



# "THE HELM"

## NEWSLETTER OF THE WESTERN CONNECTICUT COUNCIL

Volume 2017 Issue 3

October 2017

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### Upcoming dates of interest:

- **Bethel NJROTC veterans day:** Nov 10th; see story page 5.
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## Cadet Presentation Night:

Deale Division (Sea Cadets) and Training Ship Macintyre (younger League Cadets) gave formal presentations on their summer training experiences at the annual Cadet Presentation Night on October 2nd at the Stamford Yacht Club. Family, friends, and a number of Council members attended. Also in attendance was Stamford mayor, David Martin, who commented positively on the sharp appearance of Cadets and interesting content of their presentations.

The training was quite varied, and included the following:



Muster prior to the event.

*(Continued on page 2)*

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## President's Letter:

Greetings!

It has been a great summer which has nicely extended the warm weather into fall. As everyone shifts gears into the fall and the holiday season, this edition of the HELM recaps the highlights of what our Council has been up to these past few months.

In mid-August, RDAC held the annual SEAL Picnic. The picnic was a great success with all in attendance enjoying the candidates' display of the results of all of their hard physical training followed by a good BBQ dinner, great speaker, and generously supported silent auction.

This fall we also enjoyed the well-earned retirement ceremonies of RADM John Weigold and CAPT Philip Alan Gerard, both Council Board Members. These outdoor ceremonies had great weather, awesome speakers and a perfect nautical venue at the Stamford Yacht Club with wonderful support from the Deale Division.

Deale Division held its annual Presentation Night in early October with the Mayor of

Stamford in attendance to listen to the Cadets do a brilliant job discussing their summer training activities and their pride in their accomplishments. Well Done!

On a sad note, one of our members, CDR Charles Standard passed away in early August. Chuck was awarded the Navy Cross for extraordinary heroism while flying a dive bomber with VB-1 on USS Yorktown (CV-10) during the Battle of the Philippine Sea on June 20<sup>th</sup> 1944. "Chuck's presence brought the wonders of patriotism, loyalty, good cheer and friendliness to each and every occasion. He will be missed by all" said CT State Rep. Livvy Floren.

All Council veterans are invited to attend the worthwhile Veterans Day ceremony at Bethel's NJROTC unit. See page 5 for details.

I look forward to hearing from you and meeting you as we continue to develop and engage our membership and the community.

Ka Makani Aheahe Ke Kai Malino,

Jason Wathen, President

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## Cadet Presentations (continued):

*(Continued from page 1)*



Photos from summer training and the presentation night.

- Recruit training ("boot camp") for new cadets as well as for some older cadets who attended as leaders; held at Ft Devens and Lakehurst;
- Culinary training, learning by doing, while preparing meals for other cadets in training;
- Maritime security operations and riverine training in Virginia;
- Master-at-arms training with police dogs at Kings Bay in Georgia;
- Field ops, including helicopters, at an Army base in NH;
- Petty officer leadership academy (POLA);
- Coast Guard training in Boston;
- Aviation electronics training in Texas.

The event demonstrated again the value of this Council-sponsored youth program in fostering respect, responsibility, and leadership in young people whether or not they later chose to join the military.

One important component of this event is for the cadets to practice public speaking. The presentations were lively and informative. PO2 Clay O'Brien served as master of ceremonies. Bravo Zulu to him and to all the cadets who presented!



## Annual SEAL Picnic Success:



The annual RDAC SEAL Picnic, held this year in mid-August at the Italian Center in Stamford, was another sell-out. Attendees came to see area SEAL candidates demonstrate swimming and physical fitness tests that are part of their quest to become Navy SEALs; and to hear them describe why they want to become SEALs.

Special guest speaker was a former DEVGRU Commander, who spoke on the personality traits of successful SEALs. Naval Special Warfare Development Group (DEVGRU) is the proper name for what the media often refers to as "SEAL Team 6".

Also present and honored were five Gold Star families of fallen SEAL graduates of the local RDAC SEAL candidate mentoring program.

We wish the current candidates every success in their difficult quest.



SEAL Candidates warming up before the Picnic competition in August.



## Other Sea Cadet news:

### Graduation and Relieving of the Watch:

Dealey Division wished fair winds and following seas to 6 graduates on 12 June during a ceremony at the Stamford Yacht Club. The graduates were celebrated in front of parents, friends, veterans, and Council members. CPO K. Kutz is now attending USMA West Point. PO3 J. Butcher, PO2 Z. Welborn and PO2 H. Burns are enrolled in Navy ROTC programs at Purdue, Norwich, and UNC respectively. PO3 G. Villard will pursue a business degree at UCONN. Cadet Kutz was awarded the George Macintyre Scholarship while the other seniors were presented with scholarships in honor of Captain John "Bucky" Finneran through funds generously donated by the Ida White Trimble Family Foundation. Additionally Cadet Welborn received a scholarship given annually by Sea Cadet Corps Headquarters. Though it was hot and humid, the venue and clear skies provided for a great event and a fitting ceremony to celebrate the special achievements of our graduates.

### Recent and Upcoming Events:

The Sea Cadets helped make two local Navy retirements special by providing color guard and sideboy support (see story below). Superb performance at both events.

November will be packed full of events starting with a swim meet on 5 November, the Stamford Veteran's Day Parade on 12 November, Thanksgiving Basket Parade, and Stamford Parade Spectacular on 19 November. We encourage Council members to visit during one of our weekly Monday evening meetings (7pm at Stamford Marine Center) and if any member would like to join the Cadets in one of the parades, please contact us.



Dealey Commanding Officer Navy Chief Petty Officer Miguel Amadiz with graduate Kaitlyn Kutz



Dealey at Stamford's Memorial Day parade.

## Weigold/Gerard Navy Retirements:

The Stamford Yacht Club was recently the venue for two sun-lit Navy retirements of special interest to our Council. On September 24th, Rear Admiral John Weigold IV, past Council President and current Board member, retired after a Navy active and reserve surface warfare career that started in 1984. And on October 1st, Captain Philip Alan Gerard, current Dealey Division XO and Council Board member, retired following a naval aviation career that began in 1987.

Both ceremonies followed naval tradition, including parade of colors and piping ashore with sideboys. Special guest speaker at the Weigold ceremony was Admiral Harry Harris, Commander, U. S. Pacific Command.

Attending the respective ceremonies in honor of their fathers, were college Navy ROTC midshipmen Connor Weigold and Patric Gerard, proving again that salt water veins can be inherited.



RADM Weigold



CAPT Gerard

## Adopted ship news:

### USS Winston S. Churchill (DDG 81):

Our adopted Norfolk-based guided missile destroyer is again operating on the far side of the Atlantic. The ship, with embarked helicopter maritime strike squadron aboard (Detachment 5 of HSM 48—the "Vipers"), departed Norfolk on 8 September to participate in "Formidable Shield" and "Joint Warrior" exercises, in the Irish Sea and off the western coast of Scotland.

Formidable Shield involves 14 ships and about 3,300 personnel from Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, U.K., and U.S. at the U.K.'s Hebrides Range off Scotland. It includes a live-fire integrated air and missile defense scenario, defending against a ballistic missile target as well as anti-ship cruise missiles.

Joint Warrior is a semi-annual Royal Navy integrated training event designed to provide NATO, allied, and partner forces a unique multi-warfare environment to prepare for global operations. Churchill CO Commander Thomas Van Scoten was quoted saying "We are looking forward to working alongside our partner nations to improve defensive capabilities and effective means of deterrence that will enhance our global security."

Port visits in September and early October included Faslane, Scotland and Portsmouth, England. The ship was reported to be underway on October 23rd. We wish officers and crew the best as they train with allies for our defense!

### USS Connecticut (SSN 22):

As we reported in our last edition, CDR Carl Trask, from Glendora, California, relieved Cmdr. Brian Taddiken, as commanding officer of our adopted nuclear submarine on May 12th. That followed an eastern Pacific deployment that included a port visit to Pearl Harbor; which in turn had followed a 54-month depot modernization period.

More recently, the submarine was reported in August to be operating off San Diego with the nuclear carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71) and her escorting ships, as part of that strike group's Composite Training Unit Exercise (COMPUDEX). This extensive exercise is done in preparation for an overseas deployment of the group, and includes all warfare specialties including anti-submarine warfare.

In late August, the sub returned to homeport Bremerton. On 17 October, the submarine was reported to have made a brief stop at Naval Base Point Loma, San Diego, so is again operating off southern California.

Our Council wishes the officers and crew continued success as they hone their skills on this formidable warship, operating in our defense!



USS Winston S. Churchill with USS Mitscher in Faslane, Scotland in September.



Churchill (foreground) underway replenishing in September in rough Atlantic seas.



SSN 22 underway in December 2016 after lengthy stay in the yards.

## 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 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 158  
active members.**

**There is now 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.**



## Local NJROTC news:

All three of our local Navy Junior ROTC high school programs have started their 2017-2018 academic school years. Below are some updates:

### **Brien McMahon High School (Norwalk):**

Our Council sponsored 5 McMahon cadets to attend the 2 week Leadership Academy and Sail Training in Newport RI this past summer. These cadets have assumed leadership roles at McMahon and exercise the skills they learned in Newport. Chief David Pascoe, Council Board member and staff at McMahon's program, has been a Sailing Instructor at Newport for the past ten years. He is shown at right with the 5 cadets.

A large group of cadets participated in 4 days of "Mini Boot Camp" at Camp Niantic National Guard Base in late September. They engaged in challenging events and exercises that focused on teamwork (see photo at right). The program ended with a traditional pass in review ceremony.

### **Bethel High School:**

Bethel starts the academic year after earning their 14th consecutive annual Navy Distinguished Unit award; a tremendous record for the cadets and their instructors, LCDR Mark Dwinells and Master Sergeant Joseph Meehan.

**Bethel has invited all local area veterans to attend their 4th annual Veterans Day ceremony on Friday November 10th.** The event will take place at the High School with a reception starting at 0830. The ceremony itself will be held with the entire student body in the gym from 0911 to 1011. LCDR Dwinell's invitation to veterans stated: "There are many distractions for students in 2017, and many things they need to learn about patriotism, saluting the flag, honoring our nation's veterans and where their freedom comes from... [We] would be honored by your presence, and we need your help in making this an educational experience for the students." All Council member veterans and their veteran friends are encouraged to attend.

### **Bridgeport Military Academy (BMA):**

BMA is a city charter high school and we were pleased to add them to our area NJROTC units when the Bridgeport Council was merged into our Western CT Council. For recent news of the extensive activities at BMA, see their Facebook page here:

<https://www.facebook.com/bridgeportmilitaryacademy/>



Bethel senior class attendees at their annual military ball in March 2017. At front row ends are the two Bethel instructors.

*See our Council's award-winning website for special features and timely updates that occur between the editions of this newsletter at: [www.navyleaguewestct.org](http://www.navyleaguewestct.org)*

## 2017 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	Don Logan
Louis DiGiusto	David Pascoe
Edward Fitzgerald	Robert Perkin
P. Alan Gerard	Jennifer Stannard
Theodore Jenkins	Gerard Tighe
Joseph Latwin	John Weigold

ADM Harry Harris, Commander,  
US Pacific Command, at RADM  
Weigold retirement Sept. 24th.



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

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This space had been reserved for address labels for those newsletters that were sent via first class postal mail. But with this October 2017 edition, we are moving to 100% paperless email/online distribution only. We thank all members who provided email addresses to allow us to make this change. We are using the savings in print and postage costs for our vital youth programs.

**Dealey Sea Ca-  
dets performing  
sideboy duty at  
retirement cere-  
mony (see story  
page 3)**

