



Navy League of the United States

# The Helmsman

Broward County, Florida Council, Inc.

Serving the Sea Services Since 1902

VOL. 23 ISSUE 2

Shelley Beck, President  
Marianne Giambrone, Editor

FEBRUARY 2012

NAVY

MARINE CORPS

COAST GUARD

MERCHANT MARINE

## FEBRUARY EVENT

Our February dinner social with guest speaker

**Rear Admiral Thomas L. Brown  
Commander  
Special Operations Command South\***

will be held on

Thursday, February 9, 2012

Plantation Preserve Golf Course and Club  
7050 W Broward Blvd, Plantation

Cocktail hour begins at 6:30 Dinner at 7:15 PM

Dinner choices: Chicken Francaise  
Bourbon & Brown Sugar  
Marinated Salmon

Members and guests = \$35  
Active military and spouses = \$25

Please call Joan at 561-509-7941 or email  
[bcnavyleague@yahoo.com](mailto:bcnavyleague@yahoo.com) by February 2 to make  
your reservation

Please bring an item for the Marine care packages  
(see inside for more information)

\*Special Operations Command South oversees Special Operations Forces including civil affairs and information support teams in Latin America and the Caribbean. The command manages some 300 special operations personnel within 15 countries. SOCSOUTH has a number of assigned forces including Charlie Company, 3rd Battalion of the 7th Special Forces Group; Naval Special Warfare Detachment South, and Charlie Company of the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment.

## INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS



Shown above (from left to right) are Secretary Teresa Perez, Treasurer Tom Jones, VP Legislative Affairs Bob Marks, President Shelley Beck, Second VP Charlie Schmidt and First VP Marianne Giambrone  
Below is RADM Steven Ratti with LT Meg Naughton of Coast Guard Station Fort Lauderdale



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As we begin this journey together in 2012, I am honored to serve as your President and look forward to working with each of you to make it a banner year we won't forget.

We all join the Navy League for different reasons, because someone asked you, you have family serving in the military, to show support for our men and women serving our country, whatever the reason it may be, thank you! Once you join, **get involved**, some Council members get involved in their Councils and they seem to do everything, while other members do not get involved and sit back.

We have many opportunities for you to get involved – become a mentor to our new members, volunteer during Fleet Week (April 25-30), help with fundraising for the Council, bring in donated items for our Marines, come out to our dinner socials, or mingle with our men and women when we have ship visits and this is only a sampling of ideas. Come see me and I will put you work! Bring a friend, co-worker to a dinner or ship visit and let them enjoy themselves and ask them to join as well. Don't forget to pick up your Navy League applications at our dinner socials.

We already have some great speakers lined up for our dinner socials, so you won't want to miss coming out and hearing their presentations. This year is the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Sea Cadets and big plans are in the works for our September dinner social. Plans are underway to visit the Seal Museum during the summer and end our year with a potluck/fundraiser...keep an eye out in our upcoming issues for all the exciting things that we are working on.

Some ground rules I want to share is to have fun this year, participate and then the **Every member Get a Member Involved** initiative will begin to work.

For those Council members who attended with their guest to our Annual Installation on board the Crown Princess, **THANK YOU!** It was a wonderful afternoon shared by all and ended with a delicious meal served by staff onboard the ship. I truly enjoyed sharing my special day with all of you; it meant a lot to me.

This installation could not have happened without many individuals to thank on my behalf: Crown Princess for their hospitality, RADM Steven Ratti as our guest speaker, Chaplain Ron Perkins for a beautiful invocation, Spruance Sea Cadets for our side boys and Color Guard and especially to the CO Alan Starr, Peter Caspari for taking beautiful photos, George Reeves as our master of ceremonies and finally to Marianne Giambrone for all her coordination in setting up this luncheon with the ship.

See you all on February 9<sup>th</sup> at our next dinner social.

*Shelley*



## FEBRUARY GUEST SPEAKER



Rear Admiral Thomas L. Brown II assumed command of Special Operations Command South (SOCSOUTH) in September 2010. As commander, he is responsible to the Commander of U.S. Southern Command for the planning, employment, and command of special operations in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Brown was commissioned from the University of New Mexico Naval Reserves Officer Training Corps (NROTC) in 1983. He completed Underwater Demolition/SEAL Training and Army Airborne school prior to his assignment to SEAL Team 5 in 1984. In 1987, he studied Spanish at the Defense Learning Institute and then reported to SEAL Team 1 to serve as platoon commander and operations officer. His assignments include SEAL Team 8 executive officer where he deployed as Naval Special Warfare Task Unit (NSWTU) commander NSWTU-*Wasp* under commander Amphibious Task Group 185.2; and, then as commander NSWTU-*America* under Commander Task Force 60. He commanded Naval Special Warfare Unit 4, Puerto Rico, under U.S. Southern Command from 1999-2001.

His other assignments include the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict; United States Special Operations Command, and Navy section chief, U.S. Military Advisory Group, El Salvador. In 2002, Brown reported to the Directorate of Operations of the Joint Staff, Deputy Directorate Special Operations, serving as the Global War on Terrorism branch chief until September 2005. He was then assigned as assistant chief of staff for Operations and Plans at Naval Special Warfare Command until June 2007, when he took command of Naval Special Warfare Group 1. He most recently served as the deputy commander of Special Operations Command Europe.

Brown graduated Tau Beta Pi with a bachelor of science in chemical engineering, and is a distinguished graduate of the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies of John Hopkins University, where he earned a master of arts in international relations with a concentration in Latin American and strategic studies. He also holds a master of science degree in national resource strategy and the DoD Chief Information Officer Certificate from the National Defense University.

His awards include the Defense Superior Service medal; Legion of Merit (second award); Bronze Star medal (with V); Defense Meritorious Service medal (second award); Meritorious Service medal; Joint Service Commendation medal; Navy Commendation medal (second award); Joint Service Achievement medal; Navy Marine Corps Achievement medal; Combat Action ribbon; Joint Meritorious Unit award; Meritorious Unit Commendation; Navy E ribbon; Armed Forces Expeditionary medal; Southwest Asia Service medal; Armed Forces Expeditionary medal; Humanitarian Service medal, and the NATO medal.

## MARINE CARE PACKAGES

**We will be collecting items for the Marine care packages at our February dinner social. We need your donations.**

The Council – through the efforts of Shelly and Al Stein – continue to send care packages to deployed Marines. The following are some of the items that have been requested in the past by our Marines but any personal care product or non-perishable food item would be appreciated.

Hand/baby wipes  
Hand sanitizers  
Small toiletry items  
Non-perishable snack items  
Small size dry drink flavors (i.e. Crystal Light, Gatorade)  
Movies/DVDs  
Wispis (small Colgate mini toothbrushes)  
Gum and hard candy  
Magazines

If you cannot contribute any of the above items, please consider making a cash donation to help cover the cost of the postage. Currently, it costs \$13.45 to mail a large Flat Rate Priority box to our Marines.



Here are recent thank you emails:

*Thank you for all the packages that your league sent to our Battalion over the holidays! They were truly appreciated.*

*1stSgt Daniel A. Downs  
H&S Company, 3d Bn 7th Marines*

*Wanted to say thanks again and no amount of words can convey just how thankful we all are. How you and your wife are able to rally people and groups for the Marines is priceless.*

*Again thank you sir.*

*1stSgt Dacilas  
Lima Company*

## YOUR COUNCIL OFFICERS

Who are the 2012 Officers of the Council? Here is a little information about the President, First Vice President and Second Vice President. Information about other officers will be in next month's edition of *The Helmsman*.

### Shelley Beck, President

Shelly joined the Navy League in 1990 and is a life member. Shelley has held numerous positions in Broward County Council including Secretary in 1993 and 1994; Vice President in 1995 and President in 1996 and 1997. Shelley was a member of the Everglades Council from 2001 – 2010 and served as their President in 2001, 2002 and 2003. She has also served as a National Director from 1999 – 2001, 2004-2007 and 2011-2012.

### Marianne Giambrone, First Vice President

Marianne joined the Navy League in 2001 and is a life member. Marianne was secretary of the Broward County Council from 2002-2009 and served as Membership Chairperson from 2004-2008. She became Editor of *The Helmsman* in 2009.

### Charles Schmidt, Second Vice President

Charlie joined the Navy League in 1988 and became a member of the Broward County Council in 2009. He joined the Board in 2010 and was elected Second Vice President in 2011. Charlie is a retired physician who served in the US Air Force as a general medical officer from 1970-1973.

## COUNCIL SUPPORTERS

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# MEMBERSHIP

## LOCAL DUES

Local members dues vs. national members dues – why are there two types of dues and why the Council needs you to pay both!

Anyone who wants to belong to the Navy League of the United States must pay national dues. These dues help the national organization in their mission of supporting active duty personnel and their families; educating the public and Congress on the importance of strong sea services and supporting youth. Part of your national dues goes toward the publication of the award winning *Seapower* magazine which you receive each month. National dues are payable each year in the month you joined the Navy League.

Individual councils, such as the Broward County Council, request national members to also pay local dues. These funds are used by the local council to help in their mission of supporting the sea services as well as for administrative costs such as printing and postage. Local dues are payable each year in January.

In the case of the Broward County Council, the 2012 local members dues will help finance some of these projects:

Honoring Sailors/Enlisted of the Quarter and Sailors/Enlisted of the Year who serve on the USS Leyte Gulf, USS Bataan, Coast Guard Air Station-Miami, and Naval Operational Support Center (NOSC)

Honoring Individual Augmentees (IA) returning from Afghanistan

Providing Marines who are stationed in Afghanistan with "Care" packages

Rewarding five local JROTC units with scholarship stipends for graduating seniors

Supporting the commissioning of two Coast Guard cutters

Supporting the Sailors, Marines and Coast Guardsman who participate in Fleet Week (six ships anticipated)

Receptions for Naval ships that visit Port Everglades

If you have already sent in your local dues – THANK YOU! If you have not, or just want to make a donation, please send your check payable to BCNL to Treasurer Tom Jones, 6201 SW 16th St, Plantation, FL 33317.

Local dues are \$49 for an individual member or \$84 for a couple.

# COUNCIL COIN

Did you know the Council has its own challenge coin?

According to Wikipedia, a challenge coin is a small coin or medallion (usually military), bearing an organization's insignia or emblem and carried by the organization's members. They are given to prove membership when challenged and to enhance morale. In addition, they are also collected by service members. While many organizations and services claim to have been the originators of the challenge coin, the most commonly held view is that the tradition began in the Army Air Corps (a precursor of the current United States Air Force).

Group members are required to carry their coins with them at all times and be ready for any other member of the group to initiate a coin challenge. Challenges are generally initiated at a bar or restaurant. Once a coin challenge is initiated, the members of the group must display their coin to the other members. Failure to do so will result in those members having to buy the other members a round of drinks.

Besides using coins for challenging, they are also used as rewards or awards for outstanding service or performance of duty. Challenge coins were not very common until the First Persian Gulf War of 1990–1991 and have steadily grown in popularity since. Coins given as awards for accomplishments are normally given to the recipient during a handshake, passing from the right hand of the giver to the right hand of the awardee. It is also normal for the giver to offer a brief explanation of the reason for awarding the coin.

If you are interested in purchasing a Council coin, they are \$6 each. Contact Joe Giambrone at any Council dinner meeting or email him at [giambronejm@gmail.com](mailto:giambronejm@gmail.com).

Shown below are the two sides of the Council's coin.



## *INSTALLATION OF 2012 OFFICERS*

The Council's installation of its 2012 Officers was held aboard the Crown Princess on Saturday, January 21, 2012. RADM Steven Ratti was present to swear in Shelley Beck as the Council's President. Other officers include First Vice President Marianne Giambrone, Second Vice President Charlie Schmidt, Vice President Legislative Affairs Bob Marks, Treasurer Tom Jones and Secretary Teresa Perez. JAG Fritz Heidgerd was unable to attend.

The Spruance Division Sea Cadets presented the colors under the leadership of Board member LCDR Alan Starr. Chaplain Ron Perkins from Seafarers' House gave the invocation and Peter Caspari was on hand to take photos. In his remarks, RADM Ratti noted that Navy League members play an important role in educating the public and legislators on the need for a strong sea service.

Those in attendance enjoyed drinks in the Wheelhouse Bar and then, after the installation ceremony, moved to the Da Vinci dining room for a delicious lunch which included wine. Thanks to all who attended the event, which was the first major Council fundraiser of 2012.



Above (left to right) Amy Diaz and Teresa Perez

Below (left to right) Anita Carmell and Sondra Title



Below are Peggy Raben and Hank Petri



Above (left to right) is Erwin Sefton, LT Paul Turner of Coast Guard Station Fort Lauderdale and Alan Adler

Below (left to right) Outgoing President George Reeves, new President Shelley Beck and Chaplain Ron Perkins



## ***OUTSTANDING SAILORS***

The Council is proud to recognize the accomplishments of the Sailors of the Year from our adopted ship, the USS Bataan. A certificate of accomplishment along with a monetary award has been sent to Sailor of the Year PS2(SW/AW) Juan Perdomo Ramirez, Junior Sailor of the Year AO2(AW/SW) Marian Jackson and Blue Jacket of the Year LSSN(SW/AW) Techoy Cunningham. The Bataan has been deployed since March 2011 and is on track to completing the longest deployment in more than 35 years.



PS2 Ramirez



AO2 Jackson



LSSN Cunningham

The Council also recognized the accomplishments of the Sailors of the Year from our adopted ship, the USS Leyte Gulf. A certificate of accomplishment along with a monetary award has been sent to Sailor of the Year BM1(SW) Melvin S. Wilson, Junior Sailor of the Year LS2(SW) Aaron R. Lambert and Blue Jacket of the Year BM3(SW) Michael R. Cleary.



From left to right is LS2 Lambert, BM1 Wilson and BM3 Cleary

## TRAINING AT NOSC

Sailors at our adopted unit, Navy Operational Support Center (NOSC) recently underwent rifle team training as well as honor guard training.



## MERCHANT MARINERS

During the holiday months, Seafarers' House was able to hand deliver over 1,800 decorated shoeboxes filled with basic personal care items to the hard-working mariners who traveled to Port Everglades.



*These were just a few of the boxes waiting to be delivered.*

South Florida Area President and Council member Joe Giambrone served as the coordinator for the volunteers who delivered the boxes as part of Seafarers House Shoebox Christmas program. Joe also made many of the deliveries and, in December, took along his wife Marianne as well as his son, Michael Lester, who was visiting from Maryland. Also along for the deliveries were four students from Parkway Christian School. Two cargo ships were visited and it was a very interesting experience for everyone involved.



*The first hurdle was climbing up the ship's ladder carrying the care packages!*

## IN MEMORIAM

Long time Council member Eugene "Gene" Wilt, 85, of Deerfield Beach passed away on January 15, 2012. Gene served in World War II in the European Theater of war and Army of Occupation in Japan and continued serving his country for 42 years with the Army Reserves. Upon discharge from the Army, Gene began a lifetime career in the building and construction business. Gene owned his own construction company, worked for several major construction firms, and retired as the Chief of Building and Zoning for the city of Fort Lauderdale in 1990 after 17 years of service. He was also a 32nd degree Mason. He spent his retirement enjoying his love for cars and traveling. Gene was a life Navy League member and, at one time, served as Treasurer of the Council. He is survived by his wife Jean, five children, five grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.



Once aboard, the crew was very gracious and gave the group tours of the bridge and other areas of the ships. The crew members were very appreciative of the gesture of caring.

## 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 Bernard C. Webber successfully completed acceptance trials, a series of rigorous tests conducted by the Coast Guard, in December 2011. Acceptance trials of the cutter ensure that it meets all of its contractual requirements and is ready for delivery. 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.

The Sentinel Class patrol boat will be 154 feet long, capable of speeds of 28 plus knots, armed with one stabilized, remotely-operated 25mm chain gun and four crew-served .50 caliber machine guns, and crew capabilities to hold 24 people. It will be able to perform independently for a minimum of 5 days at sea and be underway for 2,500 hours per year.

## USS BATAAN



Sailors and Marines aboard the Council's adopted ship, the USS Bataan, visited Lisbon, Portugal from January 20-25 as the last port visit prior to their return home from a deployment which started March 23, 2011. The

crew explored the country's capitol city and experienced the culture of Portugal during their five-day stay. The ship's MWR office provided the crew with a variety of activities including tours to the villages of Sintra and Fatima, and a Jeep Safari. Several Sailors and Marines participated in COMREL events while in port; some assisted at a women's institute, while other members played a game of soccer against the Portuguese Navy. The Bataan also hosted a reception during their stay with more than 150 guests including U.S. Ambassador to Portugal the Honorable Allan Katz, Portuguese Fleet Commander Vice Admiral Jose Montenegro, and other distinguished ambassadors from more than 20 nations. Bataan will have completed a ten-and-a-half month deployment by the time she returns home, the longest deployment for a U.S. Navy ship since the early '70s.

## SEA SERVICE NEWS



The Navy's San Antonio-class amphibious transport dock ship, the USS Anchorage LPD 23, will be commissioned later this year in Alaska's largest city. The USS Anchorage is

684 feet long and will have a crew of 32 officers and 364 enlisted members. The original USS Anchorage was launched in May 1966 and decommissioned in 2003. According to the Navy, the ship completed 19 deployments during its life, including deployments in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. It was sunk as a target during exercises off the coast of Hawaii in 2010.



The Marine Corps welcomed its first F-35B aircraft, the Marine Corps variant of the F-35 Lightning II, at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida in early January. Marine pilots will receive training to fly the new aircraft and eventually deploy with them

aboard Navy amphibious ships. The F-35B, a short take-off and vertical landing fighter, is slated to replace the Marine Corps' F/A-18 Hornet, AV-8B Harrier and EA-6B Prowler. It will provide multi-role, fifth-generation capabilities in the form of one common tactical fixed-wing aircraft, reducing maintenance costs while ensuring the Marine Corps maintains the tactical aircraft dominance required to deter potential adversaries and protect the nation's interests.



General Dynamics NASSCO held a keel-laying ceremony for the U.S. Navy's first mobile landing platform (MLP) in San Diego, California in mid-January. Keel-laying recognizes the first joining together of a ship's components.

While modern shipbuilding processes allow fabrication of individual modules to begin months earlier, keel laying represents the formal beginning of a ship. MLP 1 will be a flexible, modular platform providing capability for large-scale logistics movements such as the transfer of vehicles and equipment from sea to shore. Each ship of the MLP class will possess a core capability mission set that supports a vehicle staging area, sideport ramp, large mooring fenders and up to three landing craft air cushioned vessel lanes. These ships will significantly reduce dependency on foreign ports and provide support in the absence of any port, making it especially useful during disaster response and for supporting Marines once they are ashore.



## **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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## SAILOR IN THE SPOTLIGHT—USS BATAAN



**Hometown:** Montrose, CO

**Duty Title:** SN(SW) aka. MASTER HELMSMAN

**Time in the Navy:** 1 year 5 ½ months

**Why I joined the Navy:** I knew I wanted to join the service since middle school; it was just a question of which branch. I have a few family members in the Air Force and an uncle that is a retired Marine. I decided to go Navy after 3 years of NJROTC in high school. I joined in August of 2009 and went to boot camp in July 2010.

**Most exciting/rewarding Navy experience:** This deployment. It is my first deployment and have accomplished so much already. I have gotten my ESWS qualification, I am one of the few Master Helmsman, and I am soon to be EAWS qualified.

**Greatest achievement since joining the Navy:** ESWS and Master Helmsman

**Goal hoping to achieve before leaving the Navy:** Get accepted into the STA-21 program and get a degree in Architectural Engineering and go Officer for the CEC (Civil Engineering Corps).

**Plans after Navy life:** Eventually get a job designing and building houses.

**The thing I like the most about my job is:** Knowing that I am trusted by the Commanding Officer of the ship to guide this ship safely during underway replenishments, strait transits, and pulling in/out of port. When I am at the helm, the life of every sailor, marine, and civilian onboard the BATAAN is in my hands.

SN(SW) Chad J. Hobbs

## SPRUANCE SEA CADETS



Spruance Division Sea Cadets attended the Installation of Council Officers and presented the colors.

They are shown here with LCDR Alan Starr and RADM Steven Ratti.

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

