



Navy League of the United States

# The Helmsman

Broward County, Florida Council, Inc.

**Serving the Sea Services Since 1902**

**VOL. 23 ISSUE 3**

Shelley Beck, President  
Marianne Giambrone, Editor

MARCH 2012

NAVY

MARINE CORPS

COAST GUARD

MERCHANT MARINE

## EASTER EGG HUNT/BBQ

## MARCH DINNER SOCIAL

**Coast Guard Station- Fort Lauderdale**

**Saturday, March 31, 2012**

**10:30 AM to 1:30 PM**

**Easter Egg Hunt at 11:00 AM  
followed by picnic**

**\*coloring contest, bounce house,  
clown, hula hoops\***

**Coast Guard Personnel and families - Free**

**\$15.00 per civilian adult  
civilian kids under 10 Free**

**Make checks payable to  
Broward County Navy League  
and mail to  
Dottie Kirk  
8215 NW 15 Street  
Plantation FL 33322**



**Thursday, March 8, 2012**

**Tropical Acres Restaurant  
2500 Griffin Road  
Fort Lauderdale**

**PROGRAM:**

**Lt. Colonel Leo R. Gray  
US Army Air Corps  
WWII Veteran Tuskegee Airmen**

**Cocktail hour: 6:30pm  
Dinner 7:15 pm**

**Choice of:**

**Shrimp Scampi or Prime Rib of Beef**

**BCNL Members and Guests - \$35.00  
Active Military and Spouses - \$25.00**

**Please RSVP your dinner choice  
on or before March 3  
by e-mailing [bcnavyleague@yahoo.com](mailto:bcnavyleague@yahoo.com) or  
calling Joan at 561-509-7941**



## *PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE*

As I continue my journey of how I joined the Navy League I would like to share several dates of interest:

February 1 – National Freedom Day  
February 19, 1945 - Battle of Iwo Jima begins  
February 23, 1991 - Desert Storm ground war begins  
February 27, 1991 - Desert Storm ground war ends after 100 hours

Another date of significance is February 4, 1941. The USO (United Service Organizations) was incorporated. As found on the website [www.uso.org](http://www.uso.org) this is how the USO began:

“Supporting America’s troops was the first mission of the USO. In 1941, as it became clear that the nation was heading into World War II, several organizations mobilized to support the growing U.S. military: the Salvation Army, Young Men’s Christian Association, Young Women’s Christian Association, National Catholic Community Services, National Travelers Aid Association and the National Jewish Welfare Board. President Franklin D. Roosevelt created synergy among these agencies by forming the United Service Organizations, with the objective of providing the emotional support the troops needed. Over time, the USO has evolved, developing new programs and services to meet the ever-changing needs of the troops and their families, while holding fast to the original mission. Today, the USO continues to lift the spirits of America’s troops and their families, and will continue to be there for them until everyone comes home.”

Back in the late 80’s, a local USO was home based near Fort Lauderdale beach. It was at this time, that I became a volunteer with the USO and greeted the many Navy vessels that visited and docked at Port Everglades. The Fort Lauderdale USO was a home away from home facility that navy personnel could come and relax, watch TV, play pool, read books or call home and talk to loved ones. We would host BBQ’s and even go to the roof of the building and watch the July 4<sup>th</sup> fireworks.

There were many volunteers with the USO and most were members of the Navy League of the United States. I asked “what is the Navy League”? To give me incite of the organization, I was invited to attend an onboard reception on a British Ship and to a monthly dinner social. It was here that I learned of its mission and the importance of being a member, and immediately joined this great organization in 1990. A year later on January 17, 1991; Desert Storm Air War begins and the whole nation is coming together as one to support the men and women serving our country. Locally, the USO sponsored a parade down Las Olas Blvd. with bands, military units, service organizations and even elephants from the Swap Shop. Everyone was wearing or displaying yellow ribbons on their lapels or in their front yards, we still need to be united as a nation as

these men and women are still serving in many parts of the world and they need our support.

Remember when you come to the next dinner social or event, bring your items (soap, toothpaste, hard candy, breakfast bars, etc.) and this is one way of showing love for our Marines Care Packages Program.

Look forward to seeing you all at the next dinner social on the 8<sup>th</sup> and at our annual Easter Egg Hunt with all of our friends and families serving us in the Coast Guard.

**Shelley**



## *SPONSOR A CADET*



Be a  
Dinner  
Sponsor!

Each month we invite one of our sponsored JROTC units or the Spruance Division Sea Cadets to present the colors and attend our dinner socials. The Board feels it is important for these young cadets to hear our guest speakers and also to better understand our support for their units. Likewise, it is important for our Council members to interact with these young men and women.

The Council does not charge the cadets for their dinners. However, the Council’s financial situation is making this expense more difficult to absorb. If you would like to help sponsor the cost of the cadets’ dinners, it would be most appreciated. You can choose to pay for the entire dinner (\$30) or make any donation towards the cost of the dinner. You can send a check payable to BCNL (indicate DINNER SPONSOR) to P O Box 39252, Fort Lauderdale FL 33339 or make your donation at any dinner social.

## MARCH GUEST SPEAKER



Lt. Col. Leo R. Gray has made significant contributions to the United States throughout his military and civilian careers. Soon after high school graduation, Gray joined the Army Air Corps and began his aviation cadet training in 1943. Little more than a year later, he graduated from the Tuskegee Army Air field as a Second Lieutenant, single engine pilot. While stationed in Italy as a fighter pilot, Gray flew 15 combat

missions in P-51s for a total of 750 hours flying time. He left active duty in 1946, but remained in the USAF Reserves until 1984. During his 41 years of military service, Gray earned a Coveted Air Medal with one Oak Leaf cluster and a Presidential Unit Citation.

Gray earned a Bachelor's degree from the University of Massachusetts in 1950, a Masters degree from the University of Nebraska in 1952 and did post graduate work at the University of Maryland from 1962-1964. He began his 30 year career with USDA in 1953 as a Technical Assistant at the University of Massachusetts, Agricultural Extension Service. Gray wore many hats in the USDA career. He served as an agricultural economist with the Economic Research Service, an economist with APHIS in California, and as Director, Program Planning Office of the Food Safety & Inspection Service to mention a few. In addition, he was an economic consultant to United States Department of Agriculture in West Africa.

His professional and civic life reflects his deep commitments to the Tuskegee Airmen, to agricultural economic research organizations, and to civil rights. He is a member of the Tuskegee Airmen Inc, and in 1991 became founder and president of the Miami Chapter of Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. He is the past president, vice president and treasurer of the East Coast Chapter of Tuskegee Airmen, the founder and past president of the Forum on Blacks in Agriculture, the past president of Good Hope East Civic Association in Silver Springs, MD and a former member of the Richmond, California, Model Neighborhood Citizens Board. Other memberships include the Air Force Association, the Retired Officers Association, and the NAACP. Lieutenant Colonel Gray has traveled extensively in North, Central and South America, as well as Europe, Africa, Asia and Australia. A widower, Lieutenant Colonel Gray has six children and ten grandchildren.

## TROPICAL ACRES

Our community affiliate, Tropical Acres Restaurant, is set to reopen on March 6, nearly seven months after a blaze put the eatery's future in question. Final inspections of the restaurant's new fire alarm, fire sprinklers and the kitchen's hood were completed during the last week of February. The steakhouse, which first opened in 1949, closed in August after a fire gutted the kitchen and spread smoke throughout the dining rooms and banquet halls. The fire was ruled accidental. Owners estimate they have already spent about \$1.5 million rebuilding the restaurant at 2500 Griffin Road in Dania Beach. The restaurant will sponsor several specials the first several weeks, including free bottles of wine on some nights and free appetizers on others. "We wanted to give everyone a big thank you for supporting us," said co-owner Jack Studiale.

The Council looks forward to our dinner social on March 8 at Tropical Acres.

## SEAPOWERS MAGAZINES

Do you discard your *SeaPower* magazine after reading it each month? If so, please consider bringing it to the next dinner social. Board member Dottie Kirk shares the magazines with many of the veterans that live in her complex who enjoy reading the current military news. It's also a great way to recycle.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

**Do we have your email address???**  
**Is it the correct email address?**

We would like to keep you updated on Council news and activities and email is the fastest way to do so.

Please make sure we have an email address for you and that it is the current one. It's simple to update our records—just send your name and email address to: [bcnavyleague@yahoo.com](mailto:bcnavyleague@yahoo.com)

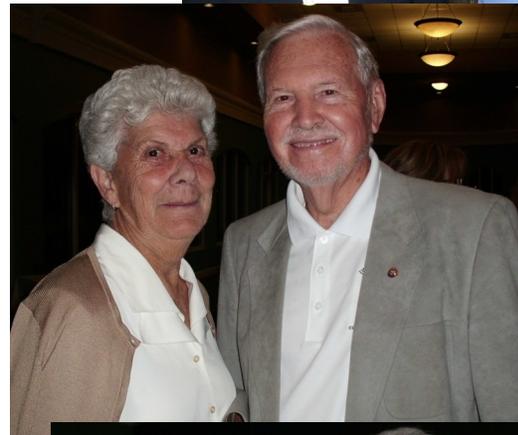
## FEBRUARY DINNER SOCIAL



Below: Chuck Black, National Director and member of Fort Lauderdale Council, with Community Affiliate Tom Carney



Many thanks to Captain Robert Wilson who served as the guest speaker at our February dinner social held at Plantation Preserve. Unfortunately, RADM Thomas L. Brown II, Commander of Special Operations Command South (SOC SOUTH), who was scheduled to speak, was unable to attend. Captain Wilson is currently assigned as deputy commander, Special Operations Command South. He shared several videos which gave the audience an idea of the type of operations handled by SOC SOUTH and answered a multitude of questions. He is shown above with Past President George Reeves (L) and South Florida Area President Joe Giambrone.



Right: Council members Phyllis and Don Bannister

Below: Council members Carolyn and Bob Marks

Below are Council members Diane Schmidt (L) and Barbara Makris.



Below: Mary Anne Gray, Chairperson of Broward Navy Days, with Board member Tom Jones.



Guest speaker Captain Robert Wilson with newly elected President Shelley Beck

## ***BROWARD NAVY DAYS***



### **FREEDOM AWARDS 2012**

**MARCH 23  
11:30 AM**

Broward Navy Days will be hosting their annual Freedom Awards luncheon on Friday, March 23, at 11:30 AM at the Fort Lauderdale Yacht Club. Tickets are \$45 for Broward Navy Days members and \$55 for guests.

This year, the following individuals will be recognized: RADM William D. Baumgartner, USCG Commander, Seventh District; Larry Burchfield, Senior Executive, Humana Military Healthcare Services; Allan McElhiney, President, Naval Air Station; Ron Perkins, Chaplain, Seafarers' House.

If you are interested in attending, you may pay on-line ([browardnavydaysinc.org](http://browardnavydaysinc.org)) or mail a check to BND, 5300 N. Federal Hwy, Fort Lauderdale FL 33308.

## ***CHANGE OF COMMAND***

LCDR Brett P. Bormann, Commanding Officer of the Navy Operational Support Center (NOSC) has been a long time friend of the Council. On Saturday, March 3, Brett will be relieved of command by CDR Steven D. Sutton. Brett will remain in the South Florida area so we hope to see him at future events.

Council members are invited to attend the change of command which is taking place at 2:00 PM at the Navy Operational Support Center, 18650 NW 62 Avenue, Hialeah. Those interested in attending should RSVP to 305-628-5150 extension 129 or email [caleb.burney@navy.mil](mailto:caleb.burney@navy.mil).

LCDR Bormann is shown below with President Shelly Beck at our February dinner social.



## ***YOUR COUNCIL OFFICERS***

Who are the 2012 Officers of the Council? Here is a little information about the Treasurer and Secretary.

### **Tom Jones, Treasurer**

Tom joined the Navy League in 2006. He has served as the Treasurer of the Council since 2010. Tom was responsible for greeting Navy ships for two years prior to becoming Treasurer. He has been very involved in Fleet Week and, for the past several years, has been in charge of handling the reservations for ships' tours.

### **Teresa Perez, Secretary**

Teresa joined the Council in 2009. She served as the JAG in 2010. In 2010, she volunteered to handle the responsibilities of the secretary when the elected secretary could not complete her term. Teresa was then elected Secretary in 2011. Teresa is an attorney and is a member of the United States Navy Reserves.

## ***COUNCIL SUPPORTERS***

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Cordova Road. Fort Lauderdale

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[www.donshulashotel.com](http://www.donshulashotel.com)

## COMMISSIONING



The USCGC BERNARD C. WEBBER, the first of the new Sentinel class of fast response cutters being built for the Coast Guard, will be commissioned on Saturday, April 14, 2012 in Miami. The ship will

be home ported at Coast Guard District 7 in Miami and will support vital migrant and contraband interdiction missions conducted throughout the Caribbean Sea and Gulf of Mexico.

If you would like to receive an invitation to the commissioning of the USCGC BERNARD C. WEBBER, please email Glenn Wiltshire at [wiltbrit@aol.com](mailto:wiltbrit@aol.com) with the names of the attendees.

The second ship in the class will be the USCGC RICHARD ETHERIDGE which is scheduled to be commissioned on August 3, 2012 in Port Everglades.

## NEWS FROM THE PORT

Steven Cernak, Port Director and Chief Executive Officer for Port of Galveston, has been selected as Chief Executive/Port Director for Broward County's Port Everglades Department. Cernak replaced Phillip C. Allen, who retired on February 3, 2012, after leading Port Everglades since 2006. Cernak served as the Port Director and CEO for the Port of Galveston, TX, since 1999. During this time period, the Port of Galveston's revenues doubled and it became the top cruise home port in the Gulf of Mexico.

As one of South Florida's leading economic powerhouses, Port Everglades is the gateway for international trade and cruise vacations. Already one of the busiest cruise ports worldwide, Port Everglades is also one of the nation's leading container ports. Port Everglades is also South Florida's main seaport for receiving petroleum products including gasoline, jet fuel and alternative fuels. The Port Everglades Department is a self-supporting Enterprise Fund of Broward County government with operating revenues of approximately \$139 million in Fiscal Year 2011 (October 1, 2010 through September 30, 2011). It does not rely on local tax dollars for operations. The total value of economic activity at Port Everglades is approximately \$14 billion. More than 143,000 Florida jobs are impacted by the Port, including almost 10,000 people who work for companies that provide direct services to Port Everglades.

## SEAFARERS' HOUSE



On Saturday, February 11, South Florida Area President and Council Member Joe Giambrone was honored at a luncheon aboard the Grand Princess. Joe was selected by Seafarers' House as their Volunteer of the Year for his participation in their Shoebox Christmas project. For the past two years, he has served as the volunteer coordinator for the delivery of Seafarers' House "Shoebox Christmas" project. His responsibilities included scheduling volunteers to deliver the

"shoeboxes", filled with personal care items, to the crews of cargo ships visiting Port Everglades during the months of November and December as well as keeping spreadsheets with pertinent information about each ship that was visited. In 2011, 1,300 boxes were delivered to 73 ships.



Attending the luncheon were (l to r) Shelly Beck, Al Stein, Shelly Stein, Diane Schmidt and Marianne Giambrone. Standing in the background are Phyllis Bannister and Chaplain Ron Perkins.



Diane and Charlie Schmidt both had lucky raffle tickets—each won a beautiful basket

## CARE PACKAGE PROGRAM

Recently the Council received a \$1,000 donation from AutoNation to assist with the Marine Care Package Program. Al and Shelly Stein, who head up the program, have been mentioning AutoNation's involvement when corresponding with Marines that are receiving care packages. Recently, Marine 1<sup>st</sup> Sergeant Dacalis of 3/7 Lima Company sent an email expressing appreciation to our Council as well as to AutoNation.

*Today the Marines of the 3/7 received 10 care packages from you and once again we wanted Broward County Navy League to know that we very much appreciate your continued support. The men were delighted to see the items and they did not last very long as snacks from home are scooped up as fast as they arrive. We found the note you left in each box letting us know that the contents and cost of postage were paid for using a generous contribution by the Auto Nation organization. We appreciate those that recognize the sacrifices we make. As you did not provide us with a means to communicate with them, please let them know how grateful we are for their support.*

*Our Marines are mentally tough and looking forward to future challenges. Once again, I cannot express enough how much your support means to our Marines morale and spirit. I understand that you have been informed that we will be replaced shortly by the 1/7 and I'm certain they will be pleased to receive whatever items you can pass along to them.*

*Semper Fi  
1stSgt Dacilas  
Lima Company*

When the email was shared with Gale Butler of AutoNation, she responded with this email:

*It is our pleasure always to support our troops. We've packed over 100 boxes here and sent them overseas as well. Our associates love it. Best, Gale*

If you would like to support the Marine Care Package Program, you can send a check to BCNL, P O Box 39252, Fort Lauderdale FL 33339 – be sure to indicate it is for the care package program. If you prefer, you can drop off a check or items for the care packages at any Council dinner social.



## RESOLVE MARINE



One of the Council's Community Affiliates – Resolve Marine Group – was recently in the news when their maritime training subsidiary, Resolve Maritime Academy, partnered with Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd for new simulation-based training.

Resolve Maritime Academy specializes in shipboard fire, safety and hazardous materials response training, and simulator-based programs, and offers maritime certification courses for cruise line, tanker and cargo vessel personnel, and private yacht crew as well as land-based fire fighting personnel. Utilizing state-of-the-art simulation technology, Resolve Maritime Academy designed and developed a new Simulation Training Center, currently in final stages of construction, adjacent to Port Everglades. The new Center features a Det Norsk Veritas (DNV) Class A Full Mission Bridge Simulator, Electronic Chart Display & Information System (ECDIS) Classroom and Navigation Lab with a suite of "mini" bridges. Courses offered will include: Ship Handling; Bridge Resource Management (BRM); Operational Use of ECDIS; and RADAR/Automatic Radar Planning Aids (ARPA). Customized programs also will be offered, including: Integrated Bridge Systems (Sperry VisionMaster and NACOS Platinum); Dynamic Positioning Systems; and Communication & Leadership Development for all ranks and employees. Future plans include an Engine Room Simulator which will be utilized for operational and Engine Resource Management (ERM) training.

## USS LEYTE GULF

The Council recently recognized sailors from our adopted ship USS Leyte Gulf. Monetary awards and certificates of recognition were sent to (from left to right) Junior Sailor of the Quarter EM2(SW) Aldwin David, Sailor of the Quarter DC1(SW) Jeffrey Delzer and Blue Jacket of the Quarter ETSN(SW) Michael Fanton.



## SEA SERVICE NEWS



U.S. commanders plan to cut the Marine Corps' footprint in southwestern Afghanistan dramatically this year, from about 17,000 personnel now to

about 7,000 in October, said the top officer in the region. The reductions will occur in coming months as the U.S. demilitarizes bases in Helmand and Nimroz provinces, Maj. Gen. John Toolan told Marine Corps Times in an interview. The number of bases and outposts in the region also will drop, from about 250 last fall to about 28 in October, he said. Toolan, commander of Regional Command-Southwest and II Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward), said his forces now have 108 bases and outposts in the region, primarily in Helmand province, where the majority of the Corps' work in Afghanistan has occurred in the last few years. The drawdown will occur as Afghan forces in the region take on more responsibility for security.



Five "Tigertails" of Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron One Two Five (VAW-125), embarked aboard the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70) as part of Carrier Air Wing Seventeen (CVW-17), flew an historic flight on January 25 when

they participated in the Navy's first all-female E-2C Hawkeye combat mission. Carrier Aircraft Plane Commander Lt. Cmdr. Tara Refo, Mission Commander Lt. Cmdr. Brandy Jackson, Second Pilot Lt. Ashley Ruic, Air Control Officer Lt. Nydia Driver, and Radar Operator Lt. j. g. Ashley Ellison flew an E-2C Hawkeye- the Navy's all-weather, carrier-based tactical battle management airborne early warning and command and control aircraft. The aircraft was also manned up by multiple female maintainers including Aviation Machinist's Mate 3rd Class LaTasha Lawrence, Aviation Machinist's Mate 1st Class Farzana Lively, Aviation Structural Mechanic (Equipment) 2nd Class Ana Wilson, Aviation Structural Mechanic Airman Denise Birchfield, and Aviation Machinist's Mate 3rd Class Racheal Watson who ensured the safe launch and recovery. The Tigertails are one of twelve active-duty VAW squadrons in the Navy. Eleven are carrier-based, but VAW-125 is the only fleet Hawkeye squadron with enough females to fill a complete flight crew.



The Navy Supply Corps celebrated its 217th anniversary on February 23, commemorating a history that traces back to 1795. At its inception, the Supply Corps supported the Navy's six frigates. Since that time, the

duties and responsibilities of the Supply Corps have evolved to keep pace with the expanding scope of the Navy's global mission. There are more than 3,500 active and Reserve component naval officers serving on nearly every afloat platform and in a full range of expeditionary environments, as well as at hundreds of shore installations located worldwide. All Supply Corps officers are graduates of the Navy Supply Corps School, now located in Newport, Rhode Island.



The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Confidence intercepted a 28-foot vessel suspected of smuggling narcotics on February 9 in the Caribbean Sea. The Confidence crew was patrolling south of

Cuba, in international waters, when they spotted the go-fast, which led to the confiscation of approximately 1,100 pounds of marijuana and the detainment of six suspected smugglers. As the Confidence's boatcrew pursued the go-fast vessel, the suspected smugglers were witnessed jettisoning bales of marijuana into the water. A second boatcrew was launched to recover the evidence, resulting in the collection of 36 bales packed with illegal drugs. Coast Guard cutter crews consistently train to respond to emergencies, search and rescue, and drug and migrant interdiction cases, all of which often occur without warning. Confidence's drug interdiction is one example of many that exhibits the Coast Guard's efforts in stopping the flow of illegal narcotics into the United States. The Confidence is a 210-foot, medium-endurance cutter homeported in Port Canaveral, Fla. The Confidence crew primarily conducts counter-drug and undocumented migrant interdiction patrols in the Caribbean Sea. Medium-endurance cutters like the Confidence are built for multi-week offshore patrols including operations requiring enhanced communications, and helicopter and pursuit boat operations, which provide a key capability for homeland security operations at sea.

## **COMMUNITY AFFILIATES**

### **SUPPORT THESE COMPANIES - THEY SUPPORT OUR COUNCIL**

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## **NEWSLETTER SPONSORS**

Are you looking for a way to advertise your business at a reasonable cost?

Business card ads are available at a cost of \$125. The ad will appear in The Helmsman for one year (ten editions). If you would like to advertise your business or organization and provide financial support to the Council at the same time, contact Joe Giambrone at [giambronejm@gmail.com](mailto:giambronejm@gmail.com) or 954-389-0545.



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# COAST GUARDSMAN IN THE SPOTLIGHT



**AET2 Eric J. Ernst**  
**Coast Guard Air Station Miami**  
**2011 Enlisted Person of the Year**

**Hometown:** Coldwater, Ohio

**Duty Title:** Avionics Electrical Technician

**Time in the Coast Guard:** 4 yrs

**Why I joined the Coast Guard:** I joined the Coast Guard to assist in saving lives and to assist in the detection and enforcement of illegal drugs coming into our country.

**Greatest achievement since joining the Coast Guard:** Being nominated and selected by the Chief's as the Enlisted Person of the Year for our Air Station.

**Goal hoping to achieve before leaving the Coast Guard:** My one goal that I wish to achieve is that I would like to become a Company Commander at Tracen Cape May, so that I may train and mold future Coastguardsmen.

**Plans after Coast Guard life:** After retiring from the Coast Guard I hopefully plan on working for Customs and Border Patrol, or working with disadvantaged children or at risk youth.

**The thing I like most about my job is:** The opportunity to travel and see different places, as well as working on Aircraft. No single day is the same thing, every day is a different challenge, and I love the challenge.

# SPRUANCE DIVISION SEA CADETS



The Spruance Division Sea Cadets under the leadership of Board Member LCDR Alan Starr presented the colors at our February dinner social.



BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA COUNCIL, INC.  
NAVY LEAGUE OF THE UNITED STATES  
Post Office Box 39252  
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33339-9252

