latwin



Council President
Joe Latwin

April 6th Program

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focus on the events, challenges, and successes of that deployment, occurring during Covid. Commander Shanley will be joined by the ship's current CO, CDR Brian Anthony (who was XO during the deployment), and the ship's Command Master Chief, CMDCM Brandy Gennette.

CDR Shanley is currently assigned as principal assistant program manager for the Undersea Warfare Surface Combat System office. His prior assignments involved increasing responsibility ashore and afloat. He holds an MBA degree and graduated from the Naval Academy (an honor he shares with his four brothers) in 2003.

In 2012, when he was a Lieutenant, he was selected as the recipient of the National Navy League's Stephen Decatur Award for operational competence. In May 2021, while he was CO, CHURCHILL was awarded the biennial USS Arizona Memorial Trophy as the most combat ready crew in the surface fleet.

Our Council is proud of our association with CHURCHILL over the years, starting in 2003 when the ship visited Stamford.

We anticipate that CDR Shanley will make a highly informative and topical presentation with questions and answers. Please plan to attend.



ZOOM?

For those who have not yet attended a Zoom meeting, it is not difficult. Many millions use it:

- Zoom is free and runs on desktop computers, laptops, tablets, and smartphones. A Zoom account is not needed.
- We will send a meeting link via email to all who make reservations. Clicking on the link a few minutes before the start time will result in you downloading the Zoom software. Or you can download it earlier by going to: <https://zoom.us/download>
- Once you have downloaded the software and joined the meeting, you will see and hear our speaker.

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); Dealey 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 events involving the units.

Cadets at Camp Sloper where they built shelters.



Cadets honor departed veterans during Wreaths Across America at Union Bedford Cemetery.



Working at Thanksgiving Basket Brigade in Bridgeport to aid needy families.

With Congressman Joe Courtney (center).



Sea Cadet Corps LCDR Stephanie Hyland at her retirement party after 39 years of service!



Onboard Coast Guard Barque Eagle.



Training with Silver Dolphins color guard team from Groton Sub Base.

Adopted ship news:

USS Connecticut (SSN 22):

As most Council members are already aware, our sponsored submarine, USS Connecticut (SSN 22), had an unfortunate accidental collision with a sea mount on the bottom of the South China Sea while on patrol on deployment in October. Although 11 crew members were injured, fortunately none required hospitalization.

The sub had serious damage to her bow and ballast tanks and was obliged to return to the US on the surface, after a stop in Guam. Although the Navy has not released the detailed causes of the accident, the sub's Commanding Officer (CDR Aljilani), Executive Officer, and Chief of the Boat were relieved of their duties. The sub is now in a Washington state shipyard undergoing repair evaluation.

The accident is a reminder, if one is ever needed, of the real dangers in operating warships at sea, even in times of relative peace.

Our Council "adopted" this Seawolf class nuclear fast attack submarine in 2016. The sub's motto is "Arsenal of the Nation" in recognition of our state's history, and is based in Bremerton. Following the accident, a new CO was named, CDR Jonathan Baugh, and we send him and his officers and crew our best wishes.



SSN 22 in San Diego in December 2021 after accident to bow area.

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.

See page 1 story of our upcoming April 6th Zoom meeting involving the ship's former and present CO's, and current Command Master Chief. The meeting will cover the ship's last overseas deployment and answers to meeting attendees' questions.

Our Council adopted this Arleigh Burke class guided missile destroyer, following her port visit to Stamford, CT in August 2003.

DDG 81 in dry-dock in Florida.



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.

Many in-person activities at these schools had been restricted by the Covid 19 virus; but they are now back more to business as usual, while following guidelines on masking of course. We send them our best wishes. Nearby is one example of a recent event at one of the high schools.



207 cadets of Bethel's unit recently conducted a change of command and annual inspection. The inspecting officer reported an overall score of outstanding. The cadets do thousands of hours of community service annually, have award-winning drill, marksmanship, and academic teams; and over 50 percent are on the honor roll.

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.

Nearby two photos are from the March 4th graduation ceremony of the famously arduous Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL (BUD/S) program in Coronado, California. Pictured below are Instructor Don Brown (first from left) and Drew Bisset (third from left) flanked by 2 local RDAC candidate graduates of Class 347 who will be joining a west coast SEAL Team (we are not publishing their names in keeping with rules regarding active duty SEALs).



Above life-sized plaque is a gift to Class 347 from Class 47.

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 224 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

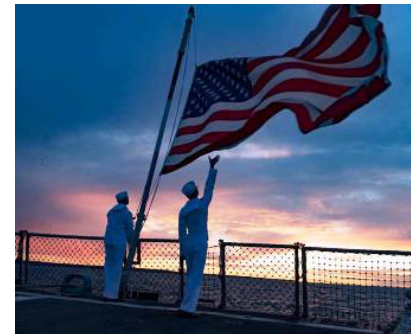
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Connecticut Council
Navy League of the United States
www.navyleaguewestct.org

Russian amphibious warships (one shown here in earlier exercise on Russian beach) have moved from Baltic to Black Sea for possible coastal assault as part of Russia's brutal war on Ukraine.

