



"THE HELM"

Newsletter of the Western Connecticut Council

Volume 2019 Issue 1

March 2019

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Upcoming dates of interest:

- Annual dinner April 6th. See lead story.
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Annual Dinner April 6th:

Our annual members' meeting and dinner will take place on Saturday April 6th at the Stamford Yacht Club (off I-95 Exit 8). Full details, including how to make reservations, were separately emailed to members on March 9th. Members may also find this information on our website at: www.navyleaguewestct.org/dinner.html

We are pleased to announce that our principal speaker will be Vice Admiral Mike Franken, USN (retired). He is from rural Iowa and graduated from the College of Engineering at the University of Nebraska and from the College of Physics at the Naval Postgraduate School. His flag assignments included director of Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA), command of Joint Task

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Vice Admiral Mike Franken

President's Letter:

Greetings!

I hope this HELM finds you well and everyone has wintered well and is as excited for spring as I am. I am also excited for our Annual Dinner and Meeting coming up on Saturday April 6th at the Stamford Yacht Club. As in years past, the Annual Dinner will be an enjoyable evening with friends, fellowship and a great guest speaker.

We are fortunate that VADM Mike Franken is able to join us for dinner and will also provide insight into the state of world affairs particularly in the Africa / Middle East region. VADM Franken is a veteran Surface Warfare Officer (see a fuller bio in the story above) and notably, the former Commanding Officer of the USS Winston Churchill (DDG 81) which is one of

our Council's Sponsored ships.

We will also hold our Annual Meeting and election of Council Board members for 2019.

All of the details for the Annual Dinner are available on our Council's website with a link to the reservation and payment website. As always, please consider sponsoring a dinner for a Sea Cadet or SEAL Candidate as well even if you are unable to attend.

I am looking forward to seeing everyone on April 6th!

Fair Winds and Following Seas,

Jason Wathen

President, Western Connecticut Council



Sea Cadets at Veterans Day ceremony.

Annual dinner (continued):

(Continued from page 1)

Force-Horn of Africa in Djibouti, and director, Strategy, Plans and Policy (J5) at US Central Command, and nearly three years as vice director, Strategy, Plans and Policy (J5) at U.S. Central Command.

His shipboard assignments included serving as the first commanding officer of our Council's adopted guided missile destroyer, USS Winston S. Churchill (DDG 81). He was instrumental in arranging Churchill's visit to Stamford in August 2003. As commodore, he commanded Destroyer Squadron 28 and Task Group 152.0 for the Eisenhower Strike Group.

As a long-time friend of our Council, we anticipate VADM Franken will make a highly informative and topical presentation with questions and answers.

Members should feel free to invite family and friends who have an interest in the sea services. It may be wise to make reservations early, as this annual event has often sold out in the past.

We will also briefly hold our Annual Meeting at the dinner to include the election of Council board members for 2019.



Scenes from prior annual dinners.



SEAL/RDAC celebrates 25 years:

Our local Navy SEAL candidate mentoring program, in conjunction with the Recruiting District Assistance Council (RDAC) held their annual holiday party in January at the Greenwich YMCA. But this was a 25th Anniversary Party as well! Approximately 170 guests, friends, Goldstar families, and visiting active-duty SEALs were present for the event. Christina Connors kicked off the proceedings with a beautiful rendition of the Star-Spangled Banner.

Our Navy League Council board member and program leader, retired Captain Drew Bisset, then acknowledged and introduced Goldstar families, key personnel, and staff members to all. Connecticut State Representative Fred Camillo presented Captain Bisset with a Town Proclamation celebrating 25 years the program has been in effect and for the incredible impact it has made in the SEAL



Push-up part of PST.

(Continued on page 3)

SEAL/RDAC (continued):

(Continued from page 2)

community and the Town of Greenwich.

Candidates were put through their paces with a modified Physical Screening Test (PST) and awards were later given out by the Goldstar families to the top officer candidate, top enlisted candidate, the team with the highest scores, and an honorary trophy to the top RDAC candidate. Following a 10 minute video showing parents and friends the training the candidates go through all year long, a live auction was held to raise funds for program expenses of equipment and new programs.

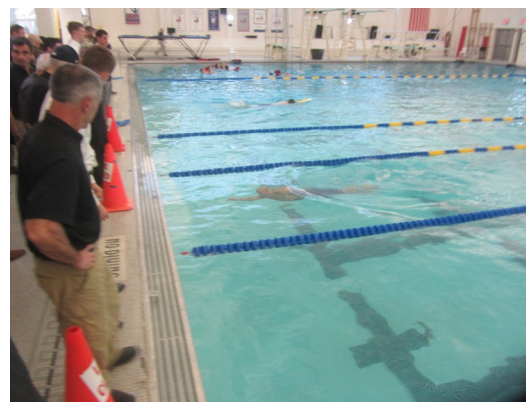
Rear Admiral Thomas Richards, a retired SEAL, was the keynote speaker. His focus was on the Goldstar families and the growing need for the kind of men that this program is producing with its rigorous training, allowing faster and easier entry to Basic Underwater Demolition / SEAL testing (BUD/S), and subsequently becoming SEALs. This past year has been a continuing year of achievement for the program: 16 New SEALs; 7 in SEAL Qualification Training; 3 currently in Officer Candidate School (OCS); 3 currently in Boot Camp; and more on the way. The program continues to rank highest in the country with 153 graduates successful out of 214 recommended - a success rate of 71.5% - and 10% of program graduates selected for DEVGRU, the elite unit sometimes referred to in the popular press as SEAL Team Six.

All were then treated to an outstanding BBQ dinner, followed with plenty of time to talk and network. All in all, the party was a resounding success.



State Rep Camillo (left) with Captain Bisset.

Swim competition.



Program staff



Sea Cadet news:

Presentation Night: Cadets made formal presentations on their summer training experiences at the annual Presentation Night held in October. Training programs included recruit training, SCUBA certification, medical, Seabee, public safety and Master-At-Arms. One objective of the presentation evening is to give the cadets experience in public speaking. The presentations, though brief, were lively and informative. Of note, Petty Officer Kutz attended the coveted training on the Coast Guard Cutter EAGLE and he also was a staff cadet at boot camps, where one of his two companies was top-scoring "Honor Company". Congratulations to all for a successful summer of training.

Parades and Community Service: DEALEY Division led by Chief Petty Officer Clayton O'Brien participated in the Stamford Veterans Day parade. This year marked the 100th anniversary of the WWI armistice and DEALEY's color guard participated in a 11/11 ceremony at Stamford's Sailors and Soldiers memorial. As we do every year, the division also supported the "Basket Brigade" in Bridgeport that supplies Thanksgiving day food baskets to the needy including needy veterans.

All-Regional Swim Meet: Sea and League cadets travelled to Mass. Maritime Academy for the annual swim meet versus other sea cadet units. Our cadets brought home several individual medals. Though the division did not place in the team events, all participated with spirit and sportsmanship.

Holiday Dinner: DEALEY Division (Sea Cadets) and Training Ship MACINTYRE (younger League Cadets) held their annual holiday dinner at the Stamford Government Center. Parents and friends assembled to celebrate the year of achievements.

Winter Training: A great turnout for winter training during the holiday school break brought about some promotions. Ten cadets attended various training programs throughout the country.

Annual Inspection: DEALEY Division and Training Ship MACINTYRE were inspected by the regional staff as is done every year. The cadets excelled during the personnel inspection. The regional staff also audits our administrative, training and financial processes for compliance with sea cadet policies and regulations.

Upcoming Events: The next few months will be packed with events to include a sea cadet ball in Rhode Island and the North East Regional Flagship Competition at the Mass. Military Reservation. The Division will provide color guards for the Stamford Senior Center's salute to veteran's dinner and local yacht club commissioning ceremonies. We would like to extend special appreciation to the Stamford Yacht Club for hosting cadet events. Their support of the program has been commendable. DEALEY staff encourage Council members to visit during one of their weekly meetings and if any member would like to attend the annual inspection, please contact them (via website below). Check out the resurrected DEALEY website as it continues to be improved: www.dealeydivision.org



Adopted ship news:

Here is an update since our last newsletter:

- USS Winston S. Churchill (DDG 81) returned to Norfolk from a 7 month deployment to the Middle East and European waters on Nov 4, 2018. On Nov 26th, the ship went to Naval Weapons Station Yorktown to offload ammunition. On Jan 14, 2019, the ship moored at Marine Hydraulics Industries (MHI) shipyard in Norfolk for a Selected Restricted Availability (SRA) to make routine scheduled repairs and updates.

- USS Connecticut (SSN 22) deployed to the Western Pacific in July 2018, returning to Bremerton homeport on Jan 29, 2019. While deployed, the submarine visited Yokosuka, Japan in August and October, and Garden Island Western Australia in December.

Our Council wishes both crews a hardy "welcome home" and "well done"!



Our adopted destroyer and submarine returning to their home-ports.



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. Invite potential new members to attend Council events. Membership sign-up and renewal is available online at our Council website, www.navyleaguewestct.org then click "join/renew" at the top. Or ask any Council Board member for a form. Thank you.

Our Western Connecticut Council has 152 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.

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

2018 Council Board*

OFFICERS

President..... Jason Wathen
Treasurer..... Richard Koch
VP Sea Services..... Andrew Bisset
VP Membership..... R. (Pete) Kenyon III
VP Youth Programs... Stephen Gravereaux
Secretary..... William McDaniel

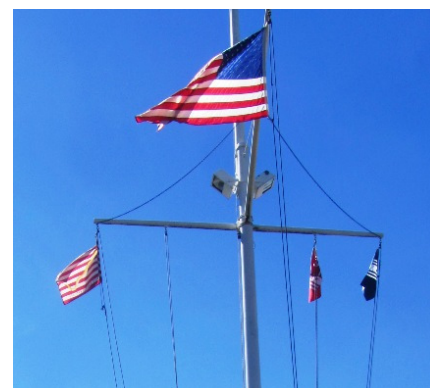
Emeritus member:

David Ellis

BOARD MEMBERS

Miguel Amadiz	David Pascoe
Louis DiGiusto	Robert Perkin
Edward Fitzgerald	Jennifer Stannard
P. Alan Gerard	Gerard Tighe
Joseph Latwin	John Weigold

* 2019 Board will be elected at the Annual Dinner on April 6 (see story on page 1).



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



Our sponsored guided missile destroyer, USS Winston S. Churchill (DDG-81) returning to homeport Norfolk, on Nov 4, 2018, after a 7 month deployment.

