

**JUNE 2020** 



### RICHMOND COUNCIL. NAVY LEAGUE OF THE UNITED STATES



NORMANDY has remained at sea the entire month of April in an effort to keep the entire HARRY S. TRUMAN Carrier Strike Group COVID-19 free

### **QUARANTINED AT SEA**

Excerpted from Robin Beres' column in Richmond Times Dispatch Apr 29, 2020

Robin is the Richmond Times Dispatch Deputy Opinions Editor, a retired Navy Chief Petty Officer and a Board Member of the Richmond Navy League.

How this blasted virus has impacted us all. Health care workers are overtaxed and tired. Out-of-work Americans are worried about their financial futures. Infected individuals are struggling to get better. Too many are grieving the loss of loved ones. The rest of us are sick and tired of being homebound.

We all long to get out and enjoy the spring weather. And yet — all things considered — it's far better to be home and unable to get away than to be away and unable to get home. Consider the thousands of soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines across the globe who were ready to come home, but cannot because of the U.S. Department of Defense's "stop movement" order issued March 13. As of now, this first-of-its-kind order from Secretary of Defense Mark Esper remains in place until June 30. Its intent is to stop the spread of COVID-19 within the military. (continued on page 3)

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Harvey V. Lankford, M.D.



### **NOW HEAR THIS**

At first we did not think there would be a June *Lucky Bag* because with all of the cancelations, there was little to report. Actually, by working from afar, your Navy League Council has stepped up, following our Motto, "They Serve, We Support".

In this digital issue, we share with you the activities of our "Covid Relief Fund". Rather than our usual donation to ships for deployment dollars, MWR, awards and other activities, we have donated, instead to support sailors and/or their families. In a way, this is a big Care Package program. In addition to allotting \$5000 from our yearly budget for Adopted Ships and supported units, we have received an additional \$1500 in donations from members like you.

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Thank you for your interest in this program.

Normally in May, our Annual Golf Outing sponsorships raise a large percentage of our funds for the year. Because it has been postponed until September 23, we will rely on individuals like you for your continued support. Please donate now by sending a check to the office or by using your credit card on the website.

# SARDONIC NAUTICAL WORDS FROM THE DAY OF SAIL

Because of the virus, some of our quarantined sailors are indeed in prison at sea (or on land). "No man will be a sailor who has contrivance enough to get him into a jail; for being in a ship is being in jail, with a chance of being drowned".

Samuel Johnson 1709-1784, known as the witty Dr. Johnson.

## **CHAPLAIN'S CORNER**

By John A. Harler, M.D.

"Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for Me." (Matt. 25:40)

As we go through this time of required confinement, there are many things upon which we may reflect. We consider all the activities we are missing and all the people with whom we normally come into contact. One reflection that has occurred to me is that perhaps I had been taking too many people for granted because they have always been there, as I expected they always would - my medical providers and their staff, the waitress at my regular restaurant, the bank teller, the dry-cleaning attendant and so many others that I had usually dutifully paid and passed on by. Had I been too self-focused to ask about their day and to ask about their story?

We naturally ascribe worth to the events of each day. We see one meeting as critical and the next meeting as mundane. We check off tasks. We give some people our attention and others we gloss over. I wonder at times whether we get it all backwards. In God's economy, are the "incidental" occurrences of the day what matters?

Each day we interact with people who work in stores or by phone. In our communication, we either let them know that they matter, or that we have more important things to which to attend. Those incidental interactions tell more about our character and our faith than the achievements we accomplish.

Jesus seemed to make this very point when he said, "whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for Me". (Matt. 25:40)

Who is "least" in our lives? For some, it is the "insignificant" people that sprinkle throughout our day. That may be people who serve us, fellow employees, or the person on the other end of the phone. For others, ironically, we treat the people we love the most like the least. Our patience wears thin at home. We trade our attention with the person in front of us for the person we are texting.

Perhaps, during this down time, we might do some self-examination and consider how much an **incidental** kind word spoken may brighten another person's day!



# CONGRATULATIONS TO CADET JOHN HERRERA

Richmond Council Navy League just heard good news that one of our protégés, John Herrera of Hanover High School and Lee Davis High School NJROTC, had been accepted to two schools for next year, UVA and its Naval ROTC and the Naval Academy. He recently announced he has accepted his appointment with the Naval Academy in Annapolis, MD.

Congratulations Midshipman, John Herrara!

#### QUARANTINED AT SEA continued from page 1

One of the largest groups of military personnel impacted by the order is the Harry S. Truman Carrier Strike Group. Although the aircraft carrier and its escort ships completed their scheduled deployment and in normal times would be home by now, the Navy has decided the vessels should remain at sea off the East Coast.

The sea service has seen the highest number of COVID-19 cases of the military branches. However, none of the ships in the Truman's battle group have been in port since early March. That means the roughly 7,500 sailors attached to those ships are unexposed to the virus. The Navy intends to keep them that way.

No one is pretending this wasn't a difficult decision. Rear Adm. Andrew Loiselle, commander of the Truman Battle Group, issued a news release addressing the families of those sailors. He noted: "We recognize that these are unique circumstances and the responsible thing to do is to ensure we are able to answer our nation's call while ensuring the health and safety of our sailors. We thank you for your continued love and support as we remain focus[ed] on this important mission".

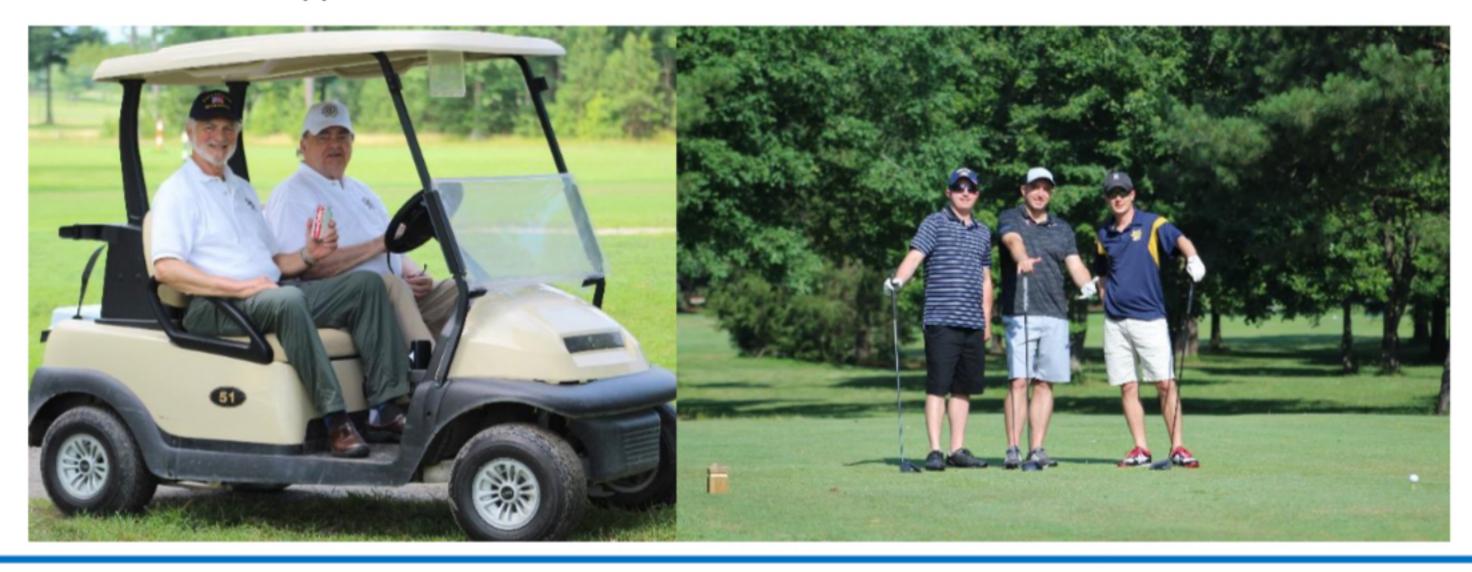
In full disclosure, I am the mom of a sailor on the **USS TRUMAN**. Our son, Joe, is serving as a "shooter" — one of a group of officers responsible for safely launching and recovering aircraft on the carrier. It is a job with zero margin for error.

To the crew of the USS TRUMAN and its entire battle group: Stay strong. This time, we've got your back.

### Spring forward to a wonderful day of golf in the fall!

SEPTEMBER 23, 2020

We greatly appreciate the faithfulness of our supporters who come out every year in the spring for our annual fund-raiser golf outing. We especially thank all who have already supported through sponsorships for our 2020 golf outing. Thank you for your patience and understanding as we have had to comply with the required time of confinement and postpone our outing to the fall. We are looking forward to being set free from confinement and having a great day of fellowship and golf on September 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Hollows Golf Club. We ask that our members continue to stay in touch with our sponsors as the time approaches.



# MCV/VCU PERSONNEL DELAYED RETURNING HOME

Council member, Steven Jones, MD, received a message from his son, Patrick Jones, MD, serving in Iraq. Orthopedic Surgeon, Lieutenant Commander Patrick Jones (M.D.'10) and Emergency Medicine Physician Commander, Matthew Lawrence (M.D. '02) stand in front of their Role 2 Medical Facility in Erbil, Iraq. They are currently deployed with Navy Expeditionary Medical Unit 10G in support of Operation Inherent Resolve. Because of COVID-19, departure from Iraq has been delayed until July.

Patrick and Matthew did not know each other prior to this deployment, but being fellow Rams and Richmond natives was an instant connection.



LCDR Patrick Jones, MD, USN (at left) & Commander Matthew Lawrence, MD, USN, Erbil, Iraq

### ADOPTED SHIPS UPDATE

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



**USS NORMANDY (CG-60)** 

CO: CAPT Christopher Stone
XO: CDR Theresa L. Kaylor
CMC: CMDCM Douglas Newman

Adam J. Fiedler, M.D., Liaison
AHOY Richmond Navy League!

NORMANDY remained at sea the entire month of April in an effort to keep the entire Harry S. Truman Carrier Strike Group COVID-19 free. We have returned to the east coast of the United States and have spent our time re-honing our advanced warfighting capabilities, as well as finding ways to keep our Sailors refreshed as we remained deployed at nearly the eight month mark.

To keep our skills sharp, we have borrowed the pre-deployment format known as "COMPTUEX" or composite unit training exercise and have modified it in order to keep our strike group ready and agile to respond anywhere in the world that we are called. Our strike group has conducted high end training across a wide range of warfare areas to include anti-air, anti-subsurface, signals intelligence, as well as many others. It is crucial that we maintain a high proficiency, allowing our nation increased flexibility as it grapples with the current pandemic.

NORMANDY had a unique opportunity, we spent a few days close in to the shore in an effort to avoid weather, which subsequently gave us the ability for Sailors to utilize their cell phones and communicate with their friends and families! While it is not the same as a port visit or a return to home port, any way we can give our Sailors a small win, is a major accomplishment!

As always we appreciate your continued outreach, especially in this trying time for our nation.

Warm regards, CAPT Chris D. Stone Commanding Officer



USS CARTER HALL (LSD-50)
CO: CDR Matthew R. Shellock
XO: CDR LaDonna M. Simpson
CMC: CMDCM Donavon Gray

#### Pat Robson, Liaison

Greetings from the FIGHTIN 5-0!

Another month has come and gone in the new world of COVID-19, but the CARTER HALL is happy to report that the pandemic has not affected the ship's ability to conduct operations at sea. Even with new and necessary precautions to keep the crew safe, the ship headed out to sea to continue to train and hone our skills. We conducted helicopter and small boat operations and even found the time to celebrate our April birthday's with a special meal.

We are continually thankful for the support and friendship of the Richmond Navy League. Through your generous support, commissary gift cards were sent to the ship to provide to Sailors and families in need. These Sailors will now have the ability to purchase healthy and needed food at the commissary freeing up personal funds for other bills.

As always, we are thankful for the extensive support and friendship that Richmond Navy League has provided to each of our Sailors and Marines.

We are: Working for Peace, Ready for War!

Very Respectfully, LCDR, CHC, Chaplain Williams, USN



USS GRAVELY (DDG-107)
CO: CDR Michael O'Reilly
XO: CDR Corey Odom
CMC: CMDCM Dion C. Dupree

Alan Palmer, Liaison
No Report at press time.



USCGC NORTHLAND (WMEC-904)

CO: CDR Charles L. Banks XO: LCDR Joshua DiPietro COB: GMC Robert Boyer

# Thomas T. Hassell, Jr., Liaison Greetings from USCGC NORTHLAND!

As our patrol comes to an end, NORTHLAND's crew celebrates being the first United States warship to transit through the Panama Canal during the COVID-19 outbreak. The Command and crew carefully worked together to develop modified schedules and procedures to overcome obstacles posed by COVID-19, which proved to be successful as the entire crew of over 100 stayed healthy for the duration of patrol.

The crew demonstrated the highest commitment to excellence and devotion to duty, evident in the 130+ qualifications earned and 50 shipwide drills conducted. The first month of patrol included over 30 flight operations and 20 hours of small boat evolutions. This was key to developing the crew's pursuit skills necessary for the counter drug mission in the Eastern Pacific. In a difficult time worldwide, NORTHLAND's crew reremained focused on the mission and accomplished a significant amount of training in a short amount of time.

A highlight of this patrol, USCGC NORTHLAND had the unique opportunity of conducting operations with USS PINCKNEY (DDG-91), homeported in San Diego, California. Together they practiced tactical maneuvers to aid in the interdiction of targets of interest in support of the counter narcotic mission. This exceptional opportunity strengthened interagency relations and sharpened the skills of both crews.

Very Respectfully, XO LCDR Joshua DiPietro

### IN MEMORY OF

Rev. Adrian W. Harmening, OSB (Order of St. Benedict)

May 24, 1927 – May 18, 2020

Council's Chaplain for 28 years - - - see page 7

# This is an updated version of the email sent to Board April 28, 2020 about our new COVID RELIEF FUND

Dear Richmond Council Board,

As Richmond Council President, I would like to share with you some of the heart-warming activities over the last month related to our Covid Relief Fund.

We decided to contact our adopted and supported units with the idea of NOT giving deployment dollars, MWR funds or other benefits to them this year. Instead, we would support Sea Service families in the current time of hardship from the Covid pandemic. We had already contributed a month ago working through the New York Council Navy League. to benefit the personnel of the hospital ship **COMFORT**. The next step was to help our other adopted or supported units.

I would like to acknowledge the impressive and dogged efforts of Board member Pat Robson, our liaison with **CARTER HALL**. Pat and the ship's Chaplain, Lieutenant Patrick (Rick) Williams worked out a way while the ship was at sea to get around the slow legal hurdles that usually interfere with donations to ships. Pat purchased \$1300 in \$25 gift certificates from the commissary using his own credit card. This was necessary because the Navy League credit card could not be used. He, of course, will be reimbursed by Council. When the ship returned in a few days, Chaplain Williams picked up the gift certificates. He is distributing the gift cards to needy families, limiting them to one per family, and informing them of the source of the donation, Richmond Council. I would like to personally thank Pat and Rick for jumping in and making this happen. In Rick's emails he was graciously complimentary of Richmond Council. Richmond Council is equally rewarded by the efforts of Pat and Rick. We salute CO CDR Matthew Shellock and the crew of the good ship **CARTER HALL**.

There is a second example. This time it was a proposed recipient unit that we applaud. As your liaison with Fighter Squadron Blacklions, I reached out to the XO, CDR Brian Pinckney. The same offer was made to Blacklions who were extremely appreciative of Richmond Council and our offer to support their personnel and families. However, in this case, the Blacklions had suffering neither viral infections nor family financial hardships. Instead of accepting our MWR contribution for Blacklions themselves, XO CDR Pinckney and CO CDR Leslie Mintz wanted to honor the humanitarian spirit of our offer and directed us to the Navy Marine Corps Relief Society. After discussion with the Oceana branch office Director, Council donated \$1000. We commend the Blacklions for their generous decision and continue to look forward to working with them.

Our **GRAVELY** liaison Alan Palmer contacted XO CDR Corey Odom who reported the need for housing and feeding of sailors who must be quarantined before boarding the ship, an expense not covered by the Navy, but out of the pockets of other sailors! Council contributed \$1500. Meanwhile, **NORTHLAND** has just returned from deployment, **NORMANDY** is still offshore, and liaisons Tom Hassell and Jay Fiedler are making contacts to plan for our support of their families as well. Your Richmond Council Navy League Council is at work: "They Serve, We Support".

Harvey Lankford, MD
President Richmond Council

### THANKS TO CONTRIBUTORS OF THE COVID RELIEF FUND

Many thanks to the Council members who have responded to the call for donations. We changed our yearly budgeted contributions to the welfare of sailors to include sailors and their families affected by the pandemic. Your generosity added to this sum and was distributed as explained elsewhere in this issue. If anyone else would like to contribute, they may send a check to our office or donate through our website:

http://www.navyleague-richmond.com/donate.html

### COVID RELIEF FUND FOR NAVY-MARINE RELIEF SOCIETY (NMCRS)

#### Dear Richmond Council Navy League,

On behalf of the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society (NMCRS), please accept my heartfelt appreciation and thank you for your recent charitable contribution of \$1,000.00.

During 2019, the Society disbursed \$42.5 million in interest free loans and grants to over 47,000 Sailors, Marines, retirees and their families in need. Thanks to patriotic, caring, and benevolent organizations such as the Richmond Council Navy League, the

Society is able to respond with enthusiastic, effective, and timely support to the distress call of our Sailors, Marines, and their families.

Thank you again!

With Warm Regards, Brittany Sadler, AFC®, Director

(Note: Navy-Marine Society supports the following programs: Society's Visiting Nurse Program; Society's Education Program; Society's Budget for Baby programs and Society's financial assistance for disaster relief and emergency situations)

# COVID RELIEF FUND FOR BLACKLIONS

### Dear Richmond Navy League,

Thank you so very much for the Richmond Navy League's generous donation to the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society. We certainly appreciate the relationship with the Richmond Navy League and look forward to getting back together when we are able.

Stay healthy and safe.

All the best, CDR Leslie "Meat" Mintz Commanding Officer VFA-213 Fighting Blacklions

## 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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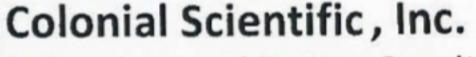












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### **REV. ADRIAN W. HARMENING, OSB**

**SINCE 1863** 

At the age of 17, Adrian Harmening joined the Navy and spent over one year serving with the military police on Okinawa during WWII. After serving in the Navy for 34 months and fours years of theology, he was ordained a priest in 1955.

"By his actions and his faith, the Rev. Harmening has brought many into the Catholic fold and many straying sheep home. His deep love of God and of the liturgy are obvious", Robin Beres, the RTD's deputy opinions editor, noted in a 2008 column. "He has married legions of cadets and baptized battalions of babies. Under his tutelage, Benedictine has graduated future congressmen, surgeons, military officers—successful men in just about every walk of life. The success of Benedictine High School, where he served as principal for 22 years, is, in part, a product of the love and energy the Rev. Harmening has devoted to it."



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# Thanks for jumping on board!!!



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#### IN MEMORIUM Henry E. Allen Jr., USAAC,

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