



"THE HELM"

NEWSLETTER OF THE WESTERN CONNECTICUT COUNCIL

Volume 2016 Issue 1

January 2016

Annual Dinner Feb 11th:

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Our annual meeting and dinner will take place on Thursday February 11th at Giovanni's Water Edge Restaurant in Darien. We are very pleased that our principal speaker will be Rear Admiral Sean Buck. He is Chief of Staff, J5, of the joint staff supporting the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff at the Pentagon.

RADM Buck, a native of Indianapolis, is a 1983 graduate of the Naval Academy. His early assignments included piloting P-3 Orion patrol aircraft and serving as catapult and arresting gear division officer in USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71). He has held commands twice at the flag level and has served in strategy and policy positions at OPNAV and the Joint Staff. He holds a masters degree in International Security Policy from George Washington University.



RADM Sean Buck

(Continued on page 2)

Upcoming dates of interest:

- **Annual Council dinner:** February 11th; see details at right.

Below: Sea Cadets muster before their Dec 21st Christmas Party at the Stamford Government Center.



President's Letter:

Winter greetings to all! I enjoy the snow, but I would rather fly to the cold climes to ski and sled, and then fly back to the warmer climes and get on a boat.

Our annual winter meeting and dinner will be held on February 11th at Giovanni's Water Edge restaurant on the Stamford-Darien border.

The guest speaker, Rear Admiral Sean Buck, has been a good friend of mine for many years. We served together in our first squadron and deployed around the West Pacific together in the late 1980's (yikes).

Currently serving as Chief of Staff for the Strategic Plans And Policy Directorate on the Joint Staff, RADM Buck has a distinguished career. His operational assignments have included multiple tours flying the P-3 Orion around the world on maritime patrols, and has commanded twice at the flag level.

RADM Buck has also held multiple Strategy and Policy positions for both the Chairman of Naval Operations and for the Chairman of The Joint Staff. RADM Buck will take command of the Navy's 4th Fleet, headquartered in Mayport Florida, later this spring.

We are very fortunate to have RADM Buck take time from his hectic schedule in the Five Sided Puzzle Palace and travel to Connecticut to be our guest and speaker.

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Annual Dinner (con't.):

(Continued from page 1)

We look forward to hearing RADM Buck's thoughts on the current state of affairs of our national security, and how our Navy and DOD are addressing current and future threats.

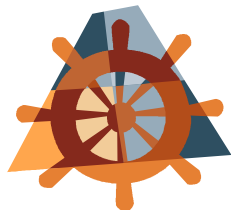
We will also hold our Annual Meeting and election of Council board members for 2016. We have a number of new nominees for the Board (see complete list on page 5).

Further details of the dinner were previously sent to members. Members should feel free to invite any associates who have an interest in the sea services and our speaker.

A copy of the event flyer, along with RSVP form, is available on our Council's website at:
www.navyleaguewestct.org



RADM Buck conducting a feedback session with enlisted sailors in Bahrain in 2014.



President's Letter (con't):

(Continued from page 1)

Sean will be discussing the national security challenges our country is facing, and how we are addressing these challenges. Sean said he is most looking forward to spending time answering questions and discussing any topics of our interest.

Please invite friends and neighbors, and anyone else you think may be interested in hearing RADM Buck discuss the current defense issues of our country.

This will be a special evening. I look forward to seeing you.

All the best,

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



P-3 Orion

Tax letters:

The Council is in the process of sending out annual tax deduction letters to all those who donated to our Sea Cadet and/or RDAC SEAL efforts during 2015.

Our Council is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization under IRS regulations, and as such your donations are tax-deductible to the extent that no goods or services were given back in exchange.

Our sincere thanks to all who contributed to these important efforts in 2015.

Sea Cadet news:

Pray Achievement Center visit:

The Sea Cadets and younger League Cadets attended the Malcolm Pray Achievement Center and were wowed by the Pray classic auto collection. The late Mr. Pray established the Center to inspire young people to excel and make the right decisions in life. His credo was that anyone could be a millionaire if they worked hard with enthusiasm, paid attention and treated people right.

The cadets were treated to a tour of the auto collection and a presentation by Marikay Satryano who manages the Center. Mr. Pray always said, "Your reputation is the most important thing that you have"; Marikay stressed that throughout her presentation. Citing examples in history and the automobile industry, the tour was both interesting and educational. While the favorite automobile of the League Cadets was an Army Jeep, the older Sea Cadets favorites were more diverse and reflected an appreciation for speed as well as design. We all look forward to continued visits to the Pray Center and, to our first cadet millionaire!

Nearby photos are from the Cadet tour of the Center.

Petty Officer Advancements:

2016 is a banner year with four PO2's in ranks! PO2 Ashley Cleary-Burke, PO2 Cheyenne de la Rivera, PO2 Kaitlyn Kutz, PO2 William Lesoravage, and PO2 Zachary Welborn. The unit is limited in the number of PO1's based on unit size so we expect some heavy recruiting for new cadets to occur to allow for more possible PO1 promotions!

Winter training:

Petty Officer 3rd Class (PO3) Haak Burns staffed Seamanship Training in Norfolk during the Christmas break. He completed the Seamanship training there last winter and was asked to return and staff this year. The training is extensive and utilization of Zodiac's on the Chesapeake Bay in late December inspires motivation! Burns created assignments, taught classes and was responsible for the general wellbeing of the cadets. He served as Leading Petty Officer (LPO), was cited for his "exceptional performance of duties", and was awarded the NSCC Commendation ribbon. BZ 'Hawk'!



USS Churchill news:



Since our last newsletter, our Council-adopted ship, the Norfolk-based Arleigh Burke class guided missile destroyer USS Winston S. Churchill (DDG-81) completed a lengthy overseas deployment to the Persian Gulf. **Bravo Zulu to all aboard for their dedicated service on deployment for 8 months in our defense!**

For those Council members who wish to see more deployment news beyond what we have space to report here, there is a section of our website devoted to that, at:

<http://www.navyleaguewestct.org/deploy.html>

In other ship news, Commander Paul Allgeier became Churchill's Commanding Officer (CO) in a change of command ceremony held onboard the ship while in Khalifa Bin Salman Port, Bahrain on September 8th. Captain Allgeier had been Churchill's Executive Officer (XO), and he relieved outgoing CO Commander Christine O'Connell. We wish them both the best in their new assignments, as well as to Churchill's new XO, Commander Tom Van Scoten.

With the Churchill now back in home waters, we fully expect to renew our support to the ship's company, as we have in the past.



Welcome home! Churchill at pier-side in Norfolk, November 7th, returning from deployment.



Mark 54 torpedo being hoisted over the ship's flight deck while at sea on Oct 24th.

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

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 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 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 then click "join/renew". Or ask any Council Board member for a form. Thank you.

**Our Western
Connecticut
Council has 109
active members.**

Navy in the news, nearing a crisis:

In keeping with part of our Navy League mission "to serve as a means of educating and informing the American people with regard to the role of sea power ... and the challenges involved in maintaining strong national defenses", below are links to some recent compelling articles:

- "Disarming the Navy through Bureaucratic Bloat": Wall St. Journal Dec. 30th opinion piece by former SECNAV John Lehman, with sub-title, "Too few ships on longer deployments is sapping the service, even as the civilian staff has hugely expanded". Copy is here: www.navyleaguewestct.org/Disarming.pdf
- "Internal Growth Cost is Danger to Military": letter to the editor in response to Mr. Lehman's article on Jan 4th by Harlan Ullman. Copy is here: www.navyleaguewestct.org/Internal.pdf
- "SOS for a Declining Navy": WSJ Jan. 6 opinion by Seth Cropsey, with sub-title: "Today's 272 ship fleet isn't nearly enough. The U.S. needs 350 ships to meet the rising global dangers". Copy here: www.navyleaguewestct.org/Declining.pdf

Editor's note: These articles highlight the growing crisis of *our rapidly unaffordable yet too small navy*, with many ship acquisitions going well over budget and behind schedule. Two examples: our newest carrier, USS Ford, costs over \$14 billion with R&D, twice the inflation-adjusted cost of a similar-sized Nimitz class carrier; and 10 years since the first Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) was launched it has no approved "mission modules" needed to meet its basic requirements - LCS's are 3,000 ton \$700 million ships whose current main weapon is a 57mm (2.25 inch) gun firing a 5 lb shell, while the standard navy 5 inch gun fires 70 lb shells. Some ship programs have been better run (e.g. SSN's and DDG's) but too many have not, and this must change.

NJROTC news:

Brien McMahon High School:

Assistant naval instructor, retired Chief Dave Pascoe, reports it has been "full speed ahead" so far this school year, having had their annual Military Ball, 2 drill competitions, Veterans Day ceremony at Norwalk City Hall, and most recently, their annual inspection by area manager CDR J. Miller. The end of year Awards Ceremony will take place May 26th, featuring an always delicious potluck dinner prepared by parents. Council members are invited to attend.

Bethel High School:

Bethel will hold its 13th annual formal Military Ball on Sunday, March 6th. The ball starts with a sword-arch honor guard, parading the colors, historic reenactments, parading the beef, ceremonial toasts, cake cutting, and the final formality, the Commanders' Waltz followed by social dancing for all guests. Over 600 attended last year. Any Council member wishing to attend should contact Bethel's senior naval instructor, LCDR Mark Dwinells, at markdwinells@gmail.com Those Council members who have attended in the past have raved about it!



Dancing at 2014 Ball

2015 Council Officers and Board:

OFFICERS

President.....Gerard Tighe
 Treasurer.....open *
 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

* S. Gravereaux is acting Treasurer

BOARD MEMBERS

Mark Adams
 Michael Case
 Louis DiGiusto
 Edward Fitzgerald
 William Grempe
 Joseph Latwin
 Don Logan
 David Martin
 Robert Perkin
 Jennifer Stannard
 John Weigold

ADD'L 2016 BOARD NOMINEES **

Miguel Amadiz
 Marcus Arroyo
 Alan Gerard
 Theodore Jenkins
 ** as of Jan 30th

Dealey Cadets
 who attend Darien
 High School at
 their Veterans'
 Day ceremony.



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

c/o E. Fitzgerald
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Ridgefield, CT 06877



USS Enterprise (CV 6) steaming into New York in October 1945. The “Big E” served in the Pacific War from the start, earning 20 battle stars and sinking 71 enemy ships.

