



NAVY LEAGUE

OF THE UNITED STATES
MINNESOTA COUNCIL



3rd Quarter 2020

Volume 1

Minnesota Council of the Navy League Awards Theodore Roosevelt Medals



On 25 January 2020, William L. James, President of the Minnesota Council of the Navy League, awarded the League's Theodore



On 22 February 2020, Mr. James awarded two additional Theodore Roosevelt Youth Medals to members of the United States Naval Sea Cadet Polaris Battalion in Cambridge, Minnesota. These medals were awarded to Petty Officer 3 Felicity May, and Cadet Petty Officer 3/LC 4 Ethan Walsh.

while instilling strong moral character and life skills through leadership and technical programs modeled after the Navy's professional development system. The Sea Cadet Corps consists of 2,800 adult officers and 9,200 cadets, i.e., "League Cadets" (age 10 thru 12) and Sea Cadets (age 13 thru high school graduation).



Roosevelt Youth Medal for outstanding performance of duty to Petty Officer 3 Ryan Leclair-Sura and Petty Officer 3/LC 4 Josef Jirik, both members of the Twin Cities Squadron, U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps in Arden Hills, Minnesota.

The Minnesota Council is the proud supporter of five Sea Cadet Corps units in Region 9-7. The U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps sponsored by the United States Navy League and supported by the Department of the Navy is a national youth leadership development organization that promotes interest and skills in naval disciplines



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Out of concern for our members and their families due to the Coronavirus pandemic we are holding all Board meetings virtually via ZOOM conference.

A Message from the President

Greetings Navy League members. Welcome to the first newsletter of the Navy League of the United States Minnesota Council. We will be rolling out this newsletter on a quarterly basis to share news and developments with our team members. Our hope is you will find information on a multitude of activities we are involved in, including the upcoming LCS21 Commissioning plans. We will also use this newsletter to share the activities of our Navy, Marine and Coast Guard commands.

I am writing this on Monday May 25, Memorial Day, the date on our calendars we remember and honor all those who have served in our Armed Services and especially those who gave the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom. In May 1868, General John A. Logan, the commander-in-chief of the Union veterans' group known as the Grand Army of the Republic, issued a decree that May 30 should become a nationwide day of commemoration for the more than 620,000 soldiers killed in the recently ended Civil War. On *Decoration Day*, as Logan dubbed it, Americans should lay flowers and decorate the graves of the war dead "whose bodies now lie in almost every city, village and hamlet churchyard in the land." The first ever Decoration Day held was in Charleston, SC to honor Union Soldiers who had been buried in mass graves behind the grandstands of the Washington Race Course and Jockey Club. Over 260 Union soldiers were interned there. After the war ended, freed slaves exhumed the bodies and gave them a

proper burial in a new cemetery encircled by a tall whitewashed picket fence with the words, "Martyrs of the Race Track". The first national commemoration of Memorial Day was held in Arlington National Cemetery on May 30, 1868, where both Union and Confederate soldiers are buried.

Although the term Memorial Day was used beginning in the 1880s, the holiday was officially known as *Decoration Day* for more than a century, when it was changed by federal law. Eight decades later, the Uniform Monday Holiday Act of 1968 finally went into effect, moving Memorial Day from its traditional observance on May 30 (regardless of the day of the week), to a set day—the last Monday in May.

Many American's look to Memorial Day as the official start of summer. With the opening of campgrounds, lakes, numerous picnics and parades held and of course the annual running of the Indianapolis 500 Race, Memorial Day has a wide range of meanings for many of us. However today is reserved to honor our veterans and those who have perished in the name of freedom. This year, honoring will be very different for all of us. With the Coronavirus pandemic, large gatherings at National Cemeteries and the holding of Memorial Day Parades and cookouts will not be happening. For the first time I can recall, the honor ceremonies at Fort Snelling National Cemetery will not be happening.

While the cemetery will be open, the ceremonial gathering of elected officials and military personnel will be absent.

In 1864 President Lincoln penned a letter to Lydia Bixby, a widow in Massachusetts believed to have lost five sons during the Civil War. While there is some debate as to whether the letter was penned by him or his secretary John Hay, it has stood as a remembrance to the sacrifices millions have made over the course of history and continue to do so.

**Executive Mansion,
Washington, November 21, 1864**

Dear Madam,

I have been shown in the files of the War Department a statement of the Adjutant General of Massachusetts, that you are the mother of five sons who have died gloriously on the field of battle.

I feel how weak and fruitless must be any words of mine which should attempt to beguile you from the grief of a loss so overwhelming. But I cannot refrain from tendering to you the consolation that may be found in the thanks of the Republic they died to save.

I pray that our Heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement, and leave you only the cherished memory of the loved and lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours, to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of Freedom.

Yours, very sincerely and respectfully,

A. LINCOLN.

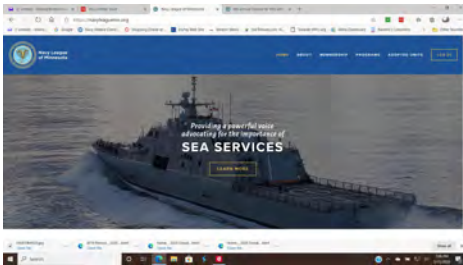
As we celebrate Memorial Day May 2020, it is my sincere hope each of you are safe, healthy and are taking care of your families and loved ones. We hope you enjoy the enclosed newsletter and we would love to hear from you. Please drop us a note at Navy League MN Council with anything you would like to share with us. Until then we look forward to seeing you all soon.

Fair winds and following seas.

Bill

3rd Quarter 2020

New Minnesota Council Website



The Minnesota Navy League recently established a new Website. The new website combines all our previous sites Minnesota Navy League, Navy Ball and USS Minneapolis- Saint Paul (LCS 21) into a single platform.

The new site allows the Navy League to include News stories about what we are doing, provides a calendar of upcoming events and identifies all our adopted units (Ships (including USS Minnesota (SSN 783), USS Minneapolis-Saint Paul (LCS 21), Sea Cadets units, Navy and Marine Corps JROTC Units, Navy ROTC at the University of Minnesota, and Shore Commands (Naval Operational Support Center, Minneapolis; Navy Talent Acquisition Group (NTAG) Northern Plains, and United States Coast Guard Station Duluth).

Additionally, the site provides up to date information on the upcoming commissioning of the USS Minneapolis-Saint Paul (LCS 21) and the efforts the council is making to prepare for the ships commissioning in Duluth in the Spring of 2021. Take a look at the site at <https://navyleaguemn.org/> and provide any comments to the Pat Dolan, Vice President of Communications at pkdolan37@gmail.com.

USS MINNESOTA RECOGNIZED AS THE BEST SHIP IN THE ATLANTIC FLEET

The Minnesota Navy League Council and all Minnesotans want to congratulate the USS Minnesota (SSN 783) and its crew on being awarded the 2019 Battenberg Cup Award!!!

Each year, the Battenberg Cup Award is presented to only one of the nearly 100 eligible surface ships, aircraft carriers and submarines, based on crew achievements. These include performance in competition for Atlantic Fleet Sportsmanship Award, Type Command Sailor of the Year Award, Golden Anchor Award, Ney Award and command excellence awards. Other information, such as operating schedules, commitments and unusual factors contributing to the nomination may also be considered. The Battenberg Cup Award honors USS Minnesota as the best all-around in the Atlantic fleet based on accumulation of crew achievements.



Minnesota Council Annual Board Meeting

We will be holding our Annual Board meeting on Wednesday June 24, 2020 to review 2019 and as well as hold elections for three of the Council Board position. Since we are presently operating on a Stay Safe Minnesota order from Gov. Walz, we will be hosting the meeting via Zoom. The Board will be staggering positions so that 1/3 of the officer positions are up for election this year, 1/3 are up for election in 2021, and the remaining 1/3 is up for election in 2022, in the following manner:

2020 elections: VP and Treasurer, VP Outreach South, and VP of Membership.

The officers that will make up the 2020 Nominating Committee will be: Brandon Montanye, Pat Dolan, and Brian Skon. Please reserve June 24, 2020 in your calendars for the gathering on ZOOM. Details will be sent via email to all current members via email and posted on www.navyleaguemn.org in the calendar.

Command Updates



NTAG Northern Plains

Navy Talent Acquisition Group (NTAG) Northern Plains is just over half-way through the recruiting year for fiscal year 2020. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, we have seen drastic changes across the seven Midwestern states we cover. With schools closing, businesses on hiatus, and many of the more traditional markets for our recruiters are now off limits, we have been focusing more on our social media prospecting tools and electronic means of reaching applicants. With the exception of our five Navy Recruiting Processing Stations, co-located with the Military Entry Processing Stations, many of our Navy Recruiting Stations have temporarily closed. As we look toward re-opening our stations, we continue to monitor the local health conditions, available PPE, and necessary supplies to open in a safe manner. The profound changes brought about by COVID has placed a damper on recruiting, but has also created possibilities to grow and develop innovative ways to reach our market. My team continues to impress me with their determination and ingenuity. This applies to the future Sailors and Officers we are working with as well – many of whom now have to endure 14 days of self-imposed Restriction of Movement before they leave for Boot camp/Officer Candidate School, and another 14 days when they arrive and before they start training. That extra commitment tells me they have what it takes to succeed in the Service we all cherish and fight for. I look forward to the second half of fiscal year 2020 and the opportunity it brings, the Future Sailors we will meet, and growth we will experience as a command. For information about NTAG Northern Plains, please reach out to, CDR James Darkenwald, USN at james.darkenwald@navy.mil or 312-320-4635.



NOSC

NOSC Minneapolis provides administrative and training support for over 500 Reservists from 21 units. Most recently, we mobilized 23 personnel in support of the Navy's response to the Coronavirus outbreak. Additionally, NOSC Minneapolis provides Military Funeral Honors to Navy veterans for the entire state of Minnesota and part of Wisconsin. We expect to resume services starting the first week in June and are anticipating a surge in requests due to the delays in having funerals the last few months.

USCG Station Duluth

Coast Guard personnel stationed at the Marine Safety Unit (MSU) in Duluth Minnesota have stayed busy during the ever challenging and dynamic situation presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. Utilizing protective equipment and adaptive technology, the Coast Guard has ensured that all mission requirements to maintain the safety of shipping and the waterway throughout the entire Western Great Lakes region have been met. Recently MSU Duluth responded to oil spills, completed challenging safety and security exams on foreign flagged vessels, and hosted a virtual workshop with applicable federal, state and local partners to increase the response efficiency to a maritime communicable disease incident.



MSU Duluth Port State Control examiners' inspecting a vessel to ensure it complies with all domestic and international regulations while ensuring appropriate protective equipment was utilized to prevent against the spread of the Coronavirus.

Command Updates



US Navy Sea Cadet Corps

The Polaris & Trident Sea Cadet Battalion – Cambridge has been unable to do anything publicly since mid March. However they have found innovative ways to engage cadets and leaguers. They have participated in weekly Zoom meetings and created a Laser Tag Challenge among the Fire Teams and Squads. The challenge consists of weekly questions about the US Navy, USNSCC, military history and facts about the units. There are also physical challenges mostly related to the PRT/PT, push up contests, mile contests and such. Other things that were done to get cadets outside and away from the computer was to have them go on field trips/missions and adventures. These have been with their family with social distancing and they have gone to Blue Hill in the Sherburne National Forest about 20 minutes west of Cambridge. They go there and climb to the top, take a selfie and write a paragraph or two about its history. Another venture was to have them go and take a selfie where there is a military memorial or piece of military equipment on display (like in front of a VFW or American Legion) and write a couple paragraphs about the display/equipment and send it in. Lastly we have cadets taking selfies with US Flags that are on display wherever they may be out and about. A pair of cadets took 100 pictures of themselves in front of 100 different locations with the flag on display! They are not in uniform, just civvies as they are out doing these challenges. It has been difficult to keep 62 cadets/leaguers engaged without a drill, but certainly an interesting experience.



A few members of the Duluth Twin Ports Division of Sea Cadets, lead by LT Davan Scott, a former Navy Corpsman, assisted in the COVID 19 testing in the Duluth.

The usual "Senior Farewell" ceremony for all high school graduating cadets who are being honorably discharged from the USN Sea Cadet Corps was cancelled. No re-opening date for Sea Cadet activities been announced by USNSCC NHQ.

University of Minnesota Naval ROTC

Like many Sailors and Marines across the country, the midshipmen of the University of Minnesota Naval ROTC unit adapted and overcame new challenges during these unprecedented times. After spring break, the university decided to transition to a virtual learning environment in order to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. While students and instructors alike remained flexible as we navigated these foreign waters, the mission of NROTC grounded us all: "to develop midshipmen morally, mentally, and physically... and to Commission College graduates as naval officers". On May 14th, we celebrated a mission accomplishment with the commissioning of Ensigns and Second Lieutenants.

Ensign Diana Theresa Chavez, a future Surface Warfare Office reporting to the USS PORT ROYAL in Pearl Harbor, summarized her experience in saying: *"It was an interesting process to switch my physical responsibilities as a midshipman and a student to a completely online environment. My bedroom became my classroom, exercise was now done all alone, military education was completely on powerpoint slides, and all of my engineering projects turned into research and proposals. Commissioning and graduating online was never the plan. The motivation was always the vision of walking across the stage and standing next to my fellow seniors taking the oath of office in our fresh choker whites/dress blues. Although that didn't happen the positive effects of commissioning weren't taken away. The unit staff at UMN NROTC worked their magic to make each commissioning ceremony special. The silver lining in an online commissioning ceremony was being able to invite anyone from anywhere in the world to witness and celebrate taking the next step in my journey. In these unprecedented times I am extremely blessed to have had the ability to watch my friends commission and have my own celebration."*



OTHER NEWS

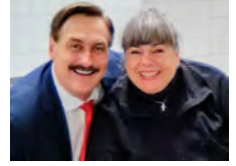
United States Naval Academy Information Program Update

The United States Naval Academy Information Program (USNAIP) is closing out the selection of students for the Naval Academy Class of 2024. To date, 14 Minnesota students have received and accepted offers of appointment to USNA. In addition 1 student has accepted an offer to attend the United States Naval Academy Preparatory School (NAPS) in Newport, Rhode Island. Upon successful completion of the NAPS program, the student will be eligible for appointment to USNA, but must repeat the nomination and appointment application processes.

This year, due to the pandemic, the Class of 2024 will report to United States Naval Academy (USNA) in waves between 29 June and 2 July 2020. At the present time, all induction activities and the USNA in general, is closed to the public.

The USNAIP in Minnesota is seeking additional Blue and Gold Officers (BGOs). BGOs conduct 1-on-1 interviews and evaluate applicants on behalf of USNA and the Dean of Admissions. Additionally BGOs participate in college fairs and Service Academy activities. A Navy background or experience is not required to become a BGO as persons will be trained and teamed with an experienced BGO. Persons interested in becoming a BGO should contact Minnesota's Area Coordinator, Captain Mark Salmen, USN (Ret.) at mark.salmen@1973.usna.com4.

Minnesota Navy League Outreach



Due to COVID-19, many outreach events scheduled for this spring and summer have been canceled or postponed, including speaking engagements at VFW Posts and American Legion Posts, parades, and inform organizations of the work of the Minnesota Navy League. Joyce continues to reach out to veterans through weekly telephone calls, providing the Minneapolis Veterans Home and Hospital with face masks and hand sanitizer, on behalf of the Minnesota Navy League Council. Additionally, Joyce has been working with Mike Lindell, Inventor and CEO of My Pillow, to furnish veterans with pillows and for those with service animals, a comfortable bed for their best buddy.

If restrictions are lifted for events, Joyce has the following parades on the calendar to promote the Council:

- Bonanzaville July 4 Parade in Fargo-Moorhead
- Stars and Stripes Parade at the Fergus Falls Veterans Home July 4
- Rothsay Prairie Days Parade - July 11th
- Appreciation Days Parade in Ashby - July 18th
- Northwest Water Carnival Parade in Detroit Lakes - July 19th
- Chief Wenonga Parade, Battle Lake - July 26th
- Flekkefest Parade in Elbow Lake, Minnesota - August 8th
- Lake Region Pioneer Thresherman's Parade, Dalton - Sept. 13th
- Annual Boots on the Ground Veterans Motorcycle Run - Sept 19
- Holiday Lights Parade in Moorhead - November 24th



USS Minneapolis Saint Paul News

The Minnesota Navy League and the USS Minneapolis Saint Paul Commissioning team are excited to update you on what is happening with our ship.

The Navy announced earlier this year that LCS 21 will be commissioned in the Port of Duluth in the late spring of 2021. The Secretary of the Navy has the EXACT suggested date on his desk and we are waiting for his signature and approval of this date. We will share that date with you when we have it. With the late spring 2021 as our end point, we are earnestly moving forward with corporate and individual fund raising in order to ensure that we have the funds to support this HUGE event for the state. We have also begun working with various entities like the Duluth Seaway Port Authority, Visit Duluth, the Duluth Area Chamber of Commerce, and possible vendors. We anticipate a significant economic benefit for the city of Duluth as a result of the commissioning ceremony.

We are looking for corporate as well as individual donors. Levels of sponsorship are based on Naval ranks, the highest being Admiral on down to Ensign. Every contribution will help the Commissioning Committee meet its fundraising goal and show our pride as Minnesotans in this wonderful ship to bear the name of our Twin Cities. You can donate on our website at lcs21.org by clicking on our DONATE button. Every dollar will help us to meet our fundraising goal. Please pass this onto your friends and any corporations you may have contact with in order to help spread the word about the opportunity to support the USS Minneapolis Saint Paul commissioning next year.

Regarding tickets for the ceremony, the Navy has a very specific process for issuing tickets to the commissioning ceremony. The Minnesota Navy league Commissioning committee will capture names at lcs21.org starting Aug. 1st. We will then send that information to the Navy in early 2021. The Navy will be responsible for sending out emails to potential attendees who must RSVP to Navy to have tickets send to them. Due to security issues, each attendee must have a ticket to attend the event.

Travel restrictions due to COVID-19, has curtailed travel by senior Navy officials and LCS 21 crew. Additionally, we have not been able to visit the ship in Marinette since these restrictions were put in place. We are hopeful that by this fall we may be able to have crew visit Minnesota for a sporting event or possibly the Navy Ball. We will keep you posted if this comes to fruition.

Finally, we are close to announcing a nationally recognized sports figure as our Honorary Chairperson. I promise you this will be someone all Minnesotans recognize! He will help us to promote the ship and be extremely valuable in our fundraising efforts. I look forward to continuing to share details as we get them.

Brian Skon
Chairman, USS Minneapolis Saint Paul Commissioning Team



USS Minneapolis Saint Paul News

Navy Announces LCS 21 Command Leadership

The Navy recently identified the command leadership for the future USS Minneapolis Saint Paul (LCS-21).

Commander Alfonza White, a native of Milwaukee, Wisconsin will be the ships' Commanding Officer. He enlisted in 1995 as a Submariner Electrician's Mate (Nuclear) and completed the nuclear field pipeline in 1997. His commission is via the Officer Candidate School, graduating from Thomas Edison State University via University of Mississippi, with a Bachelor of Science Nuclear Electronic (BSNE) in November 2003. CDR White currently serves as the Damage Control Assistant aboard USS AMERICA.

Lieutenant Commander Gregory McLean is the ships' Executive Officer. LCDR McLean was born in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba and graduated with a Bachelor of Science Degree (with Honors) in Information Science from Florida State University with minors in Math, Physics, Naval Science, Classics, and Psychology.

Finalizing the ships' command leadership is Command Master Chief Petty Officer Rafael Acevedo. CMDCS (SW/AW) Rafael Acevedo is a native of New York. In March 2019, Senior Chief Acevedo was selected for the Command Senior Chief Program and received follow on orders to Littoral Combat Ship Squadron TWO, Mayport, Florida. Senior Chief Acevedo is a graduate of the Senior Enlisted Academy Class 209.

We look forward to working with the ships' command leadership as we progress towards commissioning.



CDR Alfonza White



LCDR Gregory McLean



CMDCS Rafael Acevedo





Navy League of the United States Minnesota Council 2020 Officers

Title

President
 Vice President – Communications
 Vice President – Membership
 Vice President – Outreach North
 Vice President – Outreach South
 Vice President - Events and Chair LCS21
 Secretary
 Treasurer
 Judge Advocate General

Name

Bill James
 Pat Dolan
 Jeanette Sterner
 Joyce Lacey
 Cary Sparrow
 Brian Skon
 Brandon Montanye
 Mark Stange
 James Schoeberl

TWIN PORTS DIVISION SUPPORTS DULUTH AREA RED CROSS

The Twin Ports Division, Duluth, Minnesota, of the U.S. Navy Cadets has been partnering with the American Red Cross to ensure blood can be collected safely during the COVID-19 pandemic. Twin Ports Division has both a shipboard fire fighting (damage control) and medical unit based out of Duluth, MN so working with the Red Cross is a good fit for the roughly 30 members and allows them to use the skills they have to assist the local community.

The Twin Ports Division regularly plays an active role in the community. They helped crew the William A. Irvin both times it was moved and have provided medical support for downed runners at annual Grandma's Marathon, an annual road race held each June that runs from the city of Two Harbors on Scenic Route 61 and

continues along Lake Superior into the city of Duluth.

Lt. Davan Scott, commanding officer for the division, said, "Our unit has worked hand in hand with the Red Cross for a few years now and in the midst of a critical nationwide blood shortage, we were asked to assist however possible. Our sailors rogered up to answer the call. It's humbling to have such a vital mission as a medical unit during this wild time."

The unit assisted in screening for coronavirus symptoms and registering donors during two blood drives and hopes to help at future events. The Red Cross is especially thankful to have support and skill of the local Twin Ports Division during this key time.

The Twin Ports Division is one of four Naval Sea Cadet Corps program adopted by the Minnesota Council.

Learn more about the Twin Ports Division of the U.S. Navy Cadet Corps at their website at:
www.twinportsnsc.com.

