



DEC 2024



# The Lucky Bag

**RICHMOND, VA COUNCIL NAVY LEAGUE OF THE UNITED STATES**



Photo: Courtesy of Pearl Harbor Warbirds

## THEY SERVED – WE REMEMBER

83 years ago, Japan launched a 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. The total number of American battle-related deaths is approximately 291,557.

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

### PEARL HARBOR REMEMBRANCE DAY

FRIDAY DECEMBER 6, 2024  
11:00 AM AT THE VA WAR MEMORIAL  
621 S. BELVIDERE STREET RICHMOND, VA 23220  
**GUEST SPEAKER: RDML MICHAEL T. CURRAN**  
**SUPPLY CORPS, USN (Ret.)**

*The Richmond Navy League extends an invitation to all citizens of the Commonwealth of VA as our Nation's colors are presented by the Varina High School NJROTC Color Guard. 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

Vaughan F. Dize



Greetings Fellow Richmond Council Navy League Members and Friends.

In November we celebrated Veterans Day by attending events at Hermitage High School sponsored by their MCJROTC. On November 8, we had a successful pierside visit on one of our adopted ships, **USS Normandy**. November 14<sup>th</sup>, Tom Hassell and I visited another one of our adopted ships, **USCGC Northland**, to present the Coast Guardsman of the year award to MT1 Daniel Perez. **Northland's** CO CDR Brian Gismervik presented the Richmond Council Navy League with a plaque commemorating the 25th Anniversary of our adoption of this ship. (adopted April 1999).

Friday December 6th is our annual Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day at the Virginia War Memorial at 11:00 AM. All are encouraged to attend.

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

Tuesday December 10<sup>th</sup>, RDML John Tammen, Jr., SES Deputy Director N97 US Navy Undersea Warfare Division, will be speaking at The Houston-Holicky-Sitter Forum, at noon, at the Publix at John Rolfe Commons, 2250 John Rolfe Parkway Henrico, Virginia. I encourage our members and readers of this publication to attend.

On December 13th, the **USCGC Northland** will deploy, returning to port in February.

A reminder, **December is when the proposal for the 2025 Board of Directors are selected. Please return your ballots as soon as possible.**

In closing, for economic reasons, in 2025, the cost of our luncheons will increase from \$25.00 to \$30.00. The cost of lunches for military members who attend will continue to be covered by the Richmond Council, free of charge. The cost for the luncheon not only covers the cost of the meal but is also used to support the Richmond Council in supporting our nation's sea services. ✍

## CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Chaplain John A. Harler, M.D.

### THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS



December 24-25, 1914, on the Western Front in WWI

"Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy; without holiness, no one will see the Lord." (Hebrews 12:14).

In Early December 1914, Pope Benedict XV appealed to the leaders of Europe that the guns fall silent, at least upon the "night the angels sang," hoping the leaders would negotiate a lasting peace. Although that did not happen, on December 23-25, 1914, there was an unofficial cease-fire along a portion of the Western Front. German soldiers began placing Tannenbaum (Christmas trees) sent by the German Emperor William II outside their trenches in "No Man's Land" and began singing hymns such as "Stille Nacht" ("Silent Night"). British soldiers responded with carols of their own. This led to a friendly game of "football" (soccer), exchanging gifts, and burying each other's dead. This became known as the "**Christmas Truce**".

As we approach the Holiday Season, many families feel tense about the prospect of coming together in this season of political division. Perhaps we can learn from the above history, which offers several lessons:

- **Trench Warfare** – are we so entrenched in our political opinions that we feel incapable of hearing the feelings of those with whom we disagree but whom we love?

- **No Man's Land** – are we willing to step out of our trenches into No Man's Land and hear the Angels singing?

- **Cease-fire** – can we find the courage, as those soldiers did, to rise above our differences for a time of family togetherness that may result in a better understanding of one another?

In Matthew 5, verse 9, Jesus gives the following Beatitude: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God." So, what does it mean to be a peacemaker? It means to place our relationships above our personal preferences and opinions – to be able to disagree with each other in love.

Let us ask ourselves – Is it better to be right or to be loved? ✍

## 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 MEMBER

Michael J. Pantele

### SPONSOR

John A. Harler, M.D.



# *You are cordially invited to Council's Annual Business Meeting Luncheon Wednesday 22 January 2025 at Willow Oaks Country Club*

Council President, Vaughan Dize, extends an invitation to all Richmond Navy League members & guests to join us at our Annual Business Meeting Luncheon and hear the review of Council's varied activities during 2024. Arrive early and enjoy the complimentary fruit and cheese island and wine beverage.

Following lunch, Council's Annual Business Meeting will be conducted, and the 2025 Officers and Board Members will take their oath of office. Council members are asked to mail-in their proxy forms **to be received by January 13, 2025.** ✍



## **ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING LUNCHEON SCHEDULE**

**DATE:** Wednesday 22 January 2025

**PLACE:** Willow Oaks Country Club  
6228 Forest Hill Ave R, VA 23225

**TIME:** 11:00 AM Social  
12:00 PM Annual Meeting begins

**COST:** \$ 35.00 per person

*Complimentary fruit and cheese island  
and wine beverage*



2024 Board of Directors sworn in by Council's Judge Advocate, Thomas T. Hassell, Jr.

**RESERVATION DEADLINE: WEDNESDAY 15 JAN. 2025 (Payment must be received with reservation form)**

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

Make reservation(s) for: **ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING LUNCHEON – WEDNESDAY JAN. 22, 2025**

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

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

Regular meal served unless special meal is indicated: **Circle 1 or 2 - Veggie Meal(s) / Fish Meal(s)**

Total # of \_\_\_\_ Res. @ **\$ 35.00** Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Navy League Office #: (804) 355-7557

Make check payable (and mail to): Richmond Council NLUS P.O. Box 11201 Richmond, VA 23230



## COUNCIL'S PIERIDE VISIT ON USS NORMANDY (CG-60) NOVEMBER 8, 2024



On a warm sunny Friday in November, 17 Navy League members and guests traveled to Norfolk, to go aboard one of our adopted ships, the guided-missile cruiser, **USS Normandy (CG-60)**.

Upon arriving in Norfolk, George Feitig, Council's Liaison, briefed the group on the importance of safety during their tour of **Normandy**, as they were undergoing renovations and to be especially careful when climbing ladders.

The group was met by Chief Matthew J. Bender, who conducted the tour. Some of the interesting areas visited were:

- the locations topside where the missiles would leave the ship
- also topside, were the 2-CIWS, Gatling Gun. (CIWS: Close-in Weapon System, which is a rapid-fire, six-barrel Gatling style gun, used for close-in defense against incoming threats, like missiles and small craft. Essentially, it is a self-defense system mounted on the ship to quickly engage nearby targets).

- the Mess Decks
- the Bridge, seeing and sitting in the Captain's Chair

The group ended the tour observing the Mark 45 Mod 4 5-inch gun. Its function is used for surface warfare operations, including firing against smaller vessels and potential threats.

During this tour, George Feitig presented CO CAPT Nathan Diaz a check in the amount of \$400.00 for **Normandy's** MWR Fund (Morale, Welfare & Recreation).

We appreciate Chief Bender's time in giving the group a better understanding of the importance of **Normandy's** role in protecting our waters. 🇺🇸



Ensign and Chief Bender greet Navy League members and guests upon arrival.



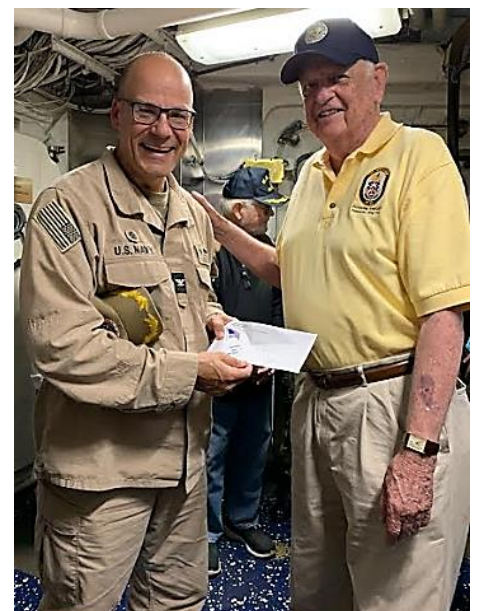
The group learns about the operation and uses of the Mark 45 Mod 4 5-inch gun used for surface warfare.



Phillip Gahm and son on the ship's bridge taking in the view from the Captain's Chair.



Council members and guests get an overview of ship's operations.



Ship's Liaison, George Feitig, presents Council's check to CO CAPT Diaz.



**AMERICA DIVISION SEA CADETS VIST  
THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE MARINE CORPS  
QUANTICO, VA**



**COUNCIL PRESENTS USCGC *NORTHLAND* (WMEC-904)  
COAST GUARDSMAN OF THE YEAR AWARD**



On November 14, 2024, Vaughan Dize, Council President and *Northland's* Liaison, along with Council Director, Tom Hassell, presented Machinist Technician 1 (MT) Daniel Perez with the Coast Guardsman of the Year Award. Bravo Zulu!

# RICHMOND NATIVE NAMED JUNIOR SAILOR OF THE QUARTER SERVING AT GUANTANAMO BAY

By [militarymedical](#) on October 28, 2024



**GUANTANAMO BAY, Cuba** – Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Tyree Bryant was named Junior Sailor of the Quarter, third quarter, fiscal year 2024, at U.S. Navy Medicine Readiness and Training Command, Guantanamo Bay, Oct. 17, 2024. Bryant serves as the Multi-Service Ward Leading Petty Officer at U.S. Naval Hospital Guantanamo Bay. (U.S. Navy photo by Emily McCamy/released).

**Story by Emily McCamy**  
**U.S. Navy Medicine Readiness and Training Command Guantanamo Bay**

Courtesy story by Rick Burke, Navy Office of Community Outreach – Millington, TN.

Petty Officer 3rd Class Tyree Bryant, a native of Richmond, Virginia was recently selected as Junior Sailor of the Quarter (JSOQ), third quarter, serving with U.S. Navy Medicine Readiness and Training Command (NMRTC) Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

JSOQ is an award given to an enlisted sailor in the Navy who is in the pay grade of E-4. The award recognizes sailors who demonstrate sustained superior performance, leadership, and professionalism.

"I am honored by this selection because this recognition is a testament to the hard work and dedication that I strive for every day," said Bryant. "This award serves as a reminder of the high standards expected of me and I look forward to continuing to make a positive impact within our organization. I am grateful for the trust and confidence my leadership and peers have placed in me to represent my command and the Navy as the quarter four selected."

Bryant, a 2015 graduate of Varina High School, joined the Navy six years ago.

"I was in a relationship with a girl I knew I wanted to marry," said Bryant. "I knew I wanted to give us a better life. I went to college but didn't take it seriously and failed. I tried local jobs that took me nowhere. I joined the Navy for my wife and now daughter, Elora. The Navy helped form me into the man I am today, one my family can feel secure with and be proud of."

The skills and values needed to succeed are similar to those found in Richmond.

"I have constantly tried to rely on my own strength and understanding," said Bryant. "Before I left for boot camp, I remember my pastor telling me to allow God to lead my path. This has stuck with me throughout my career. Through all the challenges I've faced in the Navy, putting God at the forefront of that has led to my success."

Today, Bryant serves as a hospital corpsman responsible for providing medical care to Navy and Marine Corps personnel and their families.

"My favorite part of my job as a hospital corpsman is being able to make tangible differences in families' lives every day," said Bryant. "Whether that's providing emergency care in a field setting or conducting training. The camaraderie stands out significantly, especially being attached to Marines. There is nothing that turns a team into a family like being in vigorous conditions and embracing it together."

NMRTC focuses on three critical mission priorities: warfighter readiness,

medical force generation and supporting the delivery of high-quality health care at Naval Medical Center at Guantanamo Bay.

With 90% of global commerce traveling by sea and access to the internet relying on the security of undersea fiber optic cables, Navy officials continue to emphasize that the prosperity of the United States is directly linked to recruiting and retaining talented people from across the rich fabric of America.

Bryant serves a Navy that operates far forward, around the world and around the clock, promoting the nation's prosperity and security.

"We will earn and reinforce the trust and confidence of the American people every day," said Adm. Lisa Franchetti, chief of naval operations. "Together we will deliver the Navy the nation needs."

Bryant has many opportunities to achieve accomplishments during military service.

"My proudest moment in the Navy was when I was awarded my Fleet Marine Force qualification," said Bryant. "Aside from it being an extremely challenging qualification to achieve; there is a deeper meaning, a bridge between the Marine Corps and the Navy. I get to wear a symbol of unification between two of the most decorated military branches to ever exist on my uniform every day."

Bryant can take pride in serving America through military service.

"I am a small part of the world's greatest Navy," added Bryant. "I love being part of an organization that continually protects our waterways and sustains commerce around the world. During times of need the Navy is always first to the scene, I am honored to serve an organization that has created a culture to serve those who are in need." ✍️



# 2025 INVOICE

## THIS INVOICE IS FOR RICHMOND COUNCIL NAVY LEAGUE DUES AND VOLUNTARY DONATIONS

NATIONAL DUES ARE BILLED SEPARATELY.

Annual Dues: Richmond Council Navy League: January 2025- - \$40.00

**Please mail your remittance before 13 January 2025**

Additionally, voluntary contributions from Navy League members play a vital role in the support of Council's youth programs (Sea Cadets, JROTC), the Deployment Dollars Program, the Care Package Program in addition to providing funds for Navy Family Support groups and the Morale, Welfare & Recreational Fund aboard Council's adopted ships.

**YES, I'D LIKE TO HELP:**

General Purpose: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Sea Cadet \$ \_\_\_\_\_

JROTC Youth Programs \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\*Anchor Club: **USS ANCHOR CLUB 2025** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

YOUR DONATION OF \$100 (OR MORE) WILL  
PROVIDE FUNDS FOR CARE PACKAGES TO  
DEPLOYED MEMBERS OF THE MILITARY.  
SUPPORT FOR OUR FOUR ADOPTED SHIPS  
AND FOR SUPPORT OF COUNCIL'S YOUTH  
RECOGNITION AND AWARDS PROGRAM; THE  
U.S. NAVAL SEA CADETS & JROTC UNITS.

**Total "Voluntary" Contribution -----** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\*Members making a "voluntary contribution" of \$100.00 or more will be designated members of the **USS ANCHOR CLUB 2025** and will be listed in *The Lucky Bag* throughout 2025 under the Anchor Club banner.

NOTE: "Voluntary contributions" are considered in excess of Council's dues of \$40.00

	<u>SUMMARY</u>
Council Dues 2025 - - - - -	\$ <b>40.00</b>
Voluntary Contribution - - -	\$ _____
Amount Enclosed - - - - -	\$ _____

**THANK YOU for mailing your remittance before 13 January 2025**

Your cancelled check is your receipt  
Tax Exempt 501(c)(3) IRS Code EIN 54-1162696

Please make check payable & mail to: Richmond Council NLUS P.O. Box 11201  
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**Please fill out your contact information to assist us in keeping our records up to date:**

Member's Name (Please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

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Address: \_\_\_\_\_

## ADOPTED SHIPS UPDATE

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



**USS Normandy (CG-60)**  
**CO: CAPT Nathan Diaz**  
**XO: CDR Adam J. Samson**  
**CMC: CMDCM Andrew Conover**

**George L. Feitig, Jr., Liaison**  
**Dennis Biggs, Ass't Liaison**

**USS Normandy** is currently moored at Pier 2, Naval Station Norfolk. She is undergoing an arduous Continuous Maintenance Availability (CMAV), with all hands working to keep her mission ready at a moment's notice. While some much-required maintenance goes on, her crew is completing certification validations. Warfare areas such as Mobility Damage Control Warfare (MOB-D), Naval Surface Fire Support (NSFS), and AT are being completed without mistake. Furthermore, **Nor-mandy's** sailors are excited to have returned home and spend time with loved ones. Sailors are getting the much-needed rest they've earned from executing the nation's tasking. If you find them in the Hampton Roads area, please feel welcome to greet them! If you, a family member, or a friend have served onboard, please feel free to reach out. Although we may be on the high seas or moored pierside, they will always be welcomed onboard. Well done! 🇺🇸

Very respectfully,  
LTJG John Barber  
FCO  
**USS Normandy (CG-60)**



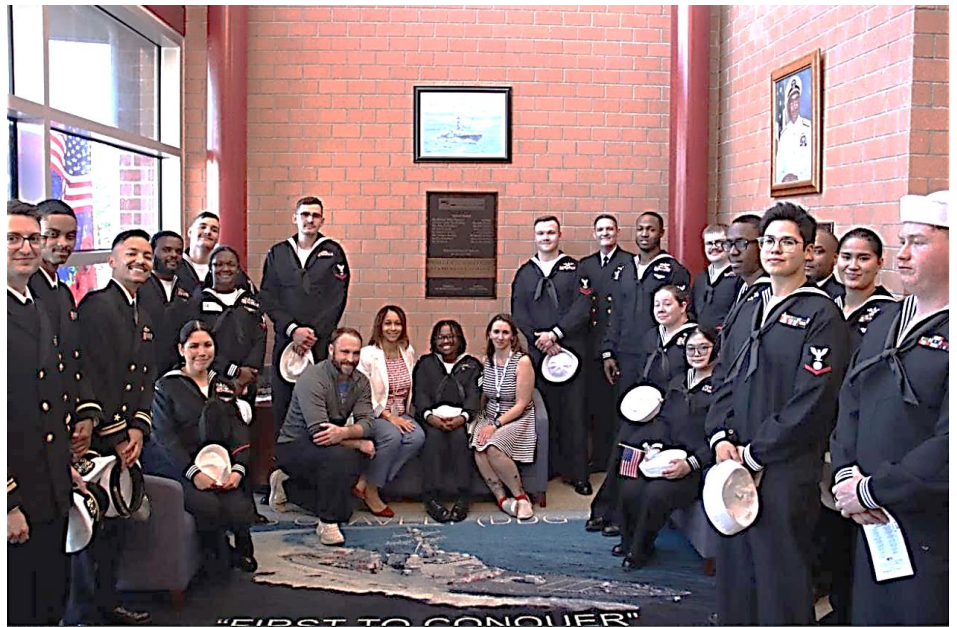
**USS Gravely (DDG-107)**  
**CO: CDR Brian C. Sanchez**  
**XO: CDR Greg Piorun**  
**CMC: CMDCM Timothy Bickerton**

**Courtney Mustin, Liaison**  
**Patrick Harris, Ass't Liaison**

## MRS. ALMA B. GRAVELY December 22, 1921 – January 3, 2024



Mrs. Alma Gravely, spouse of VADM Samuel L. Gravely and the ship's sponsor, was laid to rest at Arlington National Cemetery, November 15, 2024. Twenty-four Sailors from **USS Gravely** represented the crew to honor the Gravely family's legacy. Mrs. Gravely passed away on January 3, 2024, and was 102 years old. She was the embodiment of being a devoted naval spouse and a remarkable woman who will be missed by all. Services were led by **USS Gravely's** Chaplain, LCDR Jonathan Alexander.



Sailors from **USS Gravely** had the tremendous pleasure of joining Samuel L. Gravely Jr. Elementary for their Veteran's Day Celebration, November 8, 2024. Sailors joined students and local veterans for remarks and tributes honoring those who have served and continue to serve our nation. Thank you to Gravely Elementary and the local community for being such gracious hosts.



## USS GRAVELY ANNOUNCES NEW COMMAND MASTER CHIEF



Welcome aboard Command Master Chief LeDezman Johnson! He is a native of Lawtey, Florida who enlisted in the United States Navy in March 2001. His previous sea duty stations include **USS Carr (FFG-52)** Norfolk, Virginia; **USS Carney (DDG-64)**, Mayport, Florida; **USS Tortuga (LSD-46)**, Norfolk, Virginia. 🇺🇸



**USS Carter Hall (LSD-50)**  
CO: CDR Steven E. Grey  
XO: CDR Brittany N. Lynn  
CMC: CMDCM Benjamin Cruz

### Report by Pat Robson, Liaison

**USS Carter Hall** is currently in the BAE Shipyard. 🇺🇸



**USCGC Northland (WMEC-904)**  
CO: CDR Brian C. Gismervik  
XO: LCDR Patricia Green  
COB: GMC Matthew Winters

### Vaughan F. Dize, Liaison

#### Greetings from **USCGC Northland!**

Since returning to Portsmouth at the end of September, the crew has been hard at work in preparation for an upcoming patrol in mid-December. From machinery repairs and deck cleaning to system updates, each day has been spent ensuring **Northland** is mission-ready. Beyond the standard in port routines, **Northland** has taken the lead in advancing the 270 fleet by beta testing an optimized in port overnight manning. The introduction of an optimized in port duty section has been well-received, and feedback from **Northland's** trial period will inform decisions on po-

tential adoption across the fleet. Additionally, the crew has been testing new wireless network systems that could greatly enhance life underway.

Alongside these tasks, **Northland's** crew has dedicated time to both personal and professional growth. Many crew members participated in Weapons Range Week, Non-Compliant Vessel Pursuit Week and Law Enforcement College – intensive training sessions led by senior crew members to streamline qualifications. A number of **Northland's** crew also attended an All-Hands engagement with the Commandant and Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard, where FN Ferguson was publicly recognized for his outstanding dedication to the mission. FN Ferguson's acknowledgement reflects the commitment to growth and teamwork that defines the entire **Northland** crew.

With another month in port, **Northland** will continue to maximize this time on land, ensuring these efforts pay off for the upcoming patrol and future missions.

We are deeply grateful to the Richmond Chapter for their unwavering support. Until next time, fair winds and following seas. 🇺🇸



**FN Ferguson receiving recognition from the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard (MCPOCG) and Commandant.**



**CO CDR Gismervik (on left) participated in the Ceremonial Cake Cutting at Richmond Council's Sea**

## Services Luncheon on October 23, 2024.

Very Respectfully,  
LCDR Trish Green  
Executive Officer  
USCGC **Northland** (WMEC-904)



**USCGC Spencer (WMEC-905)**  
CO: CDR Justin Strock  
XO: LCDR L.H (Hank) Deatrich  
COB: BMC Cody Johnson

Thomas T. Hassell, Jr., Liaison  
Thomas A. Jennings, Ass't Liaison

**USCGC Spencer (WMEC-905)** is making steady progress toward reconstitution at Coast Guard Yard in Baltimore, Maryland. Crewmembers are returning to the ship to begin their reconstitution efforts. Our Engineering Department is busy unloading equipment, organizing their spaces and restoring machinery and ship's systems back to full functionality. The Yard employees continue their work to bring all of the new generators and main engines online and complete their required testing. We are in the final stages of the Service Life Extension Program (SLEP) and the entire crew is expected back onboard **Spencer** very soon.

Back in Portsmouth, crewmembers completed an inventory and maintenance of all of our required gear and equipment in storage that is needed to restore **Spencer's** operational readiness. Additionally, many of our crew members continue gaining necessary qualifications through temporary duty assignments aboard local 270s.

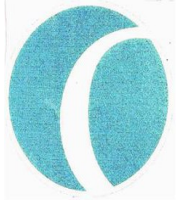
We sincerely appreciate the unwavering support of the Richmond Navy League and look forward to sharing more exciting updates on our progress! 🇺🇸



Very Respectfully,  
ENS Lea Walker  
Public Affairs Officer  
USCGC **Spencer** (WMEC-905)

## Thank You Sponsors!

Your Financial contribution to the Richmond Navy League provides Funds for programs supporting those serving in the United States Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard and Council's Youth Programs; The Naval Sea Cadet Corps and the Local Navy and Marine JROTC Units.



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***Wishing all of you many blessings during  
the upcoming Holiday Season and  
throughout the New Year!***



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*Thanks for jumping on board !!!*

## 2024 ANCHOR CLUB MISSION:

YOUR DONATION OF \$100 (OR MORE) PROVIDES FUNDS FOR THE SUPPORT OF OUR SEA SERVICES AND THEIR RELATED YOUTH PROGRAMS.

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