

JULY 2020

The Lucky Bag

RICHMOND COUNCIL, NAVY LEAGUE OF THE UNITED STATES

COUNCIL'S SUMMER LUNCHEON JUNE 11, 2020 WHAT WOULD HAVE BEEN

Our Summer Luncheon plans for June went awry like everything else lately. Commander Jean Marie Sullivan, the Commanding Officer of **USS WHIDBEY ISLAND (LSD-41)**, was to be our Pearl Harbor Day speaker last December, but duty called. Then, she was to be our Summer Luncheon speaker, but quarantine called. A report about her is included here anyway!

CDR Sullivan attended University of Rochester under the ROTC program and received her commission in 2000. She later earned a Master's Degree in Organizational Management from George Washington University. Her sea tours included onboard the **USS WINSTON S. CHURCHILL (DDG-81)**, the **USS FORREST SHERMAN (DDG-98)**, the Operations and Plans Officer for Destroyer Squadron 28 and the Executive Officer on **USS GONZALEZ (DDG-66)**. CDR Sullivan's many shore assignments included being a Special Assistant to Chief of Naval Operations and helped develop and execute strategic policy supporting U.S. and NATO efforts. She is a recipient of many Navy and Defense Medals.

CDR Sullivan and Council President Harvey Lankford had discussed what her speech would have been. Her speech title was: "Why the Navy Matters: A Personal Story." She planned to, "discuss my personal connection to **USS WHIDBEY ISLAND** and the operation she conducted off the coast of Liberia in mid-1990s. My father was a Foreign Service Officer stationed at the U.S. Embassy when the civil war broke out in Liberia. He's agreed to join me at the luncheon which, I think, your members would enjoy".



GUEST SPEAKER
CDR Jean Marie Sullivan
Commanding Officer
USS WHIDBEY ISLAND (LSD-41)

We appreciate CDR Sullivan and hope to see her next time.

*FIRST IN HER CLASS,
FIRST ALWAYS*

USS WHIDBEY ISLAND (LSD-41)

USS WHIDBEY ISLAND (LSD-41) is the lead ship of the **WHIDBEY ISLAND**-class of dock landing ships of the United States Navy. The ship was named for Whidbey Island, in Puget Sound, Washington, the location of NAS Whidbey Island. The name was ultimately derived from the sailor, explorer and engineer, Joseph Whidbey.

The well deck was designed to hold four Landing Craft Air Cushion (LCAC) Hovercraft, five of the vehicle ramp is raised, for landing Marines. Recent deployments have instead filled the well deck with a combination of Landing Craft Utility's (LCU), Assault Amphibious Vehicle's (AAV), Tanks, Long Acting Reversible Contraceptive's (LARC) and other USMC vehicles and gear. The **WHIDBEY ISLAND**-class of ship also benefits from multiple cranes and a shallow draft that make it ideal for participating in amphibious operations.

Note: The Class of LSD (Landing Ship Dock) for USS WHIDBEY ISLAND is pictured below.



Length: 610'
Construction started: Aug. 4, 1981
Launched: June 10, 1983

Commissioned: February 9, 1985
Homeport: Fort Story/Little Creek
Virginia

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Harvey V. Lankford, M.D.



NOW HEAR THIS

I wish I had not been correct in my May President's message when I wrote, "The current medical events will change all of our lives in ways that were not foreseen just a short while ago. There will be long-lasting changes in many aspects of our lives: medical and health, social, spiritual, political, financial, the economy and more". All this, the virus and much more, has come to pass.

Richmond Council activities are still canceled through July, but our mission of supporting the Sea Services continues as explained in the June and July *Lucky Bag*. I hope that you are following what we do on our website's *Lucky Bag* page, and also that you are receiving our digital *Lucky Bag* sent by email to the entire membership. If your

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email address changes please send the updated address to the office at: navyleaguerichmond@comcast.net

Our Annual Benefit Golf Event in May has been rescheduled for September 23. Members and Board Members are instrumental in contacting sponsors. Now is the time to start talking to sponsors. This is a difficult time for small non-profits like us, and for businesses and individuals who ordinarily would donate to us. But please try. Stay well. ✍

WORDS OF WISDOM

"May you live in interesting times" is considered a curse, not a blessing. The expression is used ironically; life is better in "uninteresting times" of peace and tranquility. ✍

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

By John A. Harler, M.D.

TO REMOVE WALLS OR MONUMENTS, THAT IS THE QUESTION:

In recent months, our nation has been challenged by two pandemics: one a new strain of a deadly infectious virus and the other a more deeply seated, but equally deadly, virus of racial injustice. The former virus has resulted in a total change of how our society relates with social distancing and isolation and covering of our faces, while the latter virus has resulted in the needless slaying of African Americans by our police. The coexistence of these two viruses has produced a perfect storm in which peaceful protests have deteriorated into violence, looting and killing of policemen along with the potential for a resurgence of the infectious viral spread.

We are hearing demands for such things as defunding our police departments and tearing down of the 130-year-old monuments of men representing the generals who fought for the South in the American Civil War. One side believes that the monuments represent ongoing enslavement of African Americans, while the other side believes they simply represent our history. Some believe that tearing them down simply represents an ongoing act of civil war.

One day recently as I was considering these things, I had a vision (maybe

it was a dream) of whites and blacks standing hand in hand surrounding the Lee Monument and praying prayers of repentance and forgiveness for feelings of hatred toward one another from generations past to the present. I wondered if perhaps what really needed to be torn down were the walls of separation between us rather than the statues erected to our history.

In Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" Speech in 1963, he stated: "I have a dream that one day right here in Alabama little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers".

The Bible says, "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus". When Joshua entered the Promised Land, the Israelites first battle was with the walled city of Jericho. God told them to march around the city seven times which they did by faith, and the walls fell, giving them an easy victory.

The people of the United States neither rejoice in, nor want, slavery of a people or individuals. We abhor the withholding of justice for any person or persons. What has to come down is what really divides us...the walls and idols of the heart.

The hymn, *In Christ There Is No East or West* says it well with these lyrics:

In Christ there is no East or West,
In Him no South or North;
But one great fellowship of love
Throughout the whole wide earth.
In Him shall true hearts everywhere
Their high communion find;
His service is the golden cord,
Close binding humankind.

Join hands, then, members of the faith,
Whatever your race may be!
Who serves my Father as His child
Is surely kin to me. ✍

SEAPOW MAGAZINE SPOT- LIGHTS RICHMOND COUNCIL

National Navy League's newsletter editor confirmed some of the details about our COVID Relief Fund. An article will appear in the July (or likely August) *Seapower* magazine. Be sure to look for us whether you get the digital or the paper version.

RESULTS ARE OUT FOR THE ANNUAL INSPECTION - - - AMERICA DIVISION SEA CADETS

AMERICA Division is the Metro Richmond/Central Virginia unit under the command of Warrant Officer Gary Rifle. Since 1969, the AMERICA Division has been serving the youth in Richmond and the surrounding areas for 51 years. The primary sponsor is The Richmond Council Navy League of the United States.

The U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps (USNSCC) is a non-profit youth organization established by the National Navy League of the United States in 1958 and chartered by Congress in 1962. It is supported by the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Coast Guard. USNSCC is a National youth leadership development organization that promotes interest and skill in naval disciplines while instilling strong moral character and life skills through leadership and technical programs modeled after the Navy's professional development system.

The USNSCC mission is to encourage the growth and development of American youth, especially those who are thinking about a future in military service by instilling in them patriotism, leadership, discipline, honor, pride and courage. Cadets develop these qualities through a Navy enlisted-oriented training program with emphasis on leadership skills, accountability and teamwork.

With dedication and commitment from the volunteer leaders, AMERICA Division was ranked #2 in the Nation in 2019, out of approximately 400 units. The unit was also runner-up for the 2019 Navy League of Canada Challenge award, which is awarded to the most improved unit for the year, and was ranked #12 for the Chairman's award for recruiting and retention.

Congratulations from Richmond Council Navy League to the AMERICA Division Sea Cadets! 🚩

AMERICAN DIVISION SEA CADETS UPDATE:

Headquarters has given permission to start holding drills. They will be modified to adhere to the Governor's requirements. Their first modified drill (4 hour) was planned for June 27. 🚩

OLD FRIENDS, NEW FRIENDS ON THE CARTER HALL

The Navy transfers its personnel about every two years. This cycle of personnel growth and development requires us to wish fair seas and following winds to friends we have grown to revere and to heartily welcome those we've yet to meet.

LCDR Patrick "Rick" Williams, the Chaplain and Public Affairs Officer for the **USS CARTER HALL**, will transfer to St. Louis in late June to recruit other Chaplains. Rick has been the catalyst for many homelike conveniences for the **CARTER HALL** crew. Our Richmond Navy League literally refurbished the **CARTER HALL** Chapel into a lounge, library, and educational center with a widescreen TV, three sets of library shelving, and ...with a non-working coffeemaker on the mess decks...a Keurig coffeemaker and pods arranged about two days before getting underway. Rick has been a formidable partner in our mission to serve those who serve us. LT Block will relieve Rick and will become our new member of our liaison team.

CMDCM Donavan Gray, the **CARTER HALL** Command Master Chief when I, Pat Robson, became our liaison in 2018 has become the Command Master Chief of the **USS KEARSARGE (LHD-3)**. He and Rick worked together to interpret the needs of their crew. CMDCM Adam Singleton has relieved CMDCM Gray. CMDCM Singleton joined the Navy in 1998. Interestingly, his first active duty station was an LSD, the **USS GERMANTOWN (LSD-42)**. Subsequently, he has amassed a wide variety of experience in the Coastal Riverine community, ordnance disposal, military security, and aviation warfare. To read CMDCM Singleton's full and official biography, it's under the leadership tab on: www.public.navy.mil/surflant/lhd50/Pages/Bio3.aspx. He's had a stellar career.

As our Richmond Council Liaison to the **USS CARTER HALL (LSD-50)**, I am eager to meet our new leaders. We have enjoyed a vibrant working relationship with this ship and we have much to do ahead of us. **CARTER HALL** is "*working for peace, ready for war*". We will be supportively beside them. 🚩

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

Report from Adam J. Fiedler, M.D., Liaison

USS NORMANDY, one of the support ships of the **USS HARRY S. TRUMAN** Carrier Strike Group, returned home after more than six months at sea on June 5. In stark contrast to "normal" homecomings, there was not a single spouse, loved one, family member or friend on the pier to greet them. They were required to remain in their private vehicles in a parking lot nearby. When further details are available, we will pass them on to you.

Welcome home, Sailors! 🚩



USS CARTER HALL (LSD-50)

CO: CDR Matthew R. Sherlock

XO: CDR LaDonna M. Simpson

CMC: CMDCM Adam Singleton

Pat Robson, Liaison

Greetings from the FIGHTIN 5-0!

We just "got the band back together" today, June 12! We had a few Sailors test COVID+. The great news is that all of them had mild symptoms, if any, and that we've already cleared a bunch to return to work. Our battle against COVID, though, is far from over.

Your Council's help to date has been nothing short of absolutely OUTSTANDING. We greatly appreciate your generosity.

I'm going to let the dust settle for the next few days and then Rick will reach out and ask for some assistance if needed.

Again, everything that your liaison and the greater Richmond Navy League have done for **CARTER HALL**

USS CARTER HALL cont. on page 4

ADOPTED SHIPS UPDATE

USS CARTER HALL continued from page 3

has built a relationship that will remain for years to come. I personally appreciate the kind words and the support during this difficult time. 🍷



USS CARTER HALL (LSD-50)
CO: CDR Matthew R. Sherlock
XO: CDR LaDonna M. Simpson
CMC: CMDCM Adam Singleton

Pat Robson, Liaison

Greetings from the FIGHTIN 5-0!

Summer is finally here and it will be nice to experience the warm weather after the crazy spring all of us have had with COVID-19. **CARTER HALL** was tasked to be the ready Defense Support of Civil Authorities (DSCA) ship in Jun, which meant that we were on call to get underway to provide humanitarian relief in response to natural disasters, such as a hurricane. Although this is a desperately needed mission, we are thankful that we were not called as it means that humanitarian relief was not needed. **CARTER HALL** is currently conducting a needed maintenance period to ensure the ship is ready for her upcoming deployment.

Just like much of the world, COVID-19 made her appearance on the **CARTER HALL**. We are happy to report that most of our Sailors have already recovered and returned to work and we expect the final members to return to work soon. Thank you once again for your support and friendship. During the pandemic, our Sailors and their families have received your donated Commissary gift cards to purchase healthy and needed food 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

Greetings from **USS GRAVELY**!

Again, it has been a long time since we have touched base. Since our last check-in, the ship is now safely out of the drydock and BACK IN THE WATER floating pierside at NASSCO Shipyard!

We have slowly begun to take back some of our vital systems in our engineering plant such as Seawater Service and our Firemain system which is used to energize firehoses throughout the ship. Our Sailors are working closely with the civilian technicians to complete the install of our upgraded Local Area Network and plan to begin migration of that system back on the ship next month. Additionally, we are starting to ramp up our training and qualifications, specifically in Engineering as we begin to prepare to exit the Maintenance Phase of the ships lifecycle and enter the Basic Phase where we focus on unit level training.

Lastly, it is import to note that since we last checked-in the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted us all, including **GRAVELY**. We are now faced with a new way of doing business in the Navy on many fronts. One of the changes has been the requirement for commands to execute a Restriction of Movement (ROM) for new Sailors checking-in from outside the local area in an effort to minimize any potential spread of the virus from a newly checked-in shipmate. In the process of doing so, we often have to put our new junior Sailors in hotels and provide them meals organized and supported by our Chief Petty Officer's Mess.

The Richmond Navy League provided an extremely generous donation of 1,500 dollars to support providing the meals for our junior Sailors placed in ROM status and to date has provided over 12 meals: **THANK YOU RICHMOND NAVY LEAGUE FOR ALL YOUR SUPPORT!** 🍷

Very Respectfully,
XO CDR Corey D. Odom



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**!

NORTHLAND's crew was reunited with their families after a 70-day Eastern Pacific patrol. Since return to homeport, **NORTHLAND's** crew has been navigating and adjusting to the day-to-day limitations COVID-19 has created. **NORTHLAND** is undergoing an in-depth, dockside maintenance period, including an overhaul of the ship's steering system, foc'sle nonskid resurfacing, and a plethora of tank inspections.

This month brings the beginning of a large transfer season and we are saying goodbye to and welcoming a large group of shipmates. This will present its own challenges with the upcoming patrol and the new qualification of our crew members, but we are continuously training and are prepared to overcome any challenges.

In June, **NORTHLAND's** Commanding Officer, Commander Charles Banks, will be departing for his new job as Chief of Cutter Forces, Atlantic Area serving as the fleet manager for the Atlantic Area Commander, in Portsmouth, Virginia. He will be relieved by Commander Patricia Bennett, coming from serving as the Executive Officer on **USCGC TAMPA**. All hands have worked tirelessly to prepare for the Change of Command ceremony on 16 June 2020. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 global pandemic, the small ceremony will be held virtually with few outside guests invited.

While at anchor at the end of patrol, the crew held a reception to celebrate Commander Banks' time on **NORTHLAND**. Commander Banks gave a moving, parting speech and shared his favorite memories with the crew from his time onboard. Thank you for all that you have done for **NORTHLAND**. Fair winds and following seas CDR Banks!

The crew is working diligently to complete all of the dockside maintenance and prepare **NORTHLAND** for this upcoming patrol. Thank you for your support! 🍷

Very Respectfully,
XO LCDR Joshua DiPietro

CORONAVIRUS WILL UNDERCUT NAVY RECRUITMENT



U.S. Navy photo of USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT by MCSS Kaylianna Genier

As the immediate crisis from the pandemic passes, the military will resume its normal movements, albeit with caution. For the Army and Air Force, such caution will be geared to the individual; those suspected of suffering from the coronavirus can be more easily isolated were stationed or returned home. Such precautions will never be so easy in the Navy: Most enlisted share berthing with several dozen colleagues and even officers and pilots can have two or three roommates. Those senior enough to have single staterooms still work in close quarters. Ward rooms and heads have ample supplies of hand sanitizers, but hundreds pass through each in a day. Passageways are narrow and ladders impossible to clean after each use.

Navy life is about to get far harder compared to other services. After coronavirus outbreaks aboard the **USS BOXER**, the **USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT** and **USS KIDD**, the Navy will be cautious about how it lets sailors and others on and off ships. Rather than end liberty hours just before a ship's deployment, personnel will likely need to report to their ship at least 14 days before it departs to live in quarantined facilities and away from their families. Even then, it may not be possible to keep ships completely safe. Land-based pilots and crew, staff COD (Carrier Onboard Delivery) flights to bring mail, emergency supplies, and those joining underway, and to evacuate those granted emergency leave. Manning the rails and then waiting weeks to disembark will be de-

moralizing.

Gone are morale-boosting tiger cruises when sailors' children are allowed to join for the final leg home, and gone are the VIP tours and media programs which the Navy utilized to bolster its image, explain its function, and indirectly help with recruitment.

There will always be those who seek a Navy career, but the coronavirus may already have stripped away many of the Navy recruiters' top selling points. Ships and platforms garner headlines, but personnel remain the backbone of the military. Can the Navy keep up with its needs in the post-coronavirus world? 🍷

Excerpted and paraphrased
From *Real Clear Defense*
By Michael Rubin May 26, 2020

NAVY LOVE STORY WITHIN THE LANKFORD FAMILY

In 1944 George was an apprentice at Newport News Shipbuilding. Ida was a shipyard typist using an extra wide manual carriage to fit wide drafting sheets. They had met on a blind date. George joined the Navy and went off to boot camp at Great Lakes, then training as a Petty Officer Third-Class Radio Technician in Chicago, Oklahoma and Washington State. After being stationed at the Navy Yard in DC, he had weekend leave and thumbed a ride home to marry Ida.

She sold her dog to buy a corsage. After a brief time in DC together, he was transferred to Orange, Texas. His ship at Galveston, the **USS STICKELL (DD-888)**, deployed to Gitmo and Ida took the train back to VA. After the War and his tour of duty, George became a marine architect at Newport News. My brother Nelson was born a few years later, then me. 🍷

Richmond Council Navy League
President Harvey Lankford

GOLF SPONSOR INFO NEEDED

Members & Board Members:

Please provide John Harler with email addresses of the sponsors you contacted for last year's Golf Tournament. We need them this year and want to share our June *Lucky Bag* with them so they can see where some of their sponsorship money goes. John Harler's email is: j.harler@verizon.net.

Thank You! 🍷

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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Dear Richmond Council

It's been some time since I had a chance to follow-up on our activities in support of the troops in the NYC area during the COVID 19 crisis. Once again, thank you for your generous support for our efforts as your contribution helped us make a difference. The following link is to our website which contains a short video that summarizes our activities, along with acknowledging our contributors including the Richmond Council: <https://www.nynavyleague.org/>

Frank R. Russo, Jr
New York Council, Navy League of the United States

Editors note: during the video, the Richmond Council blue banner or headliner is briefly visible at the bottom of the page at the 22 - 23 second mark.



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Thanks for jumping on board !!!



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