

BULLHORN

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY
VOLUME 52 ISSUE 2



NEWS FROM THE NAVY LEAGUE OF THE UNITED STATES PENSACOLA COUNCIL



APRIL - JUNE 2024

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Photo from Meet the Boss Luncheon by Donelle Hall

Welcome to the second edition of our quarterly newsletter for 2024! As we reflect on the past few months, it's clear that our community has been bustling with activities! From heartfelt moments of reunion during several Welcome Home events for our local USCG vessels, to the camaraderie shared at the Enlisted Sailor's Breakfast and Spouse Appreciation Lunch, we've continued to foster bonds that strengthen our organization.

In this newsletter, you'll find a special message from our President highlighting our achievements and the direction we're headed, some recaps of our recent events and we'll also delve into our upcoming events that we have planned for this quarter. Thank you for your continued support and participation in shaping our council of the Pensacola Navy League. Your support gives us the opportunity to provide support and give back to our local military community.



PENSACOLA NAVY LEAGUE

"Citizens in Support of the Sea Services"

POST OFFICE BOX 17486
PENSACOLA, FL 32522-7486
(850) 436- 8552

pensacolanavyleague@pensacolanavyleague.org
www.pensacolanavyleague.org



June 30, 2024

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From the Council President

Greetings Friends and Members of the Pensacola Council Navy League.

On behalf of the Board of Directors (BOD), and myself, we hope your summer season is in full swing.

The past six months have been absolutely gang-busters. Quick **highlights** include: six Board of Director's meetings, a Coast Guard Unit adoption ceremony, Military Recognition Day Luncheon (a.k.a. Margaret Flowers Award), participation in the Japanese U.S. Military Program Day, Enlisted Recognition Breakfast, Spouse Appreciation Luncheon, Admiral's Club Luncheon whose guest speaker was the Commanding Officer of the *USS RICHARD M. MCCOOL, JR.* (LPD-29), Pensacola Navy Days, *USCGC DAUNTLESS* (WMEC-624) Heritage Celebration, scholarship award to a college-bound high school student, and a handful of ship departures, welcomes, recognizing Coast Guard Sailors of the quarter and year, and rejuvenation of our *BULLHORN*.

Other behind-the-scenes activities encompassed: member attendance at the National Navy League Convention in San Diego, CA, two board members graduating from Leadership Pensacola, a content and continuity-based refresh of our By laws, receiving three tablet computers to make daily operations both more effective and efficient, and preparation for rest-of-the year events.

A great segue, the rest of our year has several memory-making activities you don't want to miss, including: the Blue Angels air shows, the commissioning week activities for the *USS RICHARD M. MCCOOL, JR.*, *USCGC RELIANCE* change-of-command, our famous chicken BBQ, our annual golf tournament, the U.S. Coast Guard, Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps Birthday celebrations, and the Coast Guard Eight Bells Celebration on the heels of Thanksgiving Operation Turkey Drop, Christmas Operation Santa Drop, and our year-end wrap up Pensacola Council Christmas Party. For more information, navigate to our [EVENTS](#) tab, and here's to the second half of 2024!

Navy League Goals: 1) Educate the public and elected officials on the importance of a strong maritime component for our National Security, and 2) Support and advocate for members of the Sea Services including: U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Merchant Marine, and the U.S. Navy.

In closing, **THANKS** for all you do: [Citizens in support of our Sea Services.](#)

Very Respectfully Yours and HooYah,
CDR Evan A. Hipsley, Jr., 1813, USN, Ret.

President, Pensacola Council of the U.S. Navy League

PENSACOLA TO WELCOME & COMMISSION THE USS RICHARD M. MCCOOL, JR. (LPD 29)



The Greater Pensacola Area Commissioning Committee proudly welcomes the USS Richard M. McCool, Jr. (LPD 29) to Naval Air Station Pensacola (NASP). The ship will offer free public tours from September 2nd-4th, from 1 p.m. – 4 p.m., and the U. S. Navy will commission the ship on September 7th, 2024, at NASP Pier at 10 a.m.

The USS Richard M. McCool, Jr., an amphibious transport dock, is named in honor of U.S. Navy Captain Richard M. McCool, Jr., who was awarded the Medal of Honor in 1945 for the heroism he displayed after his ship was attacked by kamikaze aircraft in the Battle of Okinawa. This will be the Navy's 13th San Antonio-class amphibious transport dock ship.

Amphibious transport docks are used to transport and land Marines, their equipment, and supplies by using two embarked Ship to Shore Connector Crafts called Landing Craft Air Cushions (LCACs) – often referred to as hovercrafts, or other support vehicles augmented by helicopters or vertical take-off and landing aircraft (MV22). These ships support amphibious assault, special operations, or expeditionary warfare missions and serve as secondary aviation platforms for amphibious operations.

Please note, the schedule of events listed below may change pending weather and other conditions:

Free Public Ship Tours at NASP Pier on Monday, September 2nd - Wednesday, September 4th – 1p.m. – 4p.m.

USS McCool Commissioning Ceremony at NASP Pier on Saturday, September 7th at 10a.m. *The public is encouraged to bring lawn chairs.*

Details for signing up for ship tours will be announced once security and logistics details are finalized. The base remains at the current security level. Visitors should expect security checks prior to tours and must be able to climb stairs. Closed toe shoes with slacks are encouraged. Backpacks and strollers will not be permitted on the ship. No animals will be allowed on the ship. There are no public restrooms aboard the ship. To learn more about the USS Richard M. McCool, Jr. (LPD 29) visit, public tours, event updates, and commissioning, visit Pensacolachamber.com or PensacolaNavyLeague.org. Sponsorship opportunities are available at pensacolachamber.com.

ENLISTED RECOGNITION BREAKFAST APRIL 11, 2024



Photos from Enlisted Recognition Breakfast by David Van Der Like

Over 120 military, community, and Navy League members gathered early in the morning at Seville Quarter's Heritage Hall on Thursday, April 11th, to attend the annual Pensacola Council of the Navy League Enlisted Recognition Breakfast. The event is part of the Navy League's celebration of Military Appreciation Month. This year, the Pensacola Council recognized 29 top-performing enlisted military members serving in Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Air Force, and Army commands throughout the Northwest Florida area. The event, sponsored by Navy Federal Credit Union and PenAir Credit Union, was attended by local representatives for Senators Rick Scott and Marco Rubio, Congressman Matt Gaetz, and Florida House Representative Michelle Salzman.

Enlisted honorees were awarded a certificate of appreciation from the Pensacola Navy League and Congressional members, as well as a gift bag from the major sponsors. Remarks on enlisted leadership were provided by guest speaker NAS Pensacola Command Master Chief CMDCM James Wallace. Pensacola Navy League Past President CMDCM Mark Curley, USN (Ret), once again served as the event emcee. The Enlisted Recognition Breakfast committee, led for the last seven years by CAPT Bill Cullik, USN (Ret), organized the event and would like to thank the outstanding support provided by Navy Federal Credit Union, Pen Air Credit Union, Seville Quarter, and the many individual sponsors that enabled the Navy League to host another highly successful recognition event supporting all military services in our area.

SPOUSE APPRECIATION LUNCHEON

MAY 15, 2024



Photos from Spouse Appreciation Luncheon by Donelle Hall

This year's spouse appreciation luncheon was a great success! Pensacola Navy League was able to honor nominees from 19 local commands! Our Mistress of Ceremonies was Sue Straughn from WEAR TV-3. We all know Sue's influence reaches far beyond her TV personality, as she has dedicated her time and energy to numerous community efforts. We were once again honored to have her as a part of our Spouse Appreciation Luncheon.

Our Guest Speaker was the wonderful Mrs. Pamela Bolado, a celebrated author and founder of *Women Who Do Wonders Media*, a platform dedicated to highlighting the successes and ventures of influential women worldwide. Pamela's commitment to social change led her to create the Mission Wonder Women Foundation in 2020, a nonprofit focused on fighting sex trafficking and enriching survivors' lives with scholarships and new opportunities. She is a dedicated Air Force Veteran Spouse who has garnered significant recognition within the military community, being named the Armed Forces Insurance Naval Air Station Pensacola Military Spouse of the Year in 2022 and 2023. She has organized numerous impactful events for military spouses and co-directs the NW Florida Military Spouse Chamber of Commerce.

THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING SPONSORS FOR HELPING US MAKE THIS EVENT A REALITY AND HELPING US TO CELEBRATE OUR LOCAL MILITARY SPOUSES!

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MEET THE BOSS LUNCHEON MAY 23, 2024



Photos from Meet the Boss Luncheon provided by Donelle Hall & RADM Donald Quinn

On May 23 we hosted our second Admiral's Club luncheon of the year where members heard directly from guest speaker CAPT Jeffrey Baker, USN, Commanding Officer, Precommissioning Unit Richard M. McCool. Captain Baker is a seasoned leader in the U.S. Navy with a career marked by distinguished service and strategic expertise. He joined the Navy in 1994 after graduating from Westminster College with a B.S. in Physics, later specializing in nuclear propulsion and becoming an instructor at NPTU Ballston Spa, NY. Commissioned through Officer Candidate School in 1998, Captain Baker pursued advanced studies and completed Joint Professional Military Education at the Naval War College and National Defense University. His operational roles include Main Propulsion Officer on USS Shreveport (LPD 12), Chief Engineer on USS Gunston Hall (LSD 44), and Commanding Officer on USS Tortuga (LSD 46). He has also served in key shore assignments, including as a Federal Executive Fellow in Washington D.C. and Commanding Officer at Engineering Assessments Atlantic. Currently designated as the Prospective Commanding Officer for USS Richard M. McCool (LPD 29), Captain Baker's leadership has been recognized with decorations such as the Legion of Merit and multiple Meritorious Service and Navy Commendation Medals, reflecting his exemplary contributions to naval operations and strategy.

The event was emceed by our very own RADM Don Quinn, USN (Ret). During the event guests were able to learn about CAPT Baker's service history, the 400 person crew that will be running the new ship, and information on the upcoming commissioning. To learn more about the USS Richard M. McCool, Jr. (LPD 29), please visit Pensacolachamber.com or visit PensacolaNavyLeague.org where updates will be posted as details are confirmed.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN JOINING THE ADMIRALS' CLUB TO ATTEND THESE EXCLUSIVE EVENTS, PLEASE REACH OUT TO OUR OFFICE TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT UPGRADING YOUR MEMBERSHIP.

Pensacola Council Navy League of the United States

P.O. Box 17486

Pensacola, FL 32522-7486

(850) 436-8552

pensacolanavyleague@pensacolanavyleague.org

USCG Q2 2024 NEWS

APRIL 24, 2024 - USCG DAUNTLESS IS WELCOMED HOME AFTER DEPLOYMENT

After a 61-day patrol in the Windward Passage and Florida Straits, the DAUNTLESS arrived back at NAS Pensacola. During their deployment, crew members carried out vital maritime safety and security operations, focusing on safeguarding lives at sea and preventing illegal migrant voyages heading towards the United States.



Photos provided by Matt Meilstrup

APRIL 27, 2024 - USCG DILIGENCE IS WELCOMED HOME FROM THE YARD

After patrol, the cutter was undergoing repairs in the Coast Guard Yard, in Baltimore Maryland. They happened to be in port during the Francis Scott Key Bridge collapse. In the early hours after the disaster, Diligence's small boat crews conducted search and rescue operations for missing persons and later provided a persistent presence to enforce a safety zone during salvage efforts. They were stuck for several weeks in Baltimore after the bridge collapse so it was an extra special welcome home when they made it back to Pensacola.



Photos from United States Coast Guard News

USCG Q2 2024 NEWS

JUNE 21, 2024 - USCG CUTTER DAUNTLESS CELEBRATES 56 YEARS OF SERVICE

Selected for layup status due to Coast Guard personnel challenges, the DAUNTLESS served the country for over 56 years. The Heritage Celebration ceremony was presided over by VADM Nathan Moore, USCG Atlantic Area Commander, and served to celebrate Dauntless' contributions to the service and nation in the presence of cutter leadership, current and former crew members, families, friends and members of our Pensacola Navy League Council. The ship has sailed for the Coast Guard Yard in Baltimore, MD awaiting further disposition instructions and the crew was reassigned to various billets across the Coast Guard.



Pictured from L to R: Former skipper Ryan Devlin, DILIGENCE skipper CDR Nolan Cain, President Evan Hipsley, skipper CDR Aaron Kowalczk, CG LANTAREA VADM Nate Moore, and former XO CDR Chuck Bare



President Hipsley with CDR Kowalczk
Photos provided by Petty Officer Brandon Hillard

JUNE 22, 2024 - USCG RELIANCE IS WELCOMED HOME AFTER PATROL

On Thursday, June 20th, the Coast Guard Cutter RELIANCE turned 60! RELIANCE launched out of Galveston, TX in 1964 and immediately began testing the prototype flight deck capability. RELIANCE is the oldest, active commissioned warship and oldest flight deck capable ship in the U.S. arsenal. Only the USS CONSTITUTION ("Old Ironsides" is a 3-masted wooden-hulled U.S. Navy heavy Frigate launched 1797) and USS PUEBLO (U.S. Navy warship captured by North Korea in 1968 and still moored in Pyongyang North Korea) are older commissioned warships.

As for the rest of the patrol, the ship sailed the Caribbean for a counterdrug mission and a highly visible operation with partners from Colombia and the Dominican Republic. An unexpected Key West visit to repair an equipment casualty and an unfortunate issue with the helicopter impacted the patrol's results. RELIANCE did visit Curacao, Netherlands Antilles. For two days, the crew explored the Caribbean island and marveled at its vibrant Dutch architecture to repair an equipment casualty. The crew enjoyed that trip and the return to homeport!



Pictured Above: Skipper Chapman, his wife Tracy and their sons Mason & Austin



Pictured Above: Ombudsman Virginia Ralls (PNL Spouse Appreciation Honoree) & family
Photos provided by Daniel McCort

2024 QUARTER 2 HIGHLIGHTS

LEADERSHIP PENSACOLA



Photos from LEAP graduation provided by Matt Meilstrup

On May 15th, two of our Navy League Council members graduated from the 2024 Leadership Pensacola (LEAP) program. Both Mark Van Der Haden and Matt Meilstrup actively engaged with their 50 classmates throughout the year-long curriculum and have already been selected by LEAP 2025 to help plan next year's Military Day and Port of Pensacola visits.

Past LEAP graduates within the Navy League Board of Directors include Evan Hipsley, Jr., Mark Curley, Russell Lentz, Patty Veal and Pamela Hatt. Please ask any of them or Mark/Matt about the program if you're interested; we would love to see even more Navy Leaguers go through this amazing program. Thank you for your support of LEAP!

UPCOMING EVENTS

July 2024

July 17 - Navy League Board Meeting at Pensacola Yacht Club

July 24 - USCG RELIANCE Celebrates it's 60th Anniversary of Service

July 25 - USCG RELIANCE Change of Command

July 25 - Seville Quarter Heroes Among Us, USCG Night with Eric Gleason - Captain, USCG

August 2024

August 4 - USCG Birthday

August 14 - Navy League Board Meeting at Pensacola Yacht Club

August 29 - Seville Quarter Heroes Among Us, Marine Recon Night with Steve Brush - Sergeant, USMC

September 2024

September 4 at 11:30am - 25th Annual POW/MIA Luncheon at the Pensacola Yacht Club

September 11 - Navy League Board Meeting at Pensacola Yacht Club

September 18 - USAF Birthday

September 26 - Annual Chicken BBQ for PNL Members and Prospective Members at Pensacola Yacht Club

September 26 - Seville Quarter Heroes Among Us, Operation Commando Saber with Gilbert AHL, Colonel, USAF

MEET YOUR 2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Victor Hall - 2nd Vice President

Background: Hall's naval career began in 1971 as an E-1 aboard USS Leary. He transitioned to Hospital Corpsman in 1972. Admiral Hall received a direct commission as an ensign in the Medical Service Corps 1982. After deployment and holding several command billets Admiral Hall's last command was Deputy Commander Navy Medicine West headquartered out of San Diego Naval station. Admiral Hall retired from the Navy in 2016.

Hometown: Cincinnati, OH

Fun Fact: He's a mustang who went from E1 to O7



Patty Veal - Secretary

Background: Patty joined the Navy League to give back to our local military community. Her step-father is a retired USAF Colonel. Although she never served in the armed forces herself, she is honored to serve on our board and support the local military members and their families.

Hometown: New Orleans, LA

Fun Fact: Patty loves to garden and make pottery!

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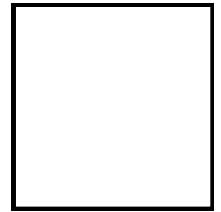
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**Pensacola Council
Navy League U.S.**

**P.O. Box 17486
Pensacola, FL 32522-7486
(850) 436-8552**

**Email: pensacolanavyleague@pensacolanavyleague.org
Website: <http://pensacolanavyleague.org/>**



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NEWSLETTER**

Published Quarterly

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Pensacola, FL 32522-7486
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Editor: Donelle Hall
pensacolanavyleague@pensacolanavyleague.org

