



Savannah Steamer

2009 and 2010 Mackie Award

Founded May 15th, 1957

2nd Quarter, 2012 Vol. 38 Issue 2

Savannah Council, Navy League of the United States

President's Message



Well, Spring has sprung, and that brings us – Savannah Council – to the time of year when we get to recognize outstanding members of our local youth. During April and May various ROTC units select their outstanding members for awards, and Savannah Council is happy to join in these recognitions. (See Schedule of Events in this issue.) These ROTC programs, as well as our Sea Cadet program, offer something almost totally missing in other educational programs – and that is the art / science of LEADERSHIP!



Youngsters joining these programs start off “following”, and learn the importance of order and organization. They all have the opportunity to progress to positions of leadership through their work and initiative – stepping forward to take charge. As they progress and become leaders of their units they develop skills that will last a lifetime. If they later decide to join any military service, their ROTC or Sea Cadet experience will facilitate their early promotions.

Bob

April Dinner Meeting at the Hunter Club

Speaker: James Roberts



Mr. James Roberts served as a Department of the Army Civilian - foreign affairs officer (law enforcement), as Major General Cucolo's personal advisor on operations and training pertaining to the Iraqi police and security forces in Northern Iraq. In that capacity, he had the opportunity to travel

throughout Northern Iraq to observe and analyze

Iraqi Army and Police forces in their interaction with the civilian population and anti-terrorism operations. He will also discuss development of the centralized government, political complexities of Iraqi-Kurdish/minorities/Shia-Sunni relationships, Iraq's economic base for survival, the current security posture, and the rise of the Iranian (Persian) v. Turkish (Ottoman) empires.

Bring a Guest to a Navy League Meeting. It is our best recruitment tool!



**April 24th
Dinner Meeting 6:00 pm,
The HUNTER CLUB***

Reserve your seat today! Reservations are due no later than close of business on Friday, April. 20th. The cost is \$22 per person.

Please contact Aunette Shipes at SavFoxy@bellsouth.net or call (912) 330-0932 to reserve your place.

Our Adopted Submarine

USS Alaska (SSBN 732) Recognition Awards

On January 17, Tom Latham, Joe Tillman, Bob Gephart, Gary Johnson and Jim Morison visited our adopted submarine, USS *Alaska* (SSBN 732), at Kings Bay for an awards ceremony. Both crews, Blue and Gold, were present and were jointly awarded a Battle E Award by Commodore Eric C. Holloway – Commander Submarine Squadron 20. The Battle Effectiveness Award (“E”) recognizes sustained superior performance in an operational environment and sustained continuous readiness throughout training cycles. In the case of a submarine, both the Blue and Gold crews are evaluated and rated separately, and then a total score is developed for the ship. In addition to specific standards that must be met within each functional area, surprise inspections are a major factor. This means **USS Alaska was the best submarine at Kings Bay for 2011!**

Following the Battle E Award, Savannah Council had the opportunity to recognize *Alaska* Sailors of the Year and Sailors of the Quarter for both Gold and Blue Crews. Each of these sailors was presented with a book from the Navy’s recommended reading list, and a \$100 U.S. Savings Bond. Following these ceremonies, Savannah Council members were invited to have a delicious lunch with the officers in the wardroom, followed by a tour of the boat.



Submarine Squadron 20 Change of Command

On April 13, Gary Johnson, Tom Latham and Bob Gephart traveled to Kings Bay to attend a Change of Command Ceremony for Submarine Squadron 20. The new commodore, Captain Christopher L. Harkins is eager to become acquainted with Savannah Council and has accepted our invitation to attend and speak at a future dinner meeting. Council members had an opportunity to have lunch with USS *Alaska* – Blue commanding officer, CDR Kevin Byrne, at the reception after the COC. They also had the pleasure of meeting the new COB (Chief of the Boat) – Blue, ETCS Nkusi B. Sims. COB Sims is replacing Chief Eddie Vanmeter. Chief Vanmeter is now Command Master Chief for Submarine Squadron 20, so he stays at Kings Bay.

MORE GOOD NEWS – CDR Byrne has been selected for promotion to the rank of Captain in the near future, hopefully before he completes his tour as CO – Blue of USS *Alaska* this Fall.



Navy photo by MC1 James Kimber

Take a Soldier Fishing

Savannah Council's Joe Tillman was instrumental in organizing the 2nd Annual Take A Soldier Fishing Tournament at Lake Mayer in Savannah. Joe arranged to have four sailors from our local units in the tournament – two from USS *Alaska* and one each from USCG – MSU Savannah and USCG - Air Station Savannah. The two sailors from USS *Alaska* even stayed overnight at Joe's house. Of the twelve boats in the tournament, only three caught fish, but both of our USS *Alaska* sailors were winners. USCG Air Station Savannah provided a flyover by one of their helicopters as the signal to close the fishing. It was a fun day for all of the participants, as the crowd cheered them as they arrived at the judges' table at the end of the tournament. Our thanks to Joe Tillman for a great job.



Welcome Aboard - New Members

The Savannah Council Navy League continues to grow thanks to your fine efforts. For 2012 through April 11 we welcome the following new members:

John Clinard	Brianna Mercado
Pamela Clinard	James Overton
Bruce Ellis	James Patsel
Ann Ellis	Philip Rosen
Elizabeth Kennedy	George Word

Community Affiliate -Trillium Marine

Trey McCormick
Shane Emmett
Ken Harrison
Doug Srenka

We look forward to your active participation in Navy League and hope to personally meet you at our dinner meetings. Again, congratulations on joining and thank you.

Bruce and Ann Ellis



James Patsel and Dan Drake

TREASURER'S REPORT Cliff Angers, Treasurer

First Quarter Financials:

Total **revenue** through March 31, was \$9,132; total **expenses** were \$2,473 (80% of which were program expenses) resulting in a net gain of \$6,659.

Our **cash position** at the end of the quarter was \$23,290.

2012 Membership Drive:

Thank you to all who have sent in their local dues and a special thank you to all who have added an

extra contribution to your submissions. This current membership drive has netted over \$2600 in special contributions. These will go a long way in keeping us in sound financial shape. However, I am disappointed to report that we still have close to 70 local members who have not sent in their dues for 2012 yet. **Please do it now!** You should know if your dues are unpaid — but if you have any question whether you've paid or not, feel free to send me an e-mail cangers@aol.com and I will respond promptly.

Cliff

USS Whidbey Island (LSD 41) Visits for St Patrick's Day

USS *Whidbey Island* (LSD 41) arrived in Savannah on March 15 in order to prepare for their participation in Savannah's St Patrick's Day celebrations. This amphibious warfare ship and her crew of about 350 had just returned from a 10 ½ month deployment to the Mediterranean Sea and the Middle East a few weeks earlier. They graciously hosted Savannah Council members and guests at an on board reception that evening, with over 200 people in attendance, including Savannah Mayor Edna Jackson and County Commission Chairman Pete Liakakis. The following day, Friday March 16, commanding officer CDR Eric Conzen and his Command Master Chief Kevin Goodrich, made an appearance on the local (WTOC) television show *Mid Morning Live*, followed by a media "Open House" back aboard ship. The highlight of their visit was their participation in the St Patrick's Day Parade, with over 60 sailors from their ship marching. It was a superlative ship visit by every measure.



UPCOMING EVENTS

April 21 - Submarine Ball Hyatt Hotel – Jacksonville, FL
7:00 PM Reservations required

April 24 - Monthly Dinner Meeting at Hunter Club 6:00 PM

April 26 - Savannah State University NROTC Spring Review
at Tiger Stadium — 11:00 AM

April 26 - Air Station Savannah's Inaugural Wardroom
Dining Out Mighty 8th Air Force Museum
(Black Tie) — 5:30 PM RSVP by April 24 912-652-4646

April 27 - Captain of the Port Golf Outing
Savannah Quarters Country Club
Call Joe Tillman for details 658-1694

May 1 - Monthly Board of Directors Meeting at
USCG Air Station Savannah — 5:30 PM

May 1 - Jenkins High School NJROTC
Awards Ceremony – Carey Hilliards
11111 Abercorn — 7:00 PM

May 2 - South Effingham High School NJROTC
Awards Ceremony – School Cafeteria — 6:00 PM

May 9 - Johnson High School NJROTC
Awards Ceremony – School Auditorium — 1:15 PM

May 22 - Monthly Dinner Meeting — 6:00 PM
Location TBD

June 5 - Monthly Board of Directors Meeting at
USCG Air Station Savannah — 5:30 PM

June 26 - Monthly Dinner Meeting — 6:00 PM
Location TBD

A Naval "Invasion" on St. Patrick's Day

It was a day to remember – great weather, huge crowds and crews from 3 Navy ships.

For this year's St. Patrick's Day Parade, Savannah Navy League hosted marchers from the USS *Alaska* (SSBN 732), USS *Samuel B. Roberts* (FFG 58) and the USS *Whidbey Island* (LSD 41). The *Alaska* is our adopted submarine and homeported in Kings Bay. Our adopted surface ship, the *Roberts*, is homeported in Mayport. The *Whidbey Island* was in port to relax after an especially long deployment.

The parade watchers gave our sailors a huge and almost overwhelming reception. With hundreds of thousands of people cheering, saluting and thanking them for their service, it's safe to say that our marching sailors came away knowing how much they are appreciated. They were somewhat surprised by the number of "kissing bandits" and had a great time interacting with the young children along the parade route.

Feedback from the visiting sailors to the Savannah Council was universally, "Thanks – we had a great time!" Here's hoping we see them or their shipmates next year.



Coast Guard and Marine Corps Quarterly Awards



LEFT: Savannah Council presented a Commandant's Reading List book and a gift card to MST1 Martin Schek on January 20. MST1 Schek was USCG MSU Savannah Sailor of the Quarter for 4th Quarter, 2011. Pat Yovich, Mike Campbell, Tom Wright and Bob Gephart all participated.



ABOVE: On Tuesday, January 24, 2012 Savannah Council members Mike Campbell, Tom Wright, Ed Robb and Bob Gephart helped recognize Marine of the Year SGT Michael O. Harris at USMC Beach and Terminal Operations Co. B, 4th Landing Support Battalion (our Savannah Marines!). Savannah Council members may remember SGT Harris from our Christmas Party. He attended to collect our donated Toys for Tots.



ABOVE: Wednesday, January 25, found Mike Campbell and Bob Gephart at USCG Station Tybee to present a gift and book to USCG MK2 Jennifer M. Inwood, Sailor of the Quarter for Station Tybee.

RIGHT: Also on January 25, Tom Latham and Mike Campbell visited USCG Air Station Savannah to present Sailor of the Year 2011 to AMT1 Brandon Jopp and Sailor of the Quarter to AET3 Johnathan Bailey. Each of the award winners was given a gift and a book from the Commandant's reading list.



RIGHT: The Savannah Council recognized MST2 Bryan Griffiths, MSU Savannah Sailor of the Year for 2011, on Feb 10, 2012. Navy League South Atlantic Coast Region President Dave Reilly and Mike Campbell assisted Council President Bob Gephart with the award.



January, February and March Meetings Wrap-up

JANUARY

COL Daniel H. Wilson, USMC, provided a great view of Recruit Depot Training and our Marine Corps at our January 24 dinner meeting. His presentation reinforced in everyone's mind that today's US Marine Corps is as smart, tough and dedicated now as ever. Our 2012 Savannah Council Officers and Board of Directors were also installed at the meeting.



FEBRUARY

On February 28, the Savannah Council met at the Hunter Club and enjoyed a great presentation by CDR Kevin Byrne, USN, Commanding Officer, USS *Alaska* (SSBN 742) Blue, a Nuclear Fleet Ballistic Missile Submarine homeported in Kings Bay, GA. CDR Byrne covered everything from mission capabilities to what his crew does during a week underway. CDR Byrne was accompanied by his wife, Jennifer, COB Eddie Vanmeter and MM1 Daniel Brown.



MARCH

Our March 27 meeting at Hunter Club featured CDR Rob Williams, Commanding Officer of our adopted surface ship, USS *Samuel B. Roberts* (FFG 58). CDR Williams presented a terrific summary of the Sammy B's recent six month deployment to the east coast of Africa and the Indian Ocean. From his descriptions and the photos shown, he and his crew had an interesting and effective deployment to that faraway region of the world. We also had the opportunity to recognize the three 2011 Sailors of the Year for the "Sammy B". They are:

SAILOR OF THE YEAR: DC1 (SW) Kenneth Recio
JUNIOR SAILOR OF THE YEAR: PS2 (SW/AW) Aldo Ardon
BLUE JACKET OF THE YEAR:
EM2 (SW) Grant Khanbalinov

In addition to these award winners, CDR Williams was accompanied by his Command Master Chief Dylan Inger and the Command Ombudsman Lisa Recio, wife of the Sailor of the Year.



2012 Officers and Directors

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Savannah Steamer Newsletter

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The Navy League of the United States is a civilian organization dedicated to informing the American people that the United States of America is a maritime nation and that its national defense and economic well-being are dependent upon strong sea services-United States Navy, United States Marine Corps, United States Coast Guard and United States Merchant Marine.

Community Affiliates

**Support Our Navy League
Community Affiliates . . .**



The Savannah Council of the Navy League is a 501(C)3 nonprofit organization. Contributions are tax deductible.

The full-color printed edition of the *Savannah Steamer* is published quarterly; in addition, an online E-Newsletter is published each month and posted on the Savannah Council's website and FaceBook page.

Visit our website at www.savannah.navyleague.us

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