



DECEMBER 2021



# The Lucky Bag

RICHMOND COUNCIL, NAVY LEAGUE OF THE UNITED STATES



Photo: Courtesy of Pearl Harbor Warbirds

## THEY SERVED – WE REMEMBER

80 years ago, Japan launched its surprise attack on Pearl Harbor killing 2,403 Americans and wounding 1,178 others; the U.S. lost 18 surface warships, sunk or seriously damaged; 188 aircraft destroyed and 159 damaged.

The next day, 8 December 1941, President Franklin Roosevelt addressed a joint session of Congress, describing the attack on Pearl Harbor as, "A day which will live in infamy..."

The United States declared war on Japan. U.S. Battle related deaths: 290,000 (1941-1945)

**Richmond Council Navy League of the U.S. will conduct its annual solemn observance.**

### PEARL HARBOR REMEMBRANCE DAY

TUESDAY 7 DECEMBER 2021

11:00 AM AT THE VA WAR MEMORIAL

621 S. BELVIDERE STREET RICHMOND, VA 23220

**GUEST SPEAKER: JOHN MAXWELL**

**COMMISSIONER - VA DEPT OF VETERANS SVCS**

*The Richmond Navy League extends an invitation to all citizens of the Commonwealth of VA as our Nation's colors are presented by the AMERICA Sea Cadets.*

*The observance will include a wreath laying ceremony and the tolling of the bell at the recitation of each name of those Virginians who gave their lives at Pearl Harbor 7 December 1941.*

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Adam J. "Jay" Fiedler, M.D.



After a successful golf outing and Sea Services Luncheon, we are looking forward to other events: Council's Annual Meeting, Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day, Council's Spring Luncheon, and the Parade of Tall Ships. Our main concern is how bus trips would be accepted. These trips could include: Mariners Museum, Air and Space museum, Ft Lee, and the museum of the Marine Corps. If you have strong feelings, one way or the other about a bus trip, please let us know by an email to me or the office. A special thanks to Pat Harris for arranging a trip to our adopted ship **USS GRAVELY** for the Admiral's family. It was a lovely outing, enjoyed by all! We are continuing to lighten John Harler's load and will need more volunteers (a not too subtle hint). ✍

## CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Chaplain John A. Harler, M.D.

### THE GIFT OF GIVING

As the Holidays approach, so does the hustle and bustle of shopping with the sound of seasonal songs ringing in our heads and broadcasting of music in the stores. However, one of the most beautiful aspects of this time of the year is how many of us *first* think of others, before doing for ourselves. The spirit of giving is prevalent everywhere!

While the shopping can create some stress with the hustle and bustle, perhaps, keeping in mind the reason for the season and the Source of the spirit of this giving from which it all begins can bring balance and true purpose for this generosity. We indeed have received the greatest gift of all which underlies this spirit of generosity.

For the Christians, the birth of Jesus Christ, the Son of God and Savior, is the extraordinary gift from God that inspires Christians to share the Lord's love with all. Hanukkah commemorates the liberation and rededication of the Temple of Jerusalem and manifests God's love to His people in their freedom to worship the Lord. For all of us, God continues to pour His goodness and love upon us. We all can share it with others. Whether it is with a gift from a store, a handmade gesture of love, or the gift of our time together, sharing this gift of giving with each other celebrates the reason for the season.

Let us give generously and joyfully for the glory of God. ✍

## UPDATE ON THE BLACKLIONS

There are several updates to report about Strike Fighter Squadron Blacklions of Naval Air Station Oceana. We recently met with squadron Commanding Officer CDR Bryan Pinckney, Executive Officer CDR Christopher Keene, Public Affairs Officer LT Michelle Espinal and Master Chief MCPO Timothy Newell. We learned that previous Blacklions CO CDR Leslie Mintz will be Captain Mintz and Commander, Air Group (CAG). The CAG is the senior Navy officer of an aircraft carrier air wing. Congratulations, Captain Mintz! As for Richmond Council, we will once again financially help to support the squadron holiday party. This is a small way of thanking the Blacklions for what they do for our country. Lastly, looking ahead to the spring of 2022, we had preliminary discussion about a possible Council group tour of the Blacklions hangar. ✍

### IMPORTANT UPDATE !!!

**The location of our monthly board meetings has changed. The new location for our monthly board meetings is:**

**The West End Branch  
Public Library  
(Westhampton Branch)  
5420 Patterson Avenue  
Richmond, VA 23226**

**Our next board meeting, December 14, will be held at our new location at 2:30 PM.**

### *The Lucky Bag* Vol 64 Issue 12

Published by the Richmond, Virginia Council  
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Harvey V. Lankford, M.D.

*The Lucky Bag* is published monthly, except  
Jan. & Feb. issues, which are combined.

## WELCOME ABOARD !

The Richmond Council Navy League is proud to welcome you as a member. In the weeks ahead, when you attend one of our Navy League events, please let the person at the registration desk know that you are a new member attending your first function.

### NEW MEMBERS

Melissa A. Hill  
Joseph Toler, Col, USA (Ret)  
Laura Walker  
Richard W. Wright

### SPONSORS

John A. Harler, M.D.  
Gil Rodriguez, M.D.  
John W. Harler, M.D.  
Gil DeBiasi, M.D.

*You are cordially invited to Council's Annual Business Meeting Luncheon  
Wednesday January 26, 2022 at Willow Oaks Country Club*

Council President, Adam "Jay" Fiedler, M.D., extends an invitation to all Richmond Navy Leaguers & friends asking that they join us at our Annual Business Meeting **Luncheon** and hear the review of Council's activities during 2021. Arrive early and enjoy the complimentary wine, cheese and fruit.

Following the luncheon, Council's Annual Business Meeting will be conducted and the Officers and Board Members will take their oath of office. Council members are asked to mail-in their proxy forms. (see page 4 for Proxy Form).



**SCHEDULE**

**DATE:** Wednesday 26 January 2022  
**PLACE:** Willow Oaks Country Club  
 6228 Forest Hill Ave  
 Richmond, VA 23225  
**TIME:** 11:30 AM Social  
 Noon Annual Meeting Begins

**COST:** \$30.00 per person  
 Complimentary wine, fruit and cheese



**Richmond Council's Board of Directors for 2020 (Five Directors absent)**

----- ✂ ----- ✂ ----- ✂ ----- ✂ -----  
**RESERVATION DEADLINE: FRIDAY JANUARY 21, 2022** (Payment must be received with reservation form)

**Payment Policy:** Checks cashed AFTER the event. Cancellations accepted & checks returned up to the deadline date

Make reservation(s) for: **COUNCIL'S ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING LUNCHEON – WEDNESDAY JANUARY 26, 2022**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Tel: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Tel: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Regular meal served unless special meal is indicated: 1 or 2 – Pescatarian (Fish) 1 or 2 – Veggie (NO Meat)**

**NOTE: ALL MEALS SERVED ARE GLUTEN FREE**

Total # of \_\_\_\_ Res. @ \$ 30.00 Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make check payable (and mail to): Richmond Council NLU S P.O. Box 11201 Richmond, VA 23230 Tel #: 804-355-7557

**NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING**

The Annual Meeting of the Richmond Council Navy League of the United States, will be a Luncheon, held Wednesday, January 26, 2022 at the Willow Oaks Country Club, 6228 Forest Ave, Richmond, VA 23226.

**NAVY LEAGUE OF THE UNITED STATES  
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA, COUNCIL  
SLATE OF DIRECTORS 2022  
PROXY**

The undersigned members of the Richmond Council Navy League of the United States, hereby designates and appoints R. Milton Owen and Edward S. Gibbons, any one or more of whom may act with full power of substitution in each, to be my true and lawful proxy and, in my place and stead, to cast my vote for the election of directors as indicated below at the Annual Meeting of the Council to be held on the 26<sup>th</sup> day of January 2022, or at any continuation or adjournment thereof, with the same effect as if such vote were cast by the undersigned in person.

This proxy shall be voted for the election of the following persons for Council Directors:

**M. Robin Beres  
Billy L. Butler  
Vaughan F. Dize  
George L. Feitig, Jr.  
Adam "Jay" Fiedler, M.D.  
Edward S. Gibbons  
John A. Harler, M.D.  
Patrick D. Harris  
Thomas T. Hassell, Jr.**

**John M. Heistand  
William W. McCathern, Jr.  
R. Milton Owen  
Donald W. Pate  
Douglas B. Reed  
Lee P. Rice  
Gary K. Riffle, Sr.  
B. Patterson "Pat" Robson, Jr.  
Carol K. Zembroski**

Given under my hand this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_

**FOR** all nominees listed above

**WITHOLD AUTHORITY** to  
vote for all nominees  
listed above

**If no direction is made here, this proxy will be voted "FOR".**

Mail Proxy Form to: Chairman, Proxy Committee  
Richmond, Virginia Council  
Navy League of the United States  
P.O. Box 11201  
Richmond, VA 23230

\_\_\_\_\_  
Member's Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Member's Signature

## 16-INCH SHELLS FOR THE VIRGINIA WAR MEMORIAL PEARL HARBOR EXHIBIT

On October 5, Richmond Navy League member, Patrick Harris, drove to the Battleship New Jersey Museum and Memorial in Camden, New Jersey to pick up two 16-inch naval gun projectiles. This was in response to a request from the curator of the Virginia War Memorial to the Richmond Navy League to help them locate two 16-inch naval gun projectiles for their Pearl Harbor exhibit. Pat was able to locate some shells at the *USS New Jersey* Museum with the help of Ryan Szimanski, the museum's curator.



A 16-inch projectile weighs about 2,000 pounds, but luckily Ryan had fiberglass replica shells which weigh much less. Pat had considered driving back to Richmond on I-95 with the projectiles strapped to the top of his car. It would have been a great publicity event for the Richmond Navy League, the Virginia War Memorial and the *USS New Jersey*. However, Pat decided it was also a stunt that could have gone very wrong. Photos of the projectiles in New Jersey and now flanking the Pearl Harbor exhibit at the Virginia War Memorial are shown above. The projectiles are now on loan to the Virginia War Memorial.

The Richmond Navy League Council thanks Ryan Szimanski and the Battleship New Jersey Museum for their support and generosity. The *USS New Jersey* is a great museum ship with many great exhibits. Their website is [www.battleshipnewjersey.org/](http://www.battleshipnewjersey.org/). Ryan is also the Executive Director of the Historic Naval Ship Association (HNSA), which is a worldwide association of over 100 naval ship museums and memorials. If you enjoy naval ship museums check out their website at [www.hnsa.org/hnsa-ships/](http://www.hnsa.org/hnsa-ships/). 🇺🇸

## VIETNAM WALL - - - INTERESTING FACTS

- A little history most people will never know. Interesting Veterans Statistics off the Vietnam Memorial Wall.
- There are 58,267 names now listed on that polished black wall, including those added in 2010.
- The names are arranged in the order in which they were taken from us by date and within each date the names are alphabetized. It is hard to believe it is 61 years since the first casualty.
- The first known casualty was Richard B. Fitzgibbon, of North Weymouth, Mass. Listed by the U.S. Department of Defense as having been killed on June 8, 1956. His name is listed on the Wall with that of his son, Marine Corps LCpl Richard B. Fitzgibbon III, who was killed on Sept. 7, 1965.
- There are three sets of fathers and sons on the Wall.
- 39,996 on the Wall were just 22 or younger.
- 8,283 were just 19 years old.
- The largest age group, 33,103 were 18 years old.
- 12 soldiers on the Wall were 17 years old.
- 5 soldiers on the Wall were 16 years old.
- One soldier, PFC Dan Bullock was 15 years old.
- 997 soldiers were killed on their first day in Vietnam.
- 1,448 soldiers were killed on their last day in Vietnam.
- 31 sets of brothers are on the Wall.
- Thirty-one sets of parents lost two of their sons.
- 54 soldiers attended Thomas Edison High School in Philadelphia . I wonder why so many from one school.

- 8 Women are on the Wall, Nursing the wounded.
- 244 soldiers were awarded the Medal of Honor during the Vietnam War; 153 of them are on the Wall.
- Beallsville, Ohio with a population of 475 lost 6 of her sons.
- West Virginia had the highest casualty rate per capita in the nation. There are 711 West Virginians on the Wall.
- The Marines of Morenci - They led some of the scrappiest high school football and basketball teams that the little Arizona copper town of Morenci (pop 5,058) had ever known and cheered. They enjoyed roaring beer busts. In quieter moments, they rode horses along the Coronado Trail, stalked deer in the Apache National Forest . And in the patriotic camaraderie typical of Morenci's mining families, the nine graduates of Morenci High enlisted as a group in the Marine Corps. Their service began on Independence Day, 1966. Only 3 returned home.
- The Buddies of Midvale - LeRoy Tafoya, Jimmy Martinez, Tom Gonzales were all boyhood friends and lived on three consecutive streets in Midvale, Utah on Fifth, Sixth and Seventh avenues. They lived only a few yards apart. They played ball at the adjacent sandlot ball field. And they all went to Vietnam . In a span of 16 dark days in late 1967, all three would be killed. LeRoy was killed on Wednesday, Nov. 22, the fourth anniversary of John F. Kennedy's assassination. Jimmy died less than 24 hours later on Thanksgiving Day. Tom was shot dead assaulting the enemy on December 7, Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day.
- The most casualty deaths for a single day was on January 31, 1968 ~ 245 deaths.
- The most casualty deaths for a single month was May 1968 - 2,415 casualties were incurred.

For most Americans who read this, they will only see the numbers that the Vietnam War created. To those of us who survived the war, and to the families of those who did not, we see the faces, we feel the pain that these numbers created. We are, until we

**Vietnam Wall Facts cont. on page 6**

## Vietnam Wall Facts cont. from pg 5

too pass away, haunted with these numbers, because they were our friends, fathers, husbands, wives, sons and daughters. There are no noble wars, just noble warriors. ✍

(Article submitted by Council member Walter Tucker)

## SEA SERVICES LUNCHEON

On 27 October 2021, Council gathered to celebrate the birthdays of our four sea services, the U. S. Navy, U. S. Marine Corps, U. S. Coast Guard, and the U. S. Flag Merchant Marines. This was an exciting event attended by 75 members and guests including officers and sailors from our adopted ships, **USS Carter Hall** and **USCGC Northland**. Also in attendance were officers and sailors from the **Richmond Navy Talent Acquisition Group** (formerly Navy Recruiting), **U. S. Marine Corps Recruiting Richmond**, and **U. S. Marine Corps Detachment, Fort Lee**. It was so exciting to see so many members of the sea services in uniform in attendance and we thank you for your service and count it a privilege to offer our support. There were **five commanding officers** present: CDR Bennett, **USCGC Northland**; Maj Fromm, USMC Recruiting Richmond; CDR Simpson, **USS Carter Hall**; LtCol Tsukano, USMC Detachment Ft. Lee; CAPT Nanartowich, Mid-Atlantic Maritime Academy.

Our social time was enjoyed by all, and we greatly appreciate the James River High School music department's string quintet for providing the background music. They also surprised us with the playing of the Navy Hymn during the invocation.

We thank the James River High School NJROTC Color Guard who opened the meeting with the parading of the Colors and presentation of the Missing Man Table which represents those who were not able to be present due to being killed or missing in action.

The cake-cutting ceremony was attended by a representative of all four sea services: CAPT Chad Reed, U. S. Navy, LtCol Julian Tsukano, U. S. Marine Corps, CDR Patricia Bennett, U. S. Coast Guard, and CAPT Edward Nanartowich, U. S. Flag Merchant Ma-

rines.

We enjoyed a delicious as usual pot roast dinner complete with the customary pièces de resistance of rum raisin ice cream to keep the sailors in the room happy with their grog.



**Guest speaker, CAPT Chad Reed with his parents, Patricia and Doug Reed (one of Council's Directors).**

We were blessed to have CAPT Chad Reed, Program Manager for Unmanned Carrier Aviation, as our keynote speaker. Also present at the head table were CAPT Reed's parents, Council Director, Doug Reed, and his wife Pat. CAPT Reed gave a very enlightening presentation complete with videos of an F18 Super Hornet in-flight refueling via the U. S. Navy's new unmanned tanker, the MQ-25 Stingray.

We would like to thank all in attendance for making this a very successful celebration of our sea services. ✍

## ADOPTED SHIPS UPDATE

(note: these reports may be edited to fit space available)



### **USS NORMANDY (CG-60)**

**CO: CAPT Charles Hampton**  
**XO: CDR Kevin C. Antonucci**  
**CMC: CMDCM William Palmer**

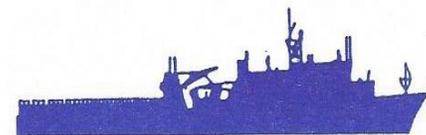
**Adam J. Fiedler, M.D., Liaison**  
**George L. Feitig, Jr., Ass't Liaison**

October was a busy month for **USS NORMANDY**. She continued making great strides in getting the ship ready for our prospective upcoming underway. The Wardroom celebrated the qualification of two new Surface Warrior Officers and three Officers of the Deck Underway. Three days of hard work and dedication brought **USS**

**NORMANDY** and her crew to the final step of her MOB-D certification pending the final Counter-Measure Wash Down underway. As a ship, the crew gathered together to cut the cake for not only the United States Navy's Birthday on 13 October, but also all our Sailors born in October. **NORMANDY** competed in multiple events in Surface Line Week and performed at its VARSITY level as always. To culminate the season of ghosts and ghouls, the divisions onboard competed in a door decorating competition that culminated with the Gunner's Mates taking the crown as Number One and Deck and Sonar Technician trailing closely behind.

Thank you and have a great Veterans Day! Thank you for your service. ✍

Very Respectfully,  
LTJG Maude Manzi, USN, PAO



### **USS CARTER HALL (LSD-50)**

**CO: CDR LaDonna M. Simpson**  
**XO: CDR Brad A. Fancher**  
**CMC: CMDCM Adam Singleton**

### **Pat Robson, Liaison**

Greetings from the FIGHTIN 5-0!

The past month following our return from deployment has been focused upon a CMAV (Consolidated Maintenance Availability) period, during which higher levels of maintenance are taking place. These ship wide efforts are all geared towards keeping the **CARTER HALL** as operational as possible, as quickly as can be. Truth be told, as many of you are well-aware, protracted times of maintenance and training can allow for "the edge to dull". Thankfully, the efforts of our Khaki leadership have forecasted maintenance and training goals in order to continue the focus forward, keeping the crew to the task, and returning us to sea better than we left it. All in all, this past month's activities have made great strides in two areas: 1) The improved material readiness of the ship; and 2) The crew's being af-

**USS CARTER HALL cont. on page 7**

**USS CARTER HALL cont. from pg 6**

forded the opportunity to rest, recharge, and reconnect with loved ones. Both of these areas are vital to our short-term and long-term successes.

With the Holiday Season approaching, I'm reminded of the Captain's fourth Guiding Principle: *Cultivate your Connections*. Not every crewmember brings the same skillset, talents and background to the table; yet each one contributes in their own way, according to their own given responsibilities. These connections that we are cultivating on a professional and a personal level serve as a sort of "personal" maintenance period. Whether we are receiving hard news from home or being faced with new and pressing responsibilities, we all need those around us to assist us in making it through to the next day in the best way possible. As the Captain notes, *"Relationships build trust and trust is the foundation of high functioning teams"*. These past months at sea have formed tighter bonds between members of the crew undoubtedly. That said, not all of the support that a person/unit receives stems from family or fellow crew mates. For the Captain and I, having been welcomed to join you for the Annual Sea Services Luncheon last month was yet another way in which the Richmond Navy League is further solidifying that relationship with the **CARTER HALL**. Thank you for your timely and enthusiastic support!

Please allow me to wish you all a Happy Thanksgiving!

We are: Working for Peace, Ready for War! ✍

Very Respectfully,  
Chaplain Block LT, CHC, USN



**USS GRAVELLY (DDG-107)**  
**CO: CDR Corey Odom**  
**XO: CDR Hunter D. Washburn**  
**PAO: ENS Michael Krueger**

**Patrick D. Harris, Liaison**  
**Alan Palmer, Consultant**

Since our last Lucky Bag, we completed a highly successful C2X with the other ships in our Strike Group where we were able to hone our high-end fighting skills. During the last few weeks of November leading up to deployment, we had a successful maintenance availability and completed our 3M Certification that is an evaluation of our 3M (Maintenance Material Management) program. **GRAVELY** passed 3M with top marks!

We wrapped up the final few days by enjoying a nice Thanksgiving with family and Shipmates. We finished final preparations for deployment, said our farewells and are now safely underway. "I am looking forward to deployment. Although I am going to miss my family, it will be nice to see all of our workups in action", says **USS GRAVELY** sailor, DC3 Armijo.

**GRAVELY** will be deploying as a member of Destroyer Squadron 28 with Carrier Strike Group 8. The crew of **GRAVELY** is ready to answer all bells and execute any mission!

Check out our Facebook page to stay up to date with **GRAVELY** and see what our Sailors are doing while serving our country abroad! Facebook: [www.facebook.com/DDG107/](http://www.facebook.com/DDG107/) Official Navy Website: [www.surflant.usff.navy.mil/ddg107/](http://www.surflant.usff.navy.mil/ddg107/)

**GRAVELY** Seadogs sends their best wishes for happy holidays to all!



Very Respectfully,  
Michael W Krueger, ENS, USN  
Public Affairs Officer



**USCGC NORTHLAND (WMEC-904)**  
**CO: CDR Patricia M. Bennett**  
**XO: LCDR Elizabeth Tufts**  
**COB: MKC Alan Kinney**

**Thomas T. Hassell, Jr., Liaison**  
**Vaughan F. Dize, Assistant Liaison**

Greetings from **USCGC NORTHLAND!**

Our crew has been hard at work throughout our in port period, performing routine and emergent maintenance on mechanical systems, completing paint projects to ensure that our ship is ready to withstand the harsh winter conditions at sea, and hosting numerous events that build camaraderie

among our service and partners. In addition to mission critical preparations, **NORTHLAND's** crew has also taken advantage of every opportunity to spend time with family and loved ones before our next deployment, which will take place over the holiday season.

Earlier in our inport, **NORTHLAND** had the distinct pleasure of hosting members of the International Maritime Officer Course (IMOC) for a tour of the ship. IMOC convenes at USCG Training Center Yorktown, VA. The course is taught by active duty Coast Guard members and offers our international partners an opportunity to receive maritime training and expertise from the world's greatest Coast Guard. **NORTHLAND** was honored to host the class's students and grateful for the opportunity to build relationships that will result in greater allied military strength downrange.

In addition to hosting the IMOC students, **NORTHLAND** hosted the USCG Atlantic Area Commander's 8 Bells Sea Service Celebration. The event consisted of former and current Coast Guard cutter sailors coming together for an afternoon filled with BBQ, tests of nautical skills, and an address from the Atlantic Area Commander, Vice Admiral (VADM) Steven Poulin. During his address to the audience, VADM Poulin spoke on the Coast Guard's seagoing missions and the critical role that Coast Guard cutters play in safeguarding our homeland and deterring illegal activity, at home and abroad. VADM Poulin also gave a special acknowledgment to **NORTHLAND's** Engineering Department in recognition of their rapid and skillful replacement of one the ship's main diesel engine lube oil coolers. Hosting events such as this one is not a frequent occasion for operational units, and **NORTHLAND** was proud to have displayed such esprit de corps for our peers and one of our service's highest-ranking officials.

As we enter the month of November, our crew is looking forward to finishing our in-port work agenda and making preparations to set sail for our next deployment. We would also like to extend a special word of gratitude for inviting members of our crew to your annual luncheon in October! As always, thank you for the support!

**NORTHLAND continued on page 8**

## NORTHLAND cont. from page 7

Fair Winds and Following Seas! 🚩

Very Respectfully,  
MKC Alan Kinney, USN, COB



**VADM Steven Poulin addressing the audience at the 8 Bells Sea Service Celebration.**

## 100<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY MRS. ALMA GRAVELY, WIFE OF VICE ADMIRAL SAMUEL L. GRAVELY, JR.

Mrs. Alma Gravelly, the wife of Vice Admiral Samuel L. Gravelly, Jr., will be celebrating her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday in December. In 1946, after Navy service during World War II, Admiral Gravelly was released from active duty, remaining in the Naval Reserve. Later that year, he married schoolteacher Alma Bernice Clark; the couple went on to raise three children, Robert, David and Tracey. The Gravelly's were married for 58 years, until the Admiral's passing in 2004. The **USS SAMUEL L. GRAVELY, JR., (DDG 107)**, is named to honor Admiral Gravelly, and is one of the four adopted ships of the Richmond Council Navy League. Admiral Gravelly became the first African American to command a U.S. Navy warship, the first African American to command an American warship under combat conditions, the first African-American to command a major naval warship, the first African-American admiral, the first African-American to rise to the rank of vice admiral, and the first African-American to command a U.S. Fleet. He served in World War II, Korea and Vietnam.

To celebrate Mrs. Gravelly's birthday

family and friends will be gathering at Samuel L Gravelly, Jr. Middle School in Haymarket, Virginia in early December. Her daughter Tracy Gravelly has said, "At Mom's age she doesn't want any gifts. Instead, if you must get her something, she would prefer that you donate to her favorite organization, the Native American Veterans Association". The Native American Veterans Association (NAVA) serves and honors Native American men and women and their families who have served active duty. Started in 2002, the Native American Veterans Association is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization. Richmond Council donated \$100.00 to this charity. 🚩

Contact information for NAVA:  
Native American Veterans Association  
P.O. Box 2075 Downey, CA 90242

[info@navavets.org](mailto:info@navavets.org) (888) 412-5997

## FIVE OF THE RAREST UNOFFICIAL U.S. NAVY 'CERTIFICATES'

The Navy has plenty of interesting and unique milestones for which its sailors strive. Though they never appear on official paperwork and not all of them have ceremonies, they're a fun bragging-rights challenge that sailors can use to flex on the uninitiated (aka "pollywogs"). By accomplishing one of several feats, sailors are inducted into an unofficial 'order' and, with that order, typically comes eligibility for a specific tattoo. While not every order is represented by a tattoo, sailors with these markings are either full of sh\*t or are undeniably badass.

### 1. Double Centurions

While the Century Club exists for pilots who've made their 100th carrier landing or flown through hurricane winds over 100 mph, you'll need to double it to get into the Double Centurions. It'll take a long time to reach that number and hurricane hunters usually aren't willing to fly in CAT 5 winds that could shred their aircraft in seconds.

### 2. Order of the Square Rigger

Square Riggers just need to serve on a ship with square rigs. Sounds simple enough — until you realize there's only two left in the entire Armed Forces. One in the Navy, *USS Constitution*,

and one in the Coast Guard, *USCGC Eagle*. Serving on either of those ships requires you to be the best of the best.

### 3. Order of Magellan

This order goes out to every sailor that completes what Ferdinand Magellan couldn't, circumnavigating the world. The Navy doesn't really care or recognize fun ceremonies like these. They typically have a mission to set out, so we go from point A to point B efficiently. There is some leeway for morale purposes, which is why most ship Captains don't mind taking some time out to go through the "Golden X". Circumnavigating the world, on the other hand, requires a specific mission to do so.

### 4. Order of the Sparrow

To be initiated into this order, one must sail the seven seas. While the ancients had a different idea and classification of the term, "seven seas", it is used in context of sailing the seven largest bodies of water. They are the four oceans (Atlantic, Pacific, Arctic, and Indian), the Mediterranean Sea, Caribbean Sea, and the Gulf of Mexico. Checking a few off a sailor's list isn't hard — stay in long enough and you'll get them. The challenge is getting on a voyage that goes through the *last* one you need.

### 5. Shellback variations

So, if you see a Shellback tattoo, they're either a Navy vet or they just really like turtles. (Wikimedia Commons) The shellback is simple enough: a sailor on official duty "crosses the line" of the equator. A golden shellback is more impressive; it means they've crossed the International Date Line. Even rarer, crossing at the Prime Meridian grants you access into the Order of the Emerald Shellback. There is also the ebony shellback for crossing the Equator at Lake Victoria (which is almost entirely in Ugandan waters) and a top-secret shellback for submariners who cross the equator at a "classified" degree of longitude. 🚩

([Military.com](https://www.military.com), October 7, 2021

We Are The Mighty | By Eric Milzarski;  
Submitted from Pat Harris)

# Thank You Sponsors!

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**GRAVELY FAMILY TOURS USS GRAVELY ON NOVEMBER 6**

On November 6, 10 members and three generations of the family of Vice Admiral Samuel L. Gravelly lead by his niece Laurette Tuner were provided a tour of the **USS GRAVELY** at Norfolk Naval Station. The Gravelly family was joined by Richmond Navy League Council member Patrick Harris and his family. The visitors received a warm welcome by the ship's captain Commander Corey Odom and a very informative tour was provided by the **GRAVELY** crew. The **GRAVELY** is currently in port preparing for deployment early next year. 🇺🇸



**Gravelly and Harris families in front of GRAVELY's 5-inch gun.**



**RICHMOND, VIRGINIA COUNCIL  
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