



September 2025



The Lucky Bag

RICHMOND, VA COUNCIL NAVY LEAGUE OF THE UNITED STATES

Join us as we celebrate the founding of our U.S. Sea Services: **NAVY, MARINE CORPS, MERCHANT MARINE & COAST GUARD** At our Sea Services Luncheon – Wednesday, October 22, 2025

Come join us at our Sea Services Luncheon on Wednesday October 22, 2025, as we celebrate the founding of our U.S. Sea Services: **Navy, Marine Corps, Merchant Marine & Coast Guard**. Our guest speaker is Gunnery Sergeant Jerome E. Atger.

Jerome enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps where he attended Marine Corps Recruit Training at Parris Island, SC in November 2001. Private First Class Atger graduated recruit training in February 2002 and transferred to Marine Combat Training, Camp Geiger, NC in March 2002. He attended the Personnel Administration School at Camp Johnson, NC in April 2002. Upon graduating, he was assigned to Headquarters and Service Battalion, Marine Corps Recruit Depot where he served in numerous positions. He simultaneously worked for the Commanding General and trained personnel at Marine Combat Instructor Water Survival (MCIWS) Course until October 2005.

Corporal Atger was affiliated with the Marine Reserve Component in Novem-



GUEST SPEAKER

**Gunnery Sergeant (GySgt)
Jerome E. Atger**

ber 2005 and volunteered for Active Duty Special Work (ADSW) Orders from 11/2005 to 2/2012. In June 2007, he

attended the Sergeant's Leadership Course at Quantico, VA. Staff Sergeant Atger completed his tour on recruiting duty and service on active duty in February 2015.

Jerome began his career with the federal government as a Human Resources Specialist, at the Office of the Secretary of the Navy, Board for Correction of Naval Records in April 2015.

Jerome later transferred to the Department of Commerce to serve as the Special Assistant to the Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Middle East and Africa in August 2020. **(GySgt Jerome Atger's bio continued on page 3).**

SEA SERVICES LUNCHEON SCHEDULE

DATE: Wednesday 22 October

TIME: 11:30 AM Registration

12:00 PM Luncheon

12:45 PM Program

PLACE: Willow Oaks Country Club

6228 Forest Hill Ave

Richmond, VA 23225

COST: \$ 35.00 per person

Reservation Deadline for SEA SERVICES LUNCHEON: To be received by Wed. October 15, 2025

****Refund Policy 2025: Cancellations will be accepted & checks returned
UP TO and INCLUDING the "deadline date."**

RESERVATIONS FOR SEA SERVICES LUNCHEON – WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 22, 2025

Name: _____ Tel: _____ email: _____

Name: _____ Tel: _____ email: _____

Regular meal served unless special meal is requested (please circle): 1 or 2 Veggie Meal(s) / Fish Meal(s)

Total # of Res. _____ @ \$ 35.00 per person Enclosed: \$ _____

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.

The Richmond Council is heavily focused on our Annual Golf Outing. This is our **Council's biggest fundraiser**.

Our Care Package Program needs more addresses for forward deployed troops. If you know of someone who is deployed, please provide their name, APO address, and a list of their needs to the Navy League and we will send them a care package. This month, we sent a care package to Marine Justice L. Truman stationed in Germany.

Upcoming events include:

- September 9: Houston-Holicky-Sitter Luncheon at Publix on John Rolfe Pkwy. Guest speaker is Kevin McAleenan, former acting Secretary Homeland Security. Arrive no later than 11:45 AM.
- September 17: Council's annual golf

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Office: 2015 W. Laburnum Avenue
Richmond, VA 23227

Telephone: (804) 355-7557

Fax: (804) 355-8788

E-mail address:

navyleaguerichmond@comcast.net

Website: navyleague-richmond.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/NavyLeagueRVA

Editor: William W. McCathern, Jr.

Co-Editor: Nancy G. Butler

Production Assistants: Billy L. Butler, John

A. Harler, M.D. and Patrick D. Harris

Photographers: Vaughan F. Dize, Nancy Butler and Maria Gallegos

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tournament at the Hollows Golf Club in Montpelier, VA. **We need players and volunteers.** As with all our events, you do not need to be a Navy League member to participate, so bring your friends and family to this fun-filled event.

- September 25: At 10:00 AM our adopted ship **USS Normandy** will be decommissioned.

- October 13: At 11:00 AM U.S. Navy's 250th Celebration at The Virginia War Memorial.

- October 22: Sea Services Luncheon at Willow Oaks Country Club. GySgt Jerome E. Atger will be our guest speaker.

Until next month, fair winds and following seas. 🚢

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Chaplain John A. Harler, M.D.



CHANGE OF ATMOSPHERE

When I went to the doctor for a follow-up on my spine MRI and sciatica, he said, "The problem is gravity. The treatment is antigravity." So, I said, "Are you prescribing me a trip on SpaceX?" He meant an inversion table. However, sometimes a genuine change of atmosphere is beneficial for our health. I once found a copy of an old prescription for a trip to Arizona in the chart of a patient with asthma.

That got me thinking about my spiritual health. When we have a medical condition that causes us to be "laid up, so to speak, the Bible emphasizes that suffering and illness can be a profound

opportunity to draw closer to the Lord and learn from Him. My personal trainer, Carlos, once told me, "Remember, what you are going through right now does not define who you are; it's just where you are. It's like going from Richmond to California; you can't get there from here. You must have a layover."

So, we might consider those times of illness as layovers with the Lord. That is when we might consider asking the Lord what He is trying to teach us.

After the Israelites left Egypt in search of the Promised Land, they faced many challenges, including fiery serpents that would bite them, causing sickness and death. The Lord instructed Moses to create a bronze serpent, place it on a pole, and hold the pole with the bronze serpent high so that all could see it. If the Israelites were bitten by the fiery serpents and looked at the bronze fiery serpent on the pole, they would live. The Israelites had a layover, allowing them to grow their faith in God and their relationship with God.

God teaches us through suffering by using it as a tool for spiritual growth, character development, and drawing us closer to Him. Suffering can reveal our true selves, prompting us to confront areas needing refinement and to depend more fully on God. It can also cultivate compassion, strengthen our faith, and provide opportunities to comfort and encourage others.

So, remember the next time you are "laid up," it's just a change of atmosphere—a layover—and an opportunity to seek God's perspective. 🚢

There was an error in last month's issue of *The Lucky Bag*. The correct date of the Marine Corps 250th Birthday Ball is November 8, 2025, not the 28th. We apologize for the error.

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

Alan B. Clemmons

Sponsor

National Navy League

GySgt Atger bio cont. from front page.

Finally, the last position Jerome held as a civil service employee was as a Desk Officer with the U.S. Agency for International Development, Latin American and Caribbean Bureau in August 2022.

Simultaneously, Staff Sergeant Atger transferred to the Individual Mobilization Augmentee (IMA) Marine Corps Reserve Component in May 2015, where he served as a Military Transition Counselor under the Marine for Life Program in Northern Virginia until April 2016. Gunnery Sergeant Atger voluntarily transferred to the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) in August 2017 and returned to the IMA in August 2021 where he served as the Marine Administrative Chief in J-1 Directorate, U.S. Southern Command. Jerome retired from the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Component in August 2024. During his time in the IRR, Jerome earned his Master's in Arts Degree in International Development from Saint Mary's University of Minnesota in February 2021.

Jerome recently joined as Navy Junior Reserves' Officer Training Corps Instructor at James River High School, Midlothian, VA, in August 2025. 🇺🇸

AMERICA Division Sea Cadets Updates



Congratulations to former AMERICA Division CPO Alexander Liu on your graduation from the U.S. Naval Academy and your commission as an Ensign in the U.S. Navy. Ensign Liu will be stationed on the USS John Finn (DDG-113) homeported in Yokosuka, Japan. Bravo Zulu, Ensign, Liu.



Bravo Zulu to former AMERICA Division's PO1 Zach Clements Prototype (A School). Zach has been selected for promotion to ETN2 (Electronics Technician – Nuclear, Petty Officer Second Class) and will serve as a Junior Staff Instructor at the Nuclear Power School in Goose Creek, SC., for two years prior to reporting to a fleet submarine.



Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets welcomes former AMERICA Division's PO1 McKenna Carson to the class of 2029.

Ensign Wolf started her career as a Seaman Recruit with the Sea Cadets in 1999. Worked her way up to Petty Class Officer 1st Class and Lead Petty Officer until 2002. Look at her now . . .

CDR Rebecca Wolf Commanding Officer USS MOMSEN (DDG-92)



A native of Richmond, VA, CDR Rebecca Wolf graduated and was commissioned from the United States Naval Academy in 2006 with a Bachelor's of Science in Oceanography. After graduation, CDR Wolf attended the Naval Post Graduate School where she obtained a Master's Degree in Physical Oceanography in June 2007.

CDR Wolf completed sea tours as 1st Division Officer and Assistant Navigator on **USS Wasp (LHD 1)**, Fire Control Officer on **USS Forrest Sherman (DDG 98)**, Operations Officer on **USS Pinckney (DDG 91)**, and Training and Readiness Officer (N7) at Destroyer Squadron 23. Selected for Early Command, she served as Executive Officer and Commanding Officer of **USS Gladiator (MCM 11)**, forward deployed in Manama, Bahrain.

Following her Division Officer tours, CDR Wolf supported the Army's Military Intelligence Community in Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom. CDR Wolf completed her shore tour in Newport Rhode Island at the Surface Warfare Officer School in the Fleet Training Department (N72) where she helped create the Basic Division Officer Course (BDOC), instructed the Conning Officer Virtual Environment (COVE) trainer, and taught the Advanced Shiphandling and Tactics (ASAT) course. Following her time in Bahrain, she served as Deputy Executive Assistant and Flag Aide to the Navy's Chief of Legislative Affairs. Prior to

CDR Wolf continued on page 4.

CDR Wolf continued from page 3.

her arrival to **USS Momsen (DDG 92)**, she served as a Congressional Fellow in Congressman Garamendi's (D-CA) office.

CDR Wolf has been awarded the Meritorious Service Medal, Joint Service Commendation Medal, Navy Commendation Medal, Navy Achievement Medal, and multiple unit and campaign medals. (article obtained from <https://www.surcpac.navy.mil> 05 June 2024).

Congratulations, CDR Wolf on all your achievements! 🍀

Council's Luncheon Venue is Changing in 2026

The Richmond Council Navy League has had many wonderful events at Willow Oaks Country Club, but because of renovations in 2026, we have had to procure an alternate venue for our four scheduled luncheons in 2026.

We will be meeting at the Richmond Country Club (RCC) at 12950 Patterson Ave, Henrico, Virginia 23238.

Our 2026 luncheon schedule is as follows:

January 14 - Annual Business Meeting
March 11 - Admiral Samuel L. Gravely, Jr. Spring Luncheon
June 10 - CDR Theodore G. Ellyson Summer Luncheon
October 14 - Sea Services Luncheon

The Richmond Country Club policies dictate the following new guidelines for our 2026 luncheons:

- All meals will be buffet-style and include meat, garden salad, vegetables, starch, rolls with butter, and rum raisin ice cream. They offer a variety of meats, allowing us to select a different one for each luncheon.
- A fish option should be available.
- The registration form will indicate the due date, which may be 10 days before the event.
- Walk-ins without prior notice will not be allowed.
- The price will be \$35 per person

The main entrance is in the front, and the handicap entrance is located in the back of the building. 🍀

**One last reminder to:
Sign up
for Council's Annual
Golf Outing
Wed., September 17, 2025,
at the Hollows Golf Club
Montpelier, VA.
COST: \$95.00
Registration Forms are
available on our website:
navyleague-richmond.com.
Call the Navy League office if
you have any questions at:
804-355-7557**

Historical Trivia Did you know?

Hitler's own nephew enlisted in the U.S. Navy in 1944 to fight against his uncle's regime. Serving in the Pacific, William Patrick Hitler was wounded and awarded a Purple Heart.

Adolf Hitler's nephew served in the US Navy in WWII. William P. Hitler was sworn in on March 6, 1944, and went on to serve for three years as a pharmacist's mate receiving a Purple Heart medal for a wound he suffered.

William Patrick Hitler was born March 12, 1911, in Liverpool, England. His father was Alois Hitler Jr., the half-brother of Adolf Hitler. Alois left his wife and son to travel Europe. He eventually moved to Germany, remarried (although he was still married), and started a new family.

When William turned 18, he traveled to Germany and reconnected with his father. His father took him to a Nazi rally where he saw his uncle Adolf, at the time, leader of the Nazi party. William again visited Germany and met his uncle in person.

Upon his return, William published some articles about his uncle. However, Adolf didn't like the way the articles portrayed him. Calling William to Berlin, Hitler ordered him to retract the articles.

The articles brought additional consequences. Now that his relationship was public, William became unwelcome in England and was fired from his job. He moved to Germany looking for employment. Adolf then denied they were relatives and shortly thereafter, William's father sent him back to England.

Again, in 1933 William returned to Germany looking for work. By this time, Adolf Hitler was Chancellor of Nazi Germany. This time Adolf received him calmly. William worked at a bank and later with a car manufacturer. Suddenly, his uncle revoked his work permit. Although he was eventually reinstated, his comings and goings were under scrutiny. After a frightening, angry meeting with Hitler, he decided to leave Germany.

Upon returning to England, William attempted to join the British armed forces but was rejected because of his direct relation to Adolf Hitler. William then moved to the United States where he went on a lecture tour sharing what he learned about his uncle and the Nazi regime. This was sponsored by William Randolph Hearst.

William tried to join the U.S. armed forces but once again, his family ties blocked the way. He then wrote directly to President Roosevelt, who passed the letter onto FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover. Upon review, he was allowed to join the armed services.

Sworn into the U.S. Navy on March 6, 1944, William Hitler went on to serve three years as a pharmacist's mate and received a Purple Heart for a wound he suffered. He was discharged in 1947.

William changed his last name to Stuart-Houston after leaving the service. He married, had four children, and ran a blood analysis lab. He died on July 14, 1987. His children did not produce any children of their own. (article source: Lyon Air Museum; photo: The History Page website). 🍀



Hitler's nephew enlisted in the U.S. Navy in 1944 to fight against his uncle's regime. Serving in the Pacific, William Patrick Hitler was wounded and awarded a Purple Heart.

National Museum of the U.S. Marine Corps Day Trip

A major factor in my personal decision to enlist in the Navy was everything I, Pat Robson, had heard about Marine Corps Boot Camp and the renowned Parris Island.

The transformation from civilian to one of our military's most competent warriors begins in Marine Boot Camp. The National Museum of the Marine Corps has an exhibit called, "Making Marines". Here's what they have to say about it:

Making Marines

All Marines remember their drill instructor. The Making Marines gallery allows visitors to step inside the process used by drill instructors to transform young men and women into Marines. Making Marines immerses visitors in the memorable experiences that forge recruits into privates and officer candidates into lieutenants: listening to the thoughts of wary recruits during that first bus ride to the training depot, standing on the famous yellow footprints, and visiting the barbershop where "it all gets taken away."

Visitors also get up close and personal with their own drill instructor and experience the most important lesson of boot camp: learning to solve problems as a cohesive unit, rather than as an individual.

Before you leave the gallery, try your marksmanship skills at the M-16 laser rifle range! Remember: "Every Marine is a rifleman."

If you dare, go through the experience. You won't be required to do pushups and you will be allowed to leave.

If you have not yet signed up for our day trip to the National Museum of the Marine Corps on Saturday, November 15, 2025, the sooner the better. Our 55-passenger charter bus has a wheelchair lift that requires 6 seats, which limits us to 49 passengers. Other organizations in addition to the Richmond Navy League have expressed an interest in this trip, so you should submit your registration soon. The registration form is below. (This trip will be featured again in our October issue of *The Lucky Bag*). ✍



Richmond Navy League Day Trip to the National Museum of the U.S. Marine Corps Saturday, November 15, 2025 Registration Form



Name: _____ Email: _____

Guest Names: _____

_____ Your Phone #: _____

Cost: \$ 50.00 per Adult; \$25.00 Children 16 yrs & younger Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

Make check payable to: **Richmond Council NLUS**

Mail to: Richmond Navy League, P.O. Box 11201, Richmond, VA 23230 **by 10/31/2025**

ADA Accommodations needed: _____

ADOPTED SHIPS UPDATE

these reports may be edited to fit space available)



USS Normandy (CG-60)
CO: CAPT Nathan Diaz
XO: CDR Robert Knapp
CMC: CMDCM Andrew Conover

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

USS Normandy is in port and scheduled to be decommissioned on Thursday, September 25, 2025. 🇺🇸



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

Pat Robson, Liaison

USS Carter Hall is in port. They have announced three **Carter Hall** Chief Selectees:

EMC (SEL): Stephen Bass
Electrician's Mate Chief Petty Officer

HMC (SEL): Justin Packan
Chief Hospital Corpsman

DCC (SEL): Christopher Miller
Damage Control Chief

In the U.S. Navy, a "Chief Select" refers to a First Class Petty Officer who has been selected for advancement to Chief Petty Officer but has not yet officially been pinned with the rank insignia (gold fouled anchors). This period between selection and pinning is known as Chief Season or the initiation period. During this time, selectees undergo training and mentorship within the Chief's Mess, to prepare them for their new leadership role. Congratulations, Sailors! 🇺🇸



USS Gravelly (DDG-107)

CO: CDR Greg Piorun
XO: CDR Gregory Tornambe
CMC: CMDCM LeDezman Johnson

Courtney Mustin, Liaison
Patrick Harris, Ass't Liaison

Daily Press, 8/21/2025

The Norfolk-based Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer **USS Gravelly** is heading to the waters off Venezuela, to support President Donald Trump's effort to combat drug cartels. *Gravelly* and two other Aegis guided-missile destroyers, the **USS Jason Dunham** and the **USS Sampson**, are expected to arrive in the region soon, according to reporting by The Associated Press. The Associated Press, quoting a Defense Department source, whom it did not identify, and was not authorized to speak publicly about the planning, confirmed the ships' deployment to support counter-narcotics operations. The official said the ships are expected to remain in the area for "several months."

USS Gravelly Facebook post 3/23/2025

General Quarters, General Quarters! All hands man your battle stations!

Saturdays aren't just for pizza and wings onboard **Gravelly**...they're a time for us to sharpen our skills through challenging combat and damage control training scenarios. We even started the day with a man overboard drill, where we recovered Oscar, our pair of coveralls stuffed with rags, via small boat in 9 minutes! Your Sailors are crushing it out here! 🇺🇸

First to Conquer!
CO CD Steven E. Grey



Gravelly Sailors prepare for Damage Control Training Scenarios.



Gravelly Sailors geared up and ready for Damage Control Training.



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 past month has been packed with memorable experiences, hard work, and opportunities for growth. We started with our first port call in Puerto Plata, Dominican Republic, where the crew had the chance to relax and explore. Many immersed themselves in the local culture, and for several, it was their first time traveling out-side the United States. During this visit, we also bid farewell to five Coast Guard Academy Cadets who spent five weeks aboard, gaining valuable cutter experience as they prepare for their senior year.

We have been busy underway with operations, training, and maintenance ship wide, which culminated in the successful intercept of a target of interest, after a 45-mile pursuit while working alongside our partners from the Bahamas. This case showcased the entire crew's ability to quickly launch our small boat for law enforcement and manage all aspects of the case from our Combat Information Center.

We also found time to celebrate Coast Guard Day, marking the 235th

USCGC Spencer cont. on page 7.

USCGC *Spencer* cont. from page 6.

birthday of the service. The Morale Committee organized an afternoon of fun activities, including a swim call and live music performed by talented crew members, it was a great way to celebrate and enjoy some downtime together. Early in the month, the morale committee organized a "Christmas in July" event that included cookie decorating and a "Ugly Sweater" contest.

It's been a busy and productive patrol thus far, and we're proud of the crew's efforts and dedication as we continue to move forward with the mission. We hope you enjoy this month's update!

Thank you for your continued support, Richmond Navy League. 🇺🇸



The Coast Guard uses orange flare guns during the daytime, as a distress signal, when they need to indicate their location to rescuers in the air, such as a helicopter. Orange smoke flares produce a visible cloud that is best seen from an aircraft or other vessel, making them highly effective for alerting rescuers to a vessel's position and distress situation.



Happy 235th Birthday,
U.S. Coast Guard !

Very Respectfully,
CO CDR Justin W. Strock



USCGC *Northland* (WMEC-904)

CO: CDR Brian C. Gismervik

XO: LCDR Charles Chavtur

CSEL: MKC Ethan Stanford

Vaughan Dize, Liaison

Following the completion of a rigorous patrol, *Northland* has successfully returned to her home port in Portsmouth, VA. During the final weeks of her deployment, *Northland* played a critical role in a multinational interdiction operation, offloading contraband valued in excess of \$20 million during a scheduled port call in Miami. This action represents a tangible contribution to ongoing counter-narcotics efforts within the region and underscores the Coast Guard's commitment to disrupting illicit trafficking networks. A subsequent diplomatic engagement in the Bahamas facilitated the presentation of a Coast Guard commendation, fostering strengthened international partnerships. In addition to these operational successes, the crew also executed a comprehensive gunnery exercise, further validating their readiness to respond to a wide spectrum of maritime threats.

Beyond operational objectives, *Northland's* command prioritized crew morale through various activities, notably a swim call designed to mitigate the stresses inherent in maritime deployments. The conclusion of the transfer

season also saw the seamless integration of new personnel, while experienced members transitioned to new assignments within the Coast Guard, ensuring continuity of expertise and operational effectiveness. The culmination of the patrol cycle provides a period of well-deserved respite for the *Northland's* crew, facilitating critical familial reintegration and psychological recovery following a demanding deployment.

Looking forward to August, *Northland* will undergo a comprehensive maintenance cycle, addressing any emergent material deficiencies to ensure optimal mission readiness. Parallel to this, crew training initiatives will continue to be emphasized, reinforcing core competencies and preparing personnel for the diverse challenges inherent in Coast Guard operations.

Sustained operational readiness through continuous process improvement, remains *Northland's* top priority.

Thank you for your continued support, which enables us to meet the highest standards of operational excellence in service to the nation. Fair winds and following seas. 🇺🇸



Operational gunnery Exercise (.50 caliber shoot) featuring, from left to right, GMC Hayes, GM2 Olmstead, and ME1 Cusick.

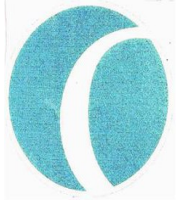


Award presentation in Nassau Bahamas featuring *Northland* command and Bahamian dignitaries.

Very Respectfully,
XO LCDR Charles Chavtur

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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Important Events in Naval History:

- *September 2, 1945: V-J Day President Truman declares victory as Japan surrenders.
- *September 10, 1813: Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry's squadron defeats the British at the Battle of Lake Erie.
- *September 11, 1814: Master Commandant Thomas Macdonough's squadron totally defeats the British squadron in Plattsburg Bay in the Battle of Lake Champlain.
- *September 11, 2001: Pentagon and World Trade Center attacked.
- *September 14, 1814: Sailors and Marines join in defense of "The Star-Spangled Banner" against British attack on Fort McHenry, MD.
- *September 15, 1950: Landing at Inchon, South Korea.
- *September 23, 1779: Captain John Paul Jones to HMS Serapis: *"I have not yet begun to fight."*
- *September 30, 1954: The **Nautilus (SSN-571)**, the world's first nuclear-powered submarine, is commissioned into the U.S. Navy.



RICHMOND, VIRGINIA COUNCIL
NAVY LEAGUE OF THE U.S.
P.O. BOX 11201
RICHMOND, VA 23230

OFFICE: (804) 355-7557 FAX: (804) 355-8788
EMAIL: navyleaguerichmond@comcast.net
WEB SITE: www.navyleague-richmond.com
FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/NavyLeagueRVA



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