



Navy League of the United States St. Augustine - Palm Coast Council

BOSUN'S LOCKER

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4Q2017
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Fellow Navy Leaguers,

I hope everyone had a great Christmas. I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a Very Happy and Healthy New Year.

Our Council is concluding another successful and active year. We have seen new faces in our Council this year through active recruitment with several of these new members taking on positions on committees or becoming officers within the Council. This is very encouraging as the future of our Council requires new members bringing fresh ideas and experience to the leadership of the Council.

We will conduct an installation of Officers and Board of Directors at our January meeting. The new Board will also determine a set of goals for 2018 to provide direction for 2018.

As we reflect back over 2017, we see many highlights including our Christmas Dinner at Marsh Creek on Dec. 7, our golf tournament in Oct., the benevolent assistance provided to our USCG in Puerto Rico after the devastating Hurricane Maria hit the island, the Council receiving the Meritorious Award from National, our many Sailor of the Quarter / Sailor of the Year awards, the many ships visits, the Change of Command with our St. Augustine – Palm Coast Sea Cadet Battalion and the growth in numbers for our Sea Cadet unit. We also witnessed a successful nominating committee that brought new faces to our Board of Directors and Officers that will help provide leadership for the coming year.

We are fortunate to have a new venue to meet each month that will now stabilize our meeting schedule to the **second Monday** of each month. We would like to extend our appreciation to Sally Watson and the folks at Christ the King Anglican Church for the use of their parish to conduct our meetings. I will put out our new meeting schedule with a separate letter to the Council in a few days.

I would like to express my appreciation for all the hard work and support of our members this year and look forward to working with you in the New Year as we continue to support our men and women in the Sea Services.

Bill Dudley

President

SA-PC Council

Navy League of the United States

CONCIL WEB SITE:

We have been working to update our web site in order to provide more visual appeal. Please visit it at www.sapcnavyleague.org and give me your feedback at leefig@aol.com.

Please also remember to provide Sally Watson with any contact changes such as, home address, telephone number or e-mail address. E-mail address changes should also be forwarded to me to ensure that you get all council communication in a timely manner.

Lee Figliuolo - VP Communications



ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT:

On Monday, October 30th, the St. Augustine – Palm Coast Council held its 21st annual fund raising golf tournament at the Grand Haven Golf Club in Palm Coast. The 128 golfer field for this year's tournament was the largest in the recent past. There were 48 active duty Sailors, Marines and Coast Guardsmen participating in the event. This was 12 more than last year and the largest contingent of active duty military we ever hosted.

The tournament had two flights, the Blue and the Gold. The Blue flight was won by a foursome representing the 'Beach Front Grille' in Flagler Beach. The team was made up of 'Grille' owner Jamie Bordeau and friends, Jimmy Mullin, Billy Ratel and Brian Reinisch. Second place Blue was a team captained by former council president Mike Zollar, and third place was won by a Grand Haven foursome.



A Coast Guard foursome from USCGC Hammer won the Gold flight. The team was made up of MK2 Steven Newsome, MK3 Cole Rice, MK3 Joshua Willis and CS2 Jacob Young. Second place was won by a team from the USCGC Valiant, including the Commanding Officer, CDR Tim Cronin, LCDR Chris Davis, LT Ian Foster and CSC Mike Perez. Third place was one by a team from USCG HITRON.



LONG DRIVE



CLOSEST

There were also contests for Long Drive and Closest to the Pin for both men and women: The winners were:

LONG DRIVE: Men – EM1 Will Nipp (USCGC Masria Bray) **Women** – Mancy O'Dell

CLOSEST TO PIN: Men – MKC Mike Sarkar (USCGC Valiant) **Women** – Sheila Tebbano

The flight winners were each presented with a hybrid golf club, a golf cap and a shadow box trophy which contains the unit or challenge coin from each of the units supported by our council.

By all measures the tournament was a huge success in that it raised just under \$14,000 for the council and awarded over 40 raffle prizes (golf foursomes & golf equipment) in addition to prizes for 1st , 2nd & 3rd place in each flight, and Men's & Ladies Long Drive and Closest to the pin. For the 8th year in a row, the Hyundai Genesis G-80 went unclaimed on Hole #17.

Thank you again so much for the great opportunity and great day! I know the HITRON folks thoroughly enjoyed the event and we are eternally grateful to the Navy League for the incredible support!!

*Very Respectfully,
CAPT Mike Campbell
Commanding Officer
HITRON Jacksonville*

Lee Figliuolo - Golf Tournament Chairman

Veterans Day 2017:

Veteran's Day was celebrated in St. Augustine by a military parade that included council members and a color guard detail from our own Sea Cadet Battalion.



MAYOR NANCY SHAYER
CITY OF ST AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA NANCY DUDLEY SALLY WATSON GRICH & BILL HAMM



SUBMARINE BASE, Kings Bay GA:



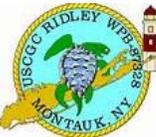
In early November, Claude Caviness and Jane and Dave Singleton joined three members of Daytona Beach Navy League for the amazing opportunity to visit the USS WEST VIRGINIA (SSBN-736), <https://www.navysite.de/ssbn/ssbn736.htm>.

There was a detailed briefing at each station given by the personnel of that department. "Looking between the two rows of twelve Trident missiles each, it was unbelievable to imagine the capabilities you are seeing" noted Dave. The photo on the right has our visitors standing in front of the latest Trident iteration.

Interestingly, despite all the modern technology on display, the ship retained part of the past: a creaky-looking, twelve-cylinder Fairbanks-Morse diesel engine to provide electric power for propulsion and charging of the battery in the event of an emergency where the nuclear reactor was off-line.



USCGC RIDLEY & SAWFISH:



Liaisons Jane and Dave Singleton visited USCGC RIDLEY, commanded by LTJG Kaitlyn Ward. They had a tour of the ship and met the members of the crew. They also enjoyed a nice lunch, discussed the Navy League, and gave the crew information on Navy League Scholarship opportunities. RIDLEY recently returned from Miami, and extended operations in support of Hurricane IRMA relief.



The following was from CO Ward. - "We were directed to join a Surface Action Group with eight other 87ft patrol boats, twelve 154ft cutters and three 270ft cutters. We went south of Miami and actually circumnavigated Cuba. We were underway for a 6 day stretch and then an additional 3 day stretch. The limits for an 87ft patrol boat is usually 4 days due to the limited amount of food we carry and just the general size of the ship. Add to that, the hurricane had its impact on the sea state so we were being bounced around. We had a brief stop in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba for logistics then continued back to Miami".



The Singletons also visited briefly with LTJG Ryan Babb and the crew of USCGC SAWFISH, passing along scholarship info and meeting with the crew. SAWFISH recently returned from a stint in Key West supporting hurricane relief operations.



LTJG Babb

The professionalism, dedication, and courteousness displayed by both crews was wonderful to witness. They love what they do, and put their personal safety at risk every day, performing a wide range of assignments



An 87' Patrol Boat making waves.



USCGC Ridley XO & Dave Singleton

USMC:



Council member Stan Gilewicz recently attended his nephew's graduation from USMC Boot Camp at Parris Island, South Carolina. Pictured from left to right are: Sgt Alexandar Gilewicz (Parris Island MCRD, Class 2006), newest Marine, Nicholas Fiorelli and Council member Stan Gilewicz. Alex is Stan's son and Nick is his nephew on his wife's side. It was a great day for all and Nick will be reporting to Camp Lejune after a short leave to begin his Marine Combat Training.



CMDCM (SW/AW) EUGENE R. FINCK

Retired

Master Chief Finck was born on March 4, 1963 in Jersey City, New Jersey. A graduate of Bayonne High School, he enlisted in the Navy in October 1982, and received recruit training at Recruit Training Center, Great Lakes, Illinois.

Following completion of Engineman "A" school, he reported to Ship Repair Facility Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Upon completion of his tour Master Chief Finck reported to the USS FAIRFAX COUNTY (LST 1193) in Little Creek, Virginia. While onboard, he was assigned to the Main Propulsion and Auxiliaries Divisions. In 1987, he transferred to Naval Reserve Center, Burlington, Vermont. While stationed in Burlington, he served as the center's Training Officer and earned the distinction as the command's Sailor of the Year for 1989. Upon completion of shore duty, Master Chief Finck reported to the USS VREELAND (FF 1068) stationed in Mayport, Florida. He served as the Auxiliaries Division Leading Petty Officer and participated in Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm. In June 1992, Master Chief Finck reported to the USS JOHN HANCOCK (DD 981). While onboard, he attended the Recovery, Assist, Secure and Traverse mechanical systems school and assumed the duties as acting Leading Chief Petty Officer, Auxiliaries Division. Master Chief Finck transferred from the USS JOHN HANCOCK in March 1994; attended FFG Pipeline school at Naval Training Center, Great Lakes; and then returned to Naval Station Mayport in May 1994 where he was assigned to Fleet Technical Support Center, Atlantic. In March of 1997, Master Chief Finck transferred to USS O'BANNON (DD 987) where he qualified as Engineering Officer of the Watch. He assumed the duties as Auxiliaries Division Chief, Repair Division Chief, and served as the Engineering Departmental Leading Chief Petty Officer. In August 2002, he reported to Naval Weapons Station, Colts Neck, New Jersey. Assigned to the Seaport Operations Department, he served as the First Lieutenant until being advanced and selected into the Command Master Chief Program in March 2004. Serving NWS Earle in this capacity, his follow-on Command Master Chief tours include USS SPRUANCE (DD 963), USS FARRAGUT (DDG 99), Transient Personnel Unit NAS Jacksonville, and the Mad Foxes at VP-5. Command Master Chief Finck retired in November of 2012 with thirty years of naval service.



His awards include the Meritorious Service Medal (2 awards), Navy Commendation Medal (5 awards), Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (4 awards), Good Conduct Medal (5 awards), Sea Service Deployment Ribbon (11 awards), as well as other personal and campaign awards.

Master Chief Finck is married to the former Bernadette Lourdes Leahey. They have a daughter, Erin Marie and a son, Eugene, Jr.

Gene is a long time member of our council and currently serves as Unit Liaison for VR-58 and the USS Farragut.

USCGC VALIANT (WMEC 621) - SOQ Awards

On November 20, 2017, Liaison Sally Watson was aboard the USCGC Valiant to present the Sailor of the Quarter (SOQ) awards.



USCG HITRON - Puerto Rico Hurricane Support:



The after effects of hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria, resulted in a large contingent of Coast Guard personnel being sent to Coast Guard Air Station, Borinquen, Puerto Rico to assist in rescue and relief efforts on that devastated Island. Our Coasties were without commercial power and very short on life's necessities just as the general population was. Council members Paul (HITRON Liaison) & Melody Kimmel, coordinated a collection of supplies and money to provide the items needed by our people. The following thank you letter and supporting photos from HITRON C.O., Captain Campbell let us know just how much our donations were appreciated.



Commanding Officer
U. S. Coast Guard HITRON

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Jacksonville, FL 3221-6120
Phone: 904-594-6850
Fax: 904-594-6854

5050
October 20, 2017

St. Augustine-Palm Coast Navy League,

On behalf of the Men and Women of U.S. Coast Guard Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron (HITRON) Jacksonville, please accept my most sincere appreciation for your generosity in providing supplies and monetary donations to support our Coast Guard crews affected by the devastating hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria.

Your donated supplies and money were collected at HITRON Jacksonville where HITRON crews used the funds to procure additionally needed supplies. HITRON volunteer crews assembled, packaged, and prepared the supplies for shipment via Coast Guard aircraft. Those crews then delivered the packaged load of more than 6,500 pounds of sorely needed supplies to Coast Guard Air Station Clearwater where they were palletized and transported via C-130 aircraft to their ultimate destination of Coast Guard Air Station Borinquen, Puerto Rico.

Coast Guard personnel and their families living in Puerto Rico had been without power, water, and basic essentials for weeks; and are still working hard every day to perform their Coast Guard missions. They do their missions while also helping their community of families who live on the Island recover from the devastation. Your generous donations were distributed and received by these families exuberantly. They wanted us to know how very much they appreciated the fantastic and generous support and how much it has helped. Your contributions went a long way in boosting their morale and empowering them to continue to provide the great support that all U.S. citizens have come to expect from your Coast Guard men and women.

Please accept my most sincere appreciation for your time, effort, and donations. It is greatly appreciated by all here at HITRON as well as those assigned to Coast Guard Air Station Borinquen, and goes a long way to show the strength and appreciation of our surrounding communities during such challenging times.

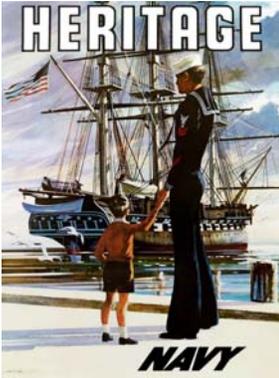
Thank you again for supporting your U.S. Coast Guard.

Most Sincerely,

M. E. Campbell
M. E. Campbell
Captain, U.S. Coast Guard
Commanding Officer
HITRON Jacksonville



2017 Tri Base Navy Birthday Ball:



Back in the days of old, when ships were made of Wood, and Sailors were made of steel, the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Admiral Elmo Zumwalt authorized recognition of 13 Oct as the Navy birthday. Unlike other Navy celebrations, the Navy Birthday is intended to be an internal activity for members of the active forces and reserves, as well as retirees, and dependents. Since 1972, each CNO has encouraged a Navy-wide celebration of this occasion "to enhance a greater appreciation of our Navy heritage, and to provide a positive influence toward pride and professionalism in the naval service".

The 242st Navy Tri-Base Birthday Ball was held on October 21, 2017 at the Renaissance Hotel and Resort at World Golf Village in St. Augustine, FL. The keynote speaker was Admiral Bill Moran, Vice Chief of Naval Operations. The public was welcome to attend and celebrate with our brave men and women who serve this great country.

Sponsors of this year's Ball included the St. Augustine-Palm Coast Council of the Navy League as well as council members Pat Ray & Claude Caviness.



In the three pictures above we have:

- 1- FN Franke Rose USCG ANT & wife Lauren, MOH Robert R. Ingram, Amanda & PO1 Matthew James USN VR-58
- 2- SA-PC Council members Sally Nichols & Pat Ray, DAB Council member Annette Skoppe & SA-PC member Jane Singleton
- 3- SA-PC members Dave & Jane Singleton, MOH Robert R. Ingram, DAB member Annette Skoppe & DAB Sea Cadet.

PATRIOTISM:

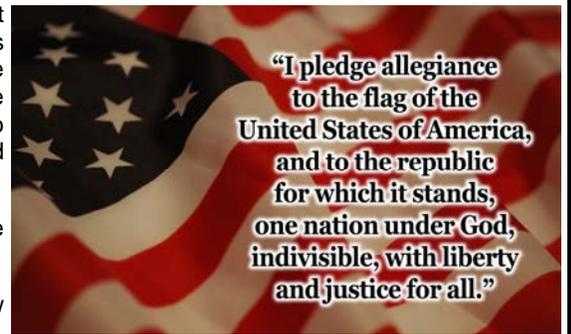


Earlier this month I spoke with council member and former NFL star Pete Banaszak and asked how he felt about the NFL players taking a knee during the star spangled banner.

Pete stated that when growing up he was taught to respect the flag and what it represented. He had family and friends who fought and died in war in support of our flag and the freedoms for which it stood. In a word he described the kneelers as "**Cowards**". "There are too many followers who don't even understand what they are protesting for". He said "he would not want to share a foxhole with any of them".

We also spoke about the Army/Navy game to be played latter in the day, and the fact the men taking the field are the true patriots.

Later when watching the game with my wife, Diana, she stated "I'll bet the only snow-flakes in that stadium today are falling from the skies.



SA-PC COUNCIL OFFICERS - 2018:

The following is the list of officers who have been nominated to serve our council in 2018. Let's wish them continued success in the positions they have accepted.

President
President Elect 2019
Chaplain
Recording Secretary
Treasurer
Judge Advocate
Archivist

Bill Dudley
Jerry Cameron
Dr. Nick Marziani
Sally Watson
Jamie Sawczyn
Patrick McCormack
Gary Cohn

VP Legislative Affairs
VP Military Affairs
VP Youth Programs
VP Membership
VP Finance & Oversight
VP Finance & Oversight
VP Communications
VP Public Affairs

Dave Sullivan
Ian Pollitt
Joe & Shannon Giammanco
Claude Caviness
Garry Karsner
Bob Price
Lee Figliuolo
Christine Rodenbaugh



U.S. COAST GUARD HITRON 20 Years of Hitting New Heights



by William H. Thiesen, Historian, Coast Guard Atlantic Area

Be our service's single provider of qualified, proficient, and well-trained shipboard and shore-side Airborne Use of Force.

-HITRON Mission Statement

The mission statement above spells out the goal of the Coast Guard's Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron (HITRON), a deploying helicopter squadron based in Jacksonville, Florida, specializing in Airborne Use of Force (AUF) for counter-narcotic operations.

HITRON is the nation's first airborne law enforcement unit trained and authorized to employ AUF. It started in 1998, when approximately 80 percent of all drugs entering the U.S. were arriving by sea, with drug trafficking organizations using "go-fast" boats -- high speed smuggling boats capable of traveling over twice the speed of Coast Guard cutters. Realizing that the Coast was stopping less than ten percent of the illegal narcotics entering the United States by sea, Coast Guard Commandant James Loy directed the Service to find a way to counter the go-fast threat, and the HITRON experiment was born.

By late 1998, six Coast Guard pilots and four enlisted airmen developed tactics to use armed helicopters flying from cutters to intercept the go-fasts. First, the helicopter would order the go-fast to stop. If orders to stop were ignored, the door gunner would fire warning shots across the boat's bow with a light machine gun and, if necessary, would disable the craft's engines with a precision-fired .50-caliber rifle. Lastly, a Coast Guard pursuit-boat team, deployed from the host cutter, would board the disabled go-fast.

In the early "proof of concept" phase, HITRON MH-90 "Enforcer" helicopters stopped all five go-fasts they intercepted, arresting 17 drug traffickers and inter-dicting over 1.5 tons of cocaine and 5.5 tons of marijuana with an estimated street value of over \$131 million. Due to these successful tests, the Coast Guard validated and designated HITRON a permanent Coast Guard aviation unit. The HITRON program was originally classified. But, in September 1999 the existence of the unit was officially revealed.

To halt the growing number of go-fast smugglers and meet the demand of cutter deployments, the squadron grew to 40 personnel and eight helicopters. Due to federal contracting laws, the Coast Guard released competitive bids to choose a permanent aircraft for the mission. In late 2000, HITRON replaced its wing of MH-90 "Enforcers" with the high-performance Augusta A 109E "Power" helicopter under lease and re-designated MH-68A "Stingray" by the Coast Guard for HITRON use.

In May 2003, HITRON was formally commissioned. As a consequence of the 9/11 terrorist attacks and the Coast Guard's move from the Transportation Department to Department of Homeland Security, HITRON was tasked with the additional mission of countering terrorist threats to the nation. DHS Secretary Tom Ridge approved the use of HITRON for armed anti-terrorism missions, noting, "The use of Coast Guard HITRON for armed aerial patrol will increase the level of security in our ports, provide an additional layer of defense, ensure the continued safe flow of commerce, and deter possible acts of terrorism on our nation's key ports."

In early 2008, the Coast Guard allowed the lease of its MH-68A Stingrays to expire. It replaced them with the Service's standard helicopter airframe, the MH-65C "Dolphin," providing improved aircraft availability and maintenance support. Since 2012, HITRON has operated with a full complement of eight Dolphin helicopters. For counter drug operations, HITRON units forward deploy on board Coast Guard cutters. During these deployments, go-fasts are identified by a maritime patrol aircraft, such as Coast Guard C-130s. The HITRON aircrew then launches from the cutter and proceeds to an intercept point. The helicopter approaches the go-fast with weapons trained on the boat for self-protection. In many cases, the mere presence of an armed Coast Guard helicopter is enough to convince smugglers to stop their boats. However, once over the suspect vessel, HITRON crews are prepared to employ AUF tactics designed to compel suspect compliance and stop the vessel. Once the boat stops, it is boarded and searched by a surface law enforcement boarding team. If carrying drugs, the boarding team will take appropriate law enforcement action, and the smugglers and contraband will be taken into custody.

Over the past ten years, HITRON has enjoyed increasing success. By late July 2006, HITRON units had stopped 104 go-fasts, arrested 382 suspected smugglers, and had seized more than 140 tons of drugs with a street value of \$7.9 billion. By late 2011, HITRON had interdicted 205 vessels, resulting in seizures totaling over \$10 billion. Since 2014, HITRON has set new records, with aircrews surpassing each previous year's total of interdictions and seizures. For example, in fiscal year 2016, HITRON successfully stopped 83 vessels and interdicted 81 tons of cocaine valued at nearly \$2.2 billion. That year, in one 55-day deployment, a HITRON unit set a record by interdicting 13 go-fasts, resulting in the recovery of 11 tons of cocaine valued at \$350 million. These 13 interdictions were the largest contributor to National Security Cutter Hamilton's recent drug offload of 26.5 tons, the largest offload in Coast Guard history.

In March 2017, HITRON marked its 500th drug interdiction. With this historic benchmark, the squadron has successfully interdicted 500 vessels transporting approximately 465 tons of cocaine and 30 tons of marijuana with a total wholesale value of more than \$16.7 billion. This success has reinforced the meaning of HITRON's motto, "Force from above," and has boosted the morale of Coast Guard men and women on the front lines of the War on Drugs. By their aeronautical skill, Airborne Use of Force tactics and professionalism, HITRON aircrews have exemplified the Coast Guard's core values of "Honor, respect and devotion to duty."

This article was copied from the Fall/Winter 2017 issue of Wings of Gold.

