



# THE HELM

Western Connecticut Council Newsletter

Volume 2014 Issue 1

March 2014

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## ADM Weigold to speak

Rear Admiral John F. Weigold IV will speak at a Council member meeting in late April or early May. Final date, location, and other details will be separately sent to all members.

ADM Weigold, past Council President and current board member, is a partner at executive search firm Heidrick & Struggles in New York. He also continues his Naval service as a reservist as the Deputy Director, Operations at U.S. Pacific Command, which oversees all US military operations in the Indo-Pacific region. Previously he was deputy commander, U.S. Seventh Fleet. He will bring a deep understanding of the ongoing issues in the Pacific. He will take questions in an open discussion format. Join us for this informative event.



RADM Weigold along with his mother and NYPD Commissioner Ray Kelly, at Navy birthday ceremony in NYC where the Admiral was guest speaker.

## Upcoming dates of interest:

- **Speaker event in April:** see story at right.
- **NYC Fleet Week:** May 21-27; see details in President's Letter.
- **SEAL memorial golf outing:** June 16th. See story on page 2.
- **Annual SEAL Picnic:** July 23rd at Riverside Yacht Club. There will be a separate mailing to all members.

## President's Letter

All,

Greetings and may soon come the thaw!

Apparently day dreaming about and wishing for warmer weather and summer breezes do not sway old man winter, even after the first day of spring. Fortunately, time will march on, and winter will pass, and the blossoms are around the corner.

A wonderful spring event to look forward to this year is Fleet Week in New York City over Memorial Day weekend. The Navy has confirmed that ships are inbound, and New York City celebrates the Navy like no other in the USA. [www.fleetweeknewyork.com/](http://www.fleetweeknewyork.com/)

Fleet Week is a great opportunity for everyone in the community to connect with our sailors and ships while in port for the celebration. The ships will be tied up to piers 86-88 near the USS Intrepid off the West Side Highway. The ships are open for tours, and whether you are an old salt or a wanna-be,

taking a tour of a ship and talking with our sailors is always a memorable experience. And yes, you are hearing this from a Naval aviator. Even I enjoy walking the decks and climbing the ladders and hearing the pride in the sailors as they tell us about "their ship."

When talking to the sailors, I also encourage them to discuss their thoughts on the current affairs in the Navy, such as training and advancement opportunities, lengths of deployments, and any other quality of life issues they find important. I find these candid conversations helpful when later engaging the leaders in our Navy and Congress on the issues facing our Navy.

This year we are very fortunate to have the Blue Angels flying an air show over Jones Beach on Long Island. The official demonstration dates are May 24-25. However, a little know secret is that the Blue Angels always fly a practice demonstration on the

*(Continued on page 2)*

## LT Latwin speaker at holiday dinner:

LT Stewart Latwin, USN was our speaker at the Council's Annual Meeting and Holiday Dinner at the Riverside Yacht Club on December 4th.

Stewart is a former Dealey Division Sea Cadet, 2008 Naval Academy graduate, and Knighthawk pilot with Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 22, where his tour included deployments aboard USNS Arctic (T-AOE 8) and USS Iwo Jima (LHD 7).

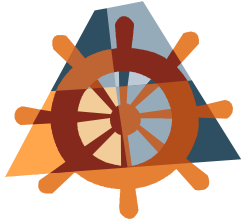
We were very pleased to have an active duty junior officer as our speaker, to share some of his experiences in today's forward deployed fleet. Our thanks go out to him.

Stewart's dad, Joe, is a Council board member and Dealey staff officer.

Also at the event, members voted for 2014 Council officers and board (see complete list on page 5).



LT Stewart Latwin, USN



## SEAL Brian Bill memorial golf event:

All Council members and friends are invited to attend a day of golf and dinner at the Rockrimmon County Club in Stamford on Monday June 16th, in honor of Chief Special Warfare Operator (SEAL) Brian Bill. Brian was a Stamford native and graduate of Norwich University and the local SEAL RDAC mentoring program. He was killed in action in Afghanistan in August 2011.

100% of the day's proceeds will go to the memorial scholarship in Brian's name at Norwich University.

Details are at: [www.alumni.norwich.edu/2014brianbill](http://www.alumni.norwich.edu/2014brianbill)



## President's Letter (continued):

*(Continued from page 1)*

Friday before the advertised air show dates:  
[www.blueangels.navy.mil/show/](http://www.blueangels.navy.mil/show/)

If you want to avoid the crowds, and still see the incredible flight demonstration, plan on visiting Jones Beach on Friday afternoon for a real thrill. I will be checking the flight times as Fleet Week approaches, so email me in late May if you are interested:  
[gerrytighe@gmail.com](mailto:gerrytighe@gmail.com)

Finally, please join us for an "evening with

the Admiral" in late April or early May (see story on page 1). In a relaxed atmosphere, we will gather for a current affairs update by Rear Admiral John Weigold, Deputy Director of Operations for the Pacific Command, preceded and followed by conversation. The date and location will be announced shortly. I look forward to the evening.

Fair (warm) winds,

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



## Sea Cadet news:

**St. Patrick's Day:** The cadets of Dealey Division trooped the colors through the streets of Stamford for the annual St. Patrick's Day parade. Attended by revelers and local politicians, the event, though cold and windy, was a success. This was the first parade for many of the newer cadets who commented that although it was 'really cold', they enjoyed it.

**Annual Inspection:** 45 cadets stood for Inspection at the Stamford Government Center on Monday, March 10<sup>th</sup>. As parents and Navy League members looked on, LCDR Jennifer Stannard, Division Commanding Officer, led the Inspecting party through the ranks of cadets. LCDR Michael Campbell, USNSCC, Regional Director, and CAPT Gerry Tighe USNR, Council President, inspected and spoke to each cadet. The unit looked sharp but competition is fierce and with so many new cadets in ranks, the cadets anxiously await the scores, hoping to retain #1 in region. The Regional Millennium Trophy, which has resided at the unit for the past 5 years, is at stake.

**New England Swim Meet:** The cadets are preparing for the regional swim meet to be held in May at Mass. Maritime Academy. Candidates from the SEAL RDAC group, supported by our Council, are coaching the Sea Cadet and League Cadet teams and we are looking for some fast times in the pool!

**Support Needed:** the cadets need **YOU!** We're in dire need of help in the admin office (filing, copying, typing on computer) and in the Instructor ranks. If you can assist, please contact Dealey CO, LCDR Jennifer Stannard, at [jenniferstannard@hotmail.com](mailto:jenniferstannard@hotmail.com) Instructors commit to two Monday evenings a month (7 to 8 pm) and ADMIN, as often as you can attend - hopefully every Monday night from 6:45 to 9 pm. Instructors are needed for Basic Military Requirements and Seamanship. Course materials provided. We have classes on Monday April 14th and two Mondays in May- 5<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> before stopping for the summer months. Please help us to finish out the year and, if you are looking for a rewarding way to contribute to the education and success of today's youth, look no further than the Council's own cadet unit!

**Threat to Sea Cadet meeting space:** Here is an update on this important topic that was first raised in our April 2013 "Helm" edition:

Dealey Division has been at the Marine Center off Magee Avenue for over 55 years. A developer proposed the construction of a huge commercial building on the former Yacht Haven West site and needed space for a replacement boatyard. The developer proposed using the area that includes the Marine Center and, if that happens, our Sea Cadets would be displaced and finding a suitable replacement would be difficult at best.

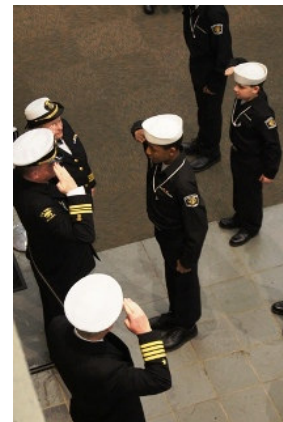
2013 Planning Commission hearings ended with the developer withdrawing their proposal for a likely rewrite to address multiple objections raised by Dealey Division and many other citizens.

**Latest news:** a citizens group. "Save Our Boatyard", proposed its own plan on Mar 19th at City Hall, that would result in no change to the Magee building; instead it would rebuild a boatyard at the original site. The developer has been publically silent, so it is unclear what will happen next. As the situation develops, we may need to seek assistance from our Council members to advocate with local elected officials for our primary mission of sponsoring the Sea Cadet youth program.

We have added a section to our website to provide detailed news on this key issue, at: [www.navyleaguewestct.org/center.html](http://www.navyleaguewestct.org/center.html)



Dealey Division cadets await Annual Inspection at Stamford Government Center.



Inspecting officers begin the inspection.

St. Patrick's Day parade.



Sea Cadets at Magee Avenue Marine Center.

## NJROTC update:

### Bethel High School:

The Bethel Navy JROTC cadets celebrated their 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Military Ball March 9<sup>th</sup>. The theme for the evening was "Our American Journey". The guest of honor was Captain Paul W. Bucha, USA, who was awarded the Medal of Honor for gallantry in Vietnam. The 600 guests present were silent as he gave a strong message of service, sacrifice, and being prepared to seize opportunity.

The cadets performed remarkably well, and in keeping with tradition the evening started with a formal receiving line, the officers entering through a sword arch honor guard, the parading of the colors, a formal POW/MIA commemoration, invocation and parading of the beef with bagpipes and drums.

Highlights of the evening included entertainment during dinner when a dance troupe and singers performed the Andrews Sisters hit "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy". The female cadets dressed in 1940's style swing dresses, and the male cadets were in WWII era sailor and soldier uniforms. The final portion of the evening's formalities was the Commanders Waltz. LCDR and Mrs. Dwinells were joined by 15 couples who performed a beautiful synchronized waltz. The parents, grandparents, family, friends, veterans and elected officials in attendance were in awe of the cadets' performance throughout the night.

It should be noted that Council members are always welcome to attend the ball.

### McMahon High School:

Brien McMahon NJROTC Cadets recently departed Norwalk for a field trip to the Navy Submarine base in Groton, CT. The Cadets toured sub school training facilities during the morning, including the Navigation Team Trainer, Damage Control Trainer as well as the new Submarine Escape facility. After morning activities, Cadets ate lunch at the base Galley where submarine sailors have dined since before World War II. According to Cadet Petty Officer 1st Class Christian Krogh, the highlight of the day was eating at the galley. After lunch, cadets toured the Submarine Force Museum and Historic Submarine USS Nautilus SSN-571. Cadet Chief Petty Officer Patrick Sanchez, a 3<sup>rd</sup> year cadet and a junior at McMahon, was amazed at the close quarters of the sub, saying that "it's incredible how small it is inside USS Nautilus and WWII diesel subs were even smaller!"

Before returning to Norwalk, the Cadets were humbled by a stop at the World War II Submarine Memorial in Groton where the 52 WWII submarines and their officers and crews who remain "on eternal patrol" are honored.



McMahon cadets in Groton during an earlier visit; in front of the sail from decommissioned USS George Washington (SSBN 598).

## NL membership:

### ***Help recruit new Navy 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 126 active members.**

## USS Churchill news:

Our Council-adopted ship, the guided missile destroyer USS Winston S. Churchill (DDG-81), had a change of command ceremony on February 28th. The prior Executive Officer, CDR Christine O'Connell, relieved outgoing commanding officer CDR Chris Stone.

CDR O'Connell is from Houston, Texas, and is a 1996 graduate of the Naval Academy. Her prior assignments included tours on two other DDG's. She has been aboard CHURCHILL since May 2012.

Our best Council congratulations go out to new Captain O'Connell and to new executive officer, CDR Paul Allgeier.

The ship recently spent a wintry week at sea in the North Atlantic, maintaining a high level of training and readiness for whatever assignment they may get. See photo on last page.



CDR Christine O'Connell, USN



Snowman on deck; time for bit of fun while underway recently.

*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

Mark Adams  
 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**

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**Winter at sea: USS Winston S. Churchill (DDG 81) in foreground refueling from USNS Kanawha (T-AO-196). USS Vella Gulf (CA 72) is on starboard side of oiler.**

