



December 2025



The Lucky Bag

RICHMOND, VA NAVY LEAGUE OF THE UNITED STATES

*You are cordially invited to Council's Annual Business Meeting Luncheon
Wednesday 14 January 2026 at Richmond Country Club*



Council President, Vaughan Dize, extends an invitation to all Richmond Navy League members & guests to join us at Richmond Country Club for our Annual Business Meeting Luncheon and hear the review of Council's varied activities during 2025. Arrive early and enjoy the complimentary fruit and cheese island.

Just a reminder, **all meals will be buffet-style that will include: pork loin, garden salad, vegetables, starch, rolls with butter, and rum raisin ice cream. A fish option is available, however, will only be available if requested on the reservation form.** Also, **walk-ins without prior notice will not be allowed.**

Following lunch, Council's Annual Business Meeting will be conducted, and the 2026 Officers and Directors will take their oath of office. Council members are asked to mail-in their proxy forms to be received by January 5, 2026. ✍

ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING LUNCHEON SCHEDULE

DATE: Wednesday 14 January 2026

PLACE: Richmond Country Club
12950 Patterson Avenue
Richmond, VA 23238

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

COST: \$ 35.00 per person

RESERVATION DEADLINE: MONDAY, JANUARY 5, 2026 (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: **ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING LUNCHEON – WEDNESDAY JANUARY 14, 2026**

Name: _____ Tel: _____ Email: _____

Name: _____ Tel: _____ Email: _____

Fish meals will **ONLY** be available to those requesting it prior to business meeting. If desired, Circle 1 or 2 for a fish meal

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 Tel #: 804-355-7557

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Vaughan F. Dize



Greetings, Fellow Richmond Council Navy League Members and Friends.

Before I get into November's news, I would like to reach out to our membership for help. We need volunteers to help on the golf committee, as well as an office manager with some computer skills. The office manager would only have to come into the office one day a week. (Bill Butler is currently working on the job description). Also, we are in need of volunteers to be liaisons to our High School JROTC Programs (Patrick Henry NJROTC or Hermitage MCJROTC). Please let me know if you are interested, or have any questions, about any of these positions.

This is a busy time of the year for your Richmond Council:

- On September 25th the guided missile destroyer, **USS Normandy (CG-60)**, was decommissioned. She had been one of our adopted ships for 35 years. **USS**

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

Normandy has been towed to Philadelphia, PA and placed in the Navy's inactive ship facility.

- On November 7th CDR Brittany Lynn assumed Command of the **USS Carter Hall (LSD-50)**. Two of our Board Members attended this Change of Command Ceremony. (see page six of this issue for more details).

- November 28th was the U.S. Navy's Chaplains Corps Birthday. At our request, Governor Youngkin issued a proclamation for the week of November 23-29, 2025, as Navy Chaplains Week in the Commonwealth of Virginia. A copy of the Declaration and an RCNL Challenge Coin was sent to all of our adopted ships chaplains.

- Sunday December 7th, at 2:00 P.M., is the Richmond Council's annual Pearl Harbor Remembrance Ceremony, at the Virginia War Memorial. All are encouraged to attend.

- On December 12th, a trip is scheduled to tour either the **USNS Comfort** or the **USNS Montford Point**.

- On December 15th, the trip to the Marine Museum had to be cancelled due to the lack of interest and the government shut down.

December events in Naval History

- December 7, 1941, Japan attacks Pearl Harbor, killing 2,403 U.S. Citizens.


- December 8, 1967, JAG Corps established.

- December 10-24, 1950, Evacuation of Hungnam, North Korea.

- December 18, 1965, Navy River Patrol Force, Operation Game Warden, begins in Vietnam.

- December 20, 1989, U.S. invades Panama in Operation Just Cause.

- December 21, 1861, Congress creates Navy Medal of Honor for Sailors and Marines.

Thank you for your continued support of the Richmond Council Navy League. I wish you all a Happy Holiday Season. 

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 luncheon.

New Member

Randolph Beales
Edward M. Saylor, M.D.

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Chaplain John A. Harler, M.D.



FOOTPRINTS IN THE SAND

While experiencing some physical challenges recently, I have asked the Lord in prayer what He wants me to learn from these personal challenges. I believe He is telling me to trust Him, and He will see me through them.

We are all probably familiar with the poem *Footprints in the Sand*:

One night, I dreamed a dream. I was walking along the beach with my Lord. Across the dark sky, scenes from my life flashed. For each scene, I noticed two sets of footprints in the sand, one belonging to me and one to my Lord.

When the last scene of my life shot up before me, I looked back at the footprints in the sand. There was only one set of footprints. I realized that this was the lowest and saddest time of my life. This always bothered me, and I questioned the Lord about my dilemma.

"Lord, You told me when I decided to follow You, You would walk and talk with me all the way. But I'm aware that during the most troublesome times of my life, there is only one set of footprints. I don't understand why, when I need You most, You leave me."

He whispered, "My precious child, I love you and will never leave you, never, ever, during your trials and testings. When you saw only one set of footprints, it was then that I carried you."

Chaplain's Corner continued on page 3

Sponsor

Maria Gallegos
James R. Dageforde, M.D.

Chaplain's Corner cont. from page 2

A little boy once excitedly said, "I know God's first name!" When asked what it was, he replied, "It's Andy! I heard my father singing this morning, 'Andy walks with me, Andy talks with me...!'"

The above stories reveal two profound truths about God: He wants to be on a first-name basis with us, and He promises to walk with us through life and carry us through the hard times.

In Exodus 3:14, God reveals his personal name to Moses as, "I AM WHO I AM," a name later understood to be Yahweh. This is considered a first name; that signifies a desire for a deep, personal relationship with His people, not just a distant, formal title.

Psalms 46:1 describes God as our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

So, remember, we are never alone in our struggles. If we walk with Him, and we talk with Him, He will tell us we are His own. And the joy we share as we tarry there, none other has ever known. ✍

Governor Glenn Youngkin proclaims Navy Chaplains Week in Virginia



At the request of the Richmond Council Navy League, Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin proclaimed the week of November 23-29, 2025, as NAVY CHAPLAINS WEEK in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

On Monday, November 23, 2025, the Richmond Council Navy League presented Navy League Board Member, Father William J. Bartz, CAPT, CHC, USN (Ret.) with the signed proclamation from Governor Glenn Youngkin.

Copies of this signed proclamation were sent to all our adopted ships and commands, along with our Council's Challenge Coin.

Father Bartz continues to serve as the Endorsing Agent for Military Chaplains of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the USA. ✍



Father William J. Bartz, CAPT, CHC, USN (Ret.) receives the Certificate of Recognition from Richmond Council's Chaplain, John A. Harler, M.D.

CERTIFICATE of RECOGNITION

By virtue of the authority vested by the Constitution in the Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia, there is hereby officially recognized:

NAVY CHAPLAINS WEEK

WHEREAS, the United States Navy Chaplain Corps was established on November 29, 1775, to provide spiritual care and moral guidance to Sailors and Marines, making one of the oldest continuous traditions of faith and service to our armed forces; and

WHEREAS, since the earliest days of the Continental Navy, Navy chaplains have stood beside those who serve at sea and ashore, offering comfort, counsel, and hope in times of both peace and war; and

WHEREAS, Navy chaplains represent many faith traditions to provide for the free exercise of religion for all service member, fostering resilience, respect, and unity across the fleet; and

WHEREAS, the Navy Chaplain Corps continues to serve with honor and compassion on ships, submarines, and aircraft carriers, in hospitals and combat zones, and within Marine Corps and Coast Guard units around the world; and

WHEREAS, Virginia, home to the world's largest naval base in Norfolk and a proud maritime tradition, honors the dedication of Navy Chaplains who strengthen the moral and spiritual readiness of our armed forces; and

WHEREAS, through prayer, council and example, Navy chaplains sustain the hearts of those who serve and remind us that faith and freedom are enduring pillars of our nation's strength.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Glenn Youngkin, do hereby recognize November 23-29, 2025, as **NAVY CHAPLAINS WEEK** in the COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA, and I call this observation to the attention of all our citizens.

...we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain ...



Photo: Courtesy of Pearl Harbor Warbirds

On Sunday morning, December 7, 1941, the Imperial Japanese Navy Air Service attacked the neutral United States at Naval Station Pearl Harbor, near Honolulu Hawaii, killing 2,403 Americans and injuring 1,178 others. The attack sank four U.S. Navy battleships and damaged four others. It also damaged three cruisers, three destroyers, and one minelayer. Aircraft losses were 188 destroyed and 159 damaged.

National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day is to remember and honor the 2,403 Americans who were killed in the Japanese surprise attack on Pearl Harbor in Hawaii on December 1941.

Canada declared war on Japan within hours of the attack on Pearl Harbor, the first Western nation to do so. On December 8, the United States declared war on Japan and entered World War II on the side of the Allies.

In a speech to Congress, President Franklin D. Roosevelt called the bombing of Pearl Harbor “**a date which will live in infamy.**” (source; Wikipedia)

PEARL HARBOR REMEMBRANCE DAY

Sunday December 7, 2025
2:00 PM at the VA War Memorial
621 S. Belvidere Street Richmond, VA 23220

Guest Speaker: RADM John W. Tammen, USN (Ret.)
Deputy Director, Undersea Warfare Division,
Office of the Chief of Naval Operations.

*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 Division USN
Sea Cadet Corps 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.*

Lieutenant John William Finn First Medal of Honor Recipient of WW II



We're remembering the remarkable legacy Lieutenant John William Finn, the first Medal of Honor recipient of World War II for his extraordinary heroism during the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941.

As a Chief Aviation Ordnanceman stationed at Naval Air Station Kaneohe Bay, Finn was awakened by the assault and immediately rushed to his squadron's armory.

Despite being in an exposed position with no cover, he mounted a .50-caliber machine gun on an improvised tripod and fired relentlessly at incoming enemy aircraft for nearly two hours, even as strafing bullets and shrapnel inflicted over 20 wounds to his body, including hits to his scalp, shoulder, arm, foot, and abdomen.

Refusing to leave his post until the attack ended, he then organized aid for the wounded before seeking medical treatment himself, embodying selfless courage that saved lives and inspired his fellow sailors.

Finn was presented the Medal of Honor by Admiral Chester Nimitz in September 1942 and later rose to the rank of lieutenant before retiring after 30 years of service.

He passed away in 2010 at age 100 as the oldest living Medal of Honor recipient and the last from Pearl Harbor.

God bless this American hero. (source: #usnavy #ww2 #medal of honor at Pearl Harbor). 🇺🇸

James River High School NJROTC Veterans Day Celebration

On Thursday, November 12, James River High School NJROTC celebrated Veterans Day. One of the guest speakers was Alan Clemmons, USN (Ret.). Alan is a member of the Richmond Council Navy League and Council's liaison for the school. Alan spoke of his experience in the Navy with the Freelancers of Fighter Squadron 21 while attached to the **USS Coral Sea**. Another speaker was Master Chief Petty Officer (MCPO) Dave Preston. Dave was a Seabee and spoke of his time in Vietnam. The cadets asked several questions and seemed to enjoy hearing the "sea stories" from these Veterans. 🇺🇸



Gunnery Sergeant Gerome Atger (Naval Science Instructor, James River HS NJROTC); Richmond Council League Liaison, Alan Clemmons, USN (Ret.), and LCDR Matt Brink (Sr. Naval Science Instructor, James River HS NJROTC).



James River High School NJROTC Program currently has 105 cadets.

AMERICA Division Sea Cadets



On November 22, 2025, at the Cavalier Rifle and Pistol Club, AMERICA Division Sea Cadets had pistol qualifying testing. The results were: 10 Marksman; 7 Sharpshooters and 2 Expert.



Meet the new USN Sea Cadet Regional Director 05-3 LCDR JoAnn Taft, replacing LCDR Jeffrey Anderson.

HOUSTON-HOLICKY-SITTER VETERANS FORUM

Date: Tuesday, December 9, 2025

Place: Publix / 2nd Floor
Community Meeting Room
2250 John Rolfe Pkwy
Henrico, VA 23233

Time: Doors open 11:15 AM
Arrive No later than 11:45 AM

**Guest Speaker: Dennis Bigelow,
President James Monroe
Impersonator**

James Monroe was the last Revolutionary War era president, closing the work of the Founding Fathers. He secured our borders and gave the people of the U.S. a sense of territorial integrity and national identity. Dennis Bigelow is "James Monroe." He captures the character of "the fifth and forgotten president," the architect of our nation's first comprehensive defense posture following the destruction of Washington during the War of 1812. 🇺🇸

Thanksgiving Feasts Deployed to Troops Around the World

Military Times

By: Karen Jowers

Thursday Nov. 20, 2025

Whether they're feasting in dining halls, aboard ships, or at remote outposts, troops around the world are set to receive their Thanksgiving meals as 152,626 pounds of turkey have already arrived at their designated overseas locations, along with beef, ham, shrimp and the fixings according to the Defense Logistics Agency.

Even with the shorter timeline, that includes service members on board a dozen ships participating in the Caribbean Sea and Eastern Pacific in their "Southern Spear" operation against drug cartels, which began a few months ago.

The planning for the worldwide holiday food deliveries begins in the spring, when the Defense Logistics Agency Troop Support team gets order forecasts from the services. DLA relays the information to their vendors around the world, and they begin ordering products for the meals.

While DLA can't provide specific numbers of items sent to specific regions, all Navy ships, including those deployed to the U.S. Southern Command area of responsibility, received their Thanksgiving provisions by the end of

October, according to a spokesman for the Defense Logistics Agency. A number of the ships in that area will soon get fresh produce and bakery items from Puerto Rico, to supplement their frozen holiday items, he said.

National Guard troops deployed to locations within the U.S. are also getting their holiday meals at those locations. "DLA is tracking that all menu items are projected to be satisfied in full prior to Thanksgiving," the spokesman said, but numbers weren't available.

In addition to the 152,626 pounds of turkey, including whole and roasted, here is what has arrived for the troops' menus specifically at overseas locations:

124,022 pounds of beef
66,054 pounds of shrimp
6,512 cans of sweet potatoes
15,282 cases of pies and cakes
792 cases of egg nog
And other holiday treats

DLA is unable to track precise numbers for amounts of food provided for thanksgiving feasts for troops at state-side locations, the spokesman said.

The government shutdown did not affect the preparation for the holiday meals, he confirmed. Much of the work is done well ahead of time, and Defense Department guidance exempted any operations related to troop feeding from being affected. ✍

USS *Carter Hall* (LSD-50) Change of Command



CDR Brittany N. Lynn assumed command of **USS *Carter Hall* (LSD-50)** on Friday, November 7, 2025, at the Change of Command Ceremony, held at the Assault Craft Unit 4, Little Creek, VA. CDR Lynn replaces CDR Steven E. Gray, who will move onto duty at the Pentagon. CDR Phillip Wise has replaced CDR Lynn as XO.

CAPT Bryan K. Carmichael, Commander of Commander, Naval Surface Group Atlantic, was the keynote speaker.

Commander is a "mustang," which means that she was an enlisted Sailor before she was commissioned. She enlisted in 1999 with the rating of a Cryptologic Technician Maintenance. In 2004 she was selected for the Seaman to Admiral-21 program and attended OCS in Newport, RI. In 2007, CDR Lynn completed her B.A. in Security and Intelligence from Ohio State University and was commissioned as an Ensign.

From there, her Navy career has been one of hard work, great achievement, and varied experience. She has had ample time aboard "Gator Freighters."

Dennis Biggs and Pat Robson, our Navy League Liaisons to **USS *Carter Hall***, arrived with ample time to "grin 'n grip" with some key people on the ship. After about a year of only email exchanges, they had the pleasure of finally meeting CMDCM Chelsea Turner, the senior enlisted Sailor onboard. It was a delightful conversation in which they acquainted CMDCM Turner with how the Navy League supports our adopted ships. They also had the privilege of meeting CDR Phillip Wise, the XO, and to speak with LT. Wilesie Wint, the ship's Chaplain and PAO.

Finally, after the ceremony, they congratulated CDR Lynn on her promotion and stressed that the Richmond Council Navy League is standing-by to help **USS *Carter Hall* (LSD-50)** with any request. ✍



Soldiers and families enjoy a Thanksgiving meal together during the Hohenfels Thanksgiving Luncheon at the dining facility in Hohenfels, Germany, Nov. 26, 2025. (Sgt. Joseph Peake/Army).

A Thankful Feast for USS *Carter Hall* (LSD-50)

Do you want something else to be thankful for on this Thanksgiving Day? Add this to your list.

A couple of weeks ago, the **USS *Carter Hall* (LSD-50)**, one of our longest-tenured "adopted" ships, asked for us to help them provide Thanksgiving Dinner onboard for their crew. The ***Carter Hall*** is in the shipyard, and their galley is inoperable, so food was needed to be catered. This afternoon, I, Pat Robson (Navy League ship's Liaison) received this text from the **USS *Carter Hall***:

Good afternoon and Happy Thanksgiving.

Today, *Carter Hall* (LSD-50) would love to thank the generosity that brought food, comfort, joy, and a sense of home to our sailors on this Thanksgiving Day.

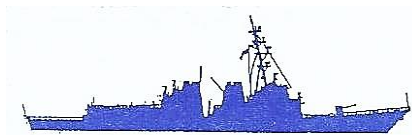
**I'm attaching some smiling faces with this message.
Have a great Turkey Day.**

It's very gratifying, knowing that the Richmond Council Navy League added a touch of home where it wasn't. 🍴



ADOPTED SHIPS UPDATE

(these reports may be edited to fit the space available)



USS Gravely (DDG-107)
CO: CDR Greg Piorun
XO: CDR Gregory Tornambe
CMC: CMDCM LeDezman Johnson

Courtney Mustin, Liaison
Patrick Harris, Ass't Liaison

USS Gravely is off the coast of Venezuela. 🚢



USS Carter Hall (LSD-50)
CO: CDR Brittany N. Lynn
XO: CDR Phillip Wise
CMC: CMDCM Chelsea L. Turner

Pat Robson, Liaison

USS Carter Hall is currently in port.

CDR Brittany N. Lynn assumed command of **USS Carter Hall** on Friday, November 7, 2025. (see page six for more details of the Change of Command Ceremony). 🚢



USCGC Northland (WMEC-904)
CO: CDR Brian C. Gismervik
XO: LCDR Charles Chavtur
CSEL: MKC Ethan Stanford

Vaughan Dize, Liaison

USCGC Northland's crew is making significant progress with dockside maintenance, preparing the ship for future USCG missions. Concurrently, many **Northland** crew members are serving on temporary assignments, bolstering manpower across the fleet, completing required qualifications, and maintaining crew readiness and proficiency.

In October, several crew members

achieved advancements and completed qualifications in their respective fields, demonstrating thorough preparation for service.

Looking ahead to November, **Northland** will begin preparations to enter the Coast Guard's Service Life Extension Program. This preparation involves creating detailed lists of equipment and systems for overhaul, aiming to extend the ship's lifespan and ensure its readiness for future missions.

Maintaining a high level of operational readiness, remains **Northland's** top priority. We deeply appreciate the continued support that allows us to maintain the highest standards of operational excellence in national service.

Fair winds and following seas. 🚢



Ensign Liam Roach advances to the rank of Lieutenant Junior Grade. Presented by Engineering Officer LT Amanda Roy and LTJG Roach's father, John Roach.

Very Respectfully,
XO LCDR Charles Chavtur



USCGC Spencer (WMEC-905)
CO: CDR Justin Strock
XO: LCDR L.H (Hank) Deatrich

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

This month we completed some big projects onboard and now shift our focus to underway preparations. While we prepare the ship, the crew continues to work on their own qualifications, training and gear preparations. With our scheduled repairs complete, systems testing is now in full swing across each department.

We recently sent some of the crew to conduct helicopter deck landing training onboard our sister ship, **USCGC Escanaba (WMEC-907)**, in partnership with helicopters from Air Station Elizabeth City in North Carolina. These crew members completed two days of training on the flight deck and in helicopter controlling stations, where they gained valuable experience, leading into our upcoming patrol with an embarked helicopter.



We have also said goodbye to several non-rates, who received orders to their respective rating "A" schools. Some were aboard briefly and others much longer, but each left their mark on the crew. It is a bittersweet farewell—we are proud of where they are headed and hopeful our paths cross again, wherever their careers lead, we hope they remember their time aboard Spencer with pride.

As we celebrate Thanksgiving, we are grateful for the progress across the ship and the growth each crew member has demonstrated in a short time. It is a feat we achieved together—proof of what a unified team can accomplish.

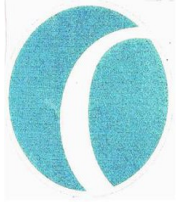
From the **Spencer** family to each of yours, we wish you a very Happy Thanksgiving!

Thank you, Richmond Navy League. 🚢

Very Respectfully,
CO CDR Justin W. Strock

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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A banner for Herndon Law P.C. featuring a background of an American flag and a gavel. The text includes the firm's name, tagline "Protecting what matters.", and contact information.

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Congratulations to the BLACKLIONS "Of the Year" Winners!



Pictured left to right: Commanding Officer CDR Swift; Chief Petty Officer of the Year, ADC Griffin; Sailor of the Year, AE1 Poe; Junior Sailor of the Year, LS2 Danmola; Blue Jacket of the Year, LSSN Casiano; Petty Officer of the Year, PR2 Lowe; Plane Captain of the Year, PR3 Chin, Command Master Chief Croshaw. Phenomenal work to all! (source:VFA-213 Blacklions Facebook).



**RICHMOND, VIRGINIA COUNCIL
NAVY LEAGUE OF THE U.S.
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EMAIL: navyleaguerichmond@comcast.net
WEB SITE: www.navyleague-richmond.com
FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/NavyLeagueRVA**



Thanks for jumping on board !!!

2025 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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John F. Bartholomew
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