



THE HIGHLINE

NAVY LEAGUE OF THE UNITED STATES

NORTH JERSEY COUNCIL

President's Message

My great thanks and respect go to those council members who volunteered to work on the two newly formed committees. One committee is dedicated to increasing membership by no less than 10% for the year and the other committee will find ways in which the Navy League can get better publicity.

I would like to remind you all to talk to friends, relatives and co-workers about the mission of the North Jersey Council, as well as the many benefits we bestow on the Coast Guard, youth groups, Naval Reservists and Recruiters in the North Jersey area. Your individual efforts may well help to increase our membership. The rebates we receive from National Headquarters for each member, although small, do help to keep our financial structure viable. My sincere thanks to everyone for bringing additional people to our April meeting. This produced an increase in the attendance for April.

For those of you who might be interested, the National Convention will take place June 1- 5, 2005 in Norfolk, Virginia. Anyone interested in attending will find the enrollment form in the April issue of Sea Power. The registration deadline is May 16, 2005.

I suggest that all of us closely watch our local newspapers for articles concerning the upcoming BRAC reduction of military bases. When the time comes, we must let our local congressional leaders understand that we do not look favorably on massive New Jersey closures or unfavorable reorganizations.

Please remember to bring a soft or hardcover book for the crew members of Coast Guard Station New York to our next meeting on Monday, May 2, 2005. These books may be new or slightly used. A box will be provided for you to drop them in at the meeting. See you May 2 at the Bonfire.

Paul Greff

Sr. Vice President's Message & May Speaker Information

It is possible! Thanks to the efforts of a number of members, attendance at last month's meeting did increase. With that increase came an increase in comradeship and energy. Well Done!

Our May speaker is Mr. Jack Dunne, an army veteran of the Korean War. We know it was a war and not a conflict as some would have us believe. Jack served with distinction and honor. As a civilian, he is an active leader and participant in fostering veterans' causes across all branches of the armed forces. His civilian background includes positions in various levels of law enforcement in Madison and in Morris County, business owner, and Mayor of Madison, New Jersey. I know you will enjoy hearing Jack share his stories.

As we did last month, let us again work hard to fill the room. Make the motto of "Each One Bring One", or perhaps more than one, our watch word! We did it last month. We can do it again!

Committee members, please remember that we will meet at six o'clock at the Bonfire to engage in a shortened version of strategic planning. The outcome of our work will form the foundation needed to help us accomplish our two goals for the year. I will be sending you some pre-meeting materials and thoughts so that we can complete this phase of our work within the one hour time period. Please come on time and prepared to engage in the discussion.

Victor Schumacher

NEXT NORTH JERSEY COUNCIL MEETING

Monday, May 2, 2005 at The Bonfire Restaurant

999 Market St., Paterson, Phone 973-278-2400

Cash Bar 6 PM Dinner 7 PM (\$20)

Directions to the Bonfire: Heading West on Rte. 80, get off at Exit 59. Bonfire is on the right at the bottom of the exit ramp. Heading East on Rte 80, get off at Exit 61. At the bottom of the ramp (traffic light) turn left. Go 100 feet. Turn left into Rte 80 West entrance ramp. Go to Exit 59. Local Directions: Go North on Lakeview Ave through Clifton and Paterson. Bear right as Lakeview ends at Market St. Cross Market St. and turn right into the Bonfire lot.

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The Highline

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The HIGHLINE is published monthly by the North Jersey Council of the Navy League of the United States. Contributions are welcome. Deadline is Friday after the Board meeting.

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**Visitors from Clifton Marine JROTC
at Our April Meeting
Cadet Captain Michael Pagani
Cadet Sergeant Major Mike Hruby**

Our two young Marine JROTC visitors were warmly received by the council. Cadet Captain Michael Pagani, who is the Cadet Commanding Officer, urged Cadet Sergeant Major Hruby to report on the recent drill competition.

On March 19, 2005, fifteen schools participated in a drill and color guard competition at Emerson High School. Cadet Sergeant Major Hruby took the third place trophy in unarmed drill. The cadet's award-winning presentation was reflected in his demeanor at our meeting. He is well-spoken, disciplined, and an ideal representative of the Junior Reserve program at Clifton High School. Hruby is currently a senior. After graduation he plans to attend William Patterson University in Wayne. He hopes to pursue a military career after college.

Hruby is pleased that the enthusiasm and confidence of the Clifton MJROTC drill team have improved since he won a trophy for the team at Emerson High. But he refuses credit, saying, 'I give all the credit to the commanding officer.'

Cadet Captain Pagani, the commanding officer, disagrees, saying, 'My Cadet Sergeant Major deserves the credit - one hundred percent.'

Tom McHugh

The Navy as of April 7

Active Duty 366,763 • Officers 53,332 • Enlisted 309,171
Ready Reserve 144,674 (as of Feb 28) • Selected Reserve 78,323
Active Duty Reservists 4,265 (as of April 6) • Ships 288
Ships Deployed 93 • Subs Deployed 8 • Aircraft 4,000+

from the April 18 issue of Navy Times

Cruises with the Coast Guard

At the past few meetings members were invited to sign up to indicate their interest in future cruises with the Coast Guard. This is an ongoing opportunity. Some cruises are scheduled well in advance and other opportunities come up with little notice. Our liaison calls members whose names are on the list when a Coast Guard cruise opportunity comes up.

If this is something you would like to do, come to our next meeting and get your name on the list of those interested. It's a great experience to cruise the Hudson on a Coast Guard vessel.

R Eaton

Our April Speaker

Pharmacist's Mate II, Ken Williams

Ken Williams was born and raised in Morristown. He played football for the Boonton Panthers, getting \$25 per game. At the start of World War II he enlisted in the Navy and tried for duties in submarines, but was kept out of that service by a slight overbite. Following training he was assigned to the Navy Yard at Norfolk, Virginia. He was subsequently ordered to the USS Gregory, DD802, where he served throughout the invasions of Iwo Jima and Okinawa.

On April 1, 1945 the USS Gregory participated in a diversionary landing on the southern end of Okinawa Island. Following that operation, the Gregory joined the radar picket of the island as the bloody battle for Okinawa raged on. The Japanese pilots seemed to know just when the Covering Air Patrol would leave the radar picket line. They always attacked within minutes of the departure of the planes. Williams does not know how the Japanese got this information.

From April 3 - 7, air attacks increased. During the battle for Okinawa the Gregory shot down six planes and pulled 9 pilots out of the water. Ken Williams remembers that one of the pilots was LTCDR Clark who was flying from the Enterprise.

Then, on April 8, 1945, suicide attacks against the picket ships reached their peak. Four planes targeted the Gregory; two were shot to pieces and the third was fought off. The fourth plane also was shot to pieces, but parts of the fuselage crashed into the destroyer amidships, buckling the hull. PHM2 Ken Williams was working in sick bay, starboard amidships at that time. The ship shuddered and stopped, dead in the water. Within a few minutes, lights came back on as damage crews worked to put the ship in order. Williams learned later that a bomb had been heading straight toward the fire room but was deflected by the gig, a 40-foot motor whale boat suspended in davits amidships.

Corpsman Williams worked to patch up the wounded. In response to a question, he explained that he regularly had responsibility for the sick bay because the ship's doctor was often either seasick or otherwise incapacitated.

For his actions during this battle, Lt. Bruce McCandless, Commanding Officer of the Gregory, was awarded the Silver Star. McCandless was also awarded the Medal of Honor for his previous actions as Communications Officer of cruiser San Francisco (CA-38) during the battle of Guadalcanal.

The Gregory was patched up by the USS Prairie, and then returned to San Diego for repairs, which were directed by Commodore McCandless, father of Bruce.

For those of you who use the internet and are interested in finding out more, follow this link to read the Medal of Honor citation for Bruce McCandless: <http://www.medalofhonor.com/BruceMcCandless.htm>. Follow this link for a history of the amazing McCandless family, including four distinguished naval officers, two medal of honor winners, and one astronaut: http://www.homeofheroes.com/a_homepage/community/misc/mccandless_family.htm.

Tom McHugh

Highline Contributions for 2005

We are accepting donations to help cover the cost of printing and mailing The Highline for 2005. If you have not yet contributed this year, we ask that you please help support The Highline with a contribution of \$10.00 or more.

Please send your check made payable to the North Jersey Council - NLUS to North Jersey Council, PO Box 256, Newton, NJ 07860. Our thanks to all Highline supporters.

Eaton



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APRIL 2005

2005 Meeting Schedule

Our monthly dinner meetings are held on the first Monday of each month except July and September when they will be held on the second Monday due to holidays. Board meetings are held the second Wednesday of each month.

Remaining Dinner Meetings for 2005: May 2, June 6, July 11, August 1, September 12, October 3, November 7 and December 5.

Next Meeting & Speaker: On May 2 our speaker will be Jack Dunne, Korean War veteran.

Visit the North Jersey Council Online

On our own North Jersey Council page (www.nlusnj.org) you can read current announcements and follow links to the "Online Highline". Each month more information is added here, and you can sign up to receive an email copy of The Highline.

Visit Navy League National Site

The Navy League Online Community (www.navyleague.org) includes councils and members from all over the United States. It is an excellent way to keep up to date and in touch with Navy League members across the nation. Follow the links from the home page to join the Navy League Online Community.

To register for access to the Online Community, follow these steps:

1. Go to the Navy League National Website (www.navyleague.org). Select (click on) "Online Community" on the Menu Bar.
2. The Online Community entry page will load. To register for the first time, select REGISTER NOW.
3. When the registration page loads, type in your member number and last name. Then select the VERIFY button.

Your member number can be found on the mailing label of Sea Power magazine, or on your membership card. You will be given an opportunity to select a password for future access to the online community. Once you are registered you have access to a wealth of Navy League information. Join the fun, keep informed.

Tom McHugh
