



ALL AHEAD FULL

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BALTIMORE COUNCIL, NAVY LEAGUE OF THE UNITED STATES

SUMMER 2021



FROM THE BRIDGE

Greetings all,

We begin with really big news! Planning has begun on both organizational and operational levels for the commissioning of another major warship in Baltimore. It will be the third such event here in little more than a decade. The ship is USS Carl M. Levin, an Arleigh Burke Class destroyer and one of the most powerful vessels afloat. Levin, a United States Senator from Michigan from 1978 through 2013 was, for many years, chairman or ranking minority member of the Senate Armed Services Committee. The contract for the ship, along with the name, was first announced in a press release from General Dynamics, parent company of Bath Iron Works, on 31 March 2016.



Arleigh Burke Class Destroyer

Bravo Zulu!

And The Winner Is.....

By Alan Walden

It wasn't that long ago when the United States Naval Sea Cadet (USNSCC) and Navy League Sea Cadet (NLSC) program in Baltimore was on the ropes. Uneven leadership and a general lack of interest had shrunk the corps of cadets to single digits. With the arrival of then LT Rolanda Franklin (now Regional Director) and a more determined effort by the Baltimore Council-NLUS to turn things around remarkable progress has been achieved. The number of cadets has risen dramatically in recent years, and the commitment of the cadre and this council has increased exponentially. All of which led to the following seminal announcement:

"It is our pleasure to inform you that United States Naval Sea Cadet Corps Fort McHenry Division & Training Ship Constellation has been selected as the Winner of the 2021 Best of Baltimore Award in the category of Non-Profit Organization. The Baltimore Award Program was created to honor and generate public recognition of the achievements and



positive contributions of businesses and organizations in and around Baltimore. Our mission is to raise the profile of exemplary companies and entrepreneurs among the press, the business community, and the general public."

The credit goes in full measure to now LCDR Franklin, the current commanding officer, LTJG Andrea Thomas, the staff, the parents and, of course, the cadets themselves who helped achieve this honor. Well done! ⚓



Flight IIA Arleigh Burke Class

From the Bridge
Continued from page 1

The official designation of DDG-120 as the Carl M. Levin by then Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus was announced two weeks later. Baltimore has obviously become a favored venue for such occasions. Many of you may recall that in 2008 USS Sterett (DDG-104), also an Arleigh Burke, was commissioned here. And in 2016 Baltimore was host to the commissioning of the super destroyer USS Zumwalt (DDG-1000), lead ship of her class. As of now it seems likely that what promises to be a truly exciting event will take place in the fall of 2022, likely to coincide with the celebration of Fleet Week. A heavily attended plenary



Plenary Meeting at Navy Operational Support Center

meeting took place in May at the Navy Operational Support Center with four officers of the Baltimore Council, myself included, among the participants. This organization will, as it has in the past, have a leading role to play in this event. We'll keep you posted.

Meanwhile we are doing our level best to meet the ongoing demands of our mission. We have continued

the in person activities of the Sea Cadets, but have suspended, temporarily, the JROTC Program due to the schools being having been closed because of the pandemic. All will, however, be reactivated in the fall of 2021 when schools reopen. Recognition awards programs for men and women in units and vessels of the Navy Reserve and Coast Guard will likewise resume once the

facilities reopen to us.

Our annual holiday banquet and business meeting, to which all members of the Baltimore Council and their guests will be invited, is scheduled for Wednesday, 1 December 2021. More information will be forthcoming as plans are determined.

In closing we wish you all a safe and enjoyable summer and remind you, as always, "Freedom Isn't Free." It is the men and women of the Armed Forces who pay for it. ⚓

Warmest regards,
Joe

BG Arthur J. Nattans, USA (ret)
Council President & Life Member

Staying The Course Coping with Covid



By LTJG Andrea Thomas

During the Winter Months, Fort McHenry Division and Training Ship Constellation engaged in traditional unit activities with the added precautions due to COVID 19 Pandemic.

In January, we participated in the Wreaths Across America Cleanup, the followup to the annual WAA event. Volunteers travel to National Cemeteries to help pick up and recycle wreaths that were placed on graves of fallen Military Members and their spouses during our Holiday season. Cadets wore their Navy Working Uniform (NWU) and traveled to Baltimore National Cemetery in Catonsville



(r) Capt. B. Johnson

to assist other volunteers in the cleanup. (PO1 Amar Hathiramani pictured at Baltimore National Cemetery January 15th, 2021.)

In February we participated in Virtual Drills, in which we had speakers from our Armed Services to celebrate Black History Month and provide the cadets an insight on their experiences and their military heroes. Captain Brianca Johnson, USAFR spoke to Training Ship Constellation about her job as a Public Affairs Officer and of historic Black Air Force Leaders including General Benjamin O. Davis and his Tuskegee Airmen. Major Ralph Johnson also spoke to Fort McHenry Division (virtually) about his Leadership experiences and his career



SR Cole Reis and SN Joshua Rogan

in the US Air Force. Our virtual drills included fellow units Training Ship Reina Mercedes, based in Annapolis, and Maryland Division, which operates on the Eastern Shore.

March was the time for our semi-annual Physical Readiness Test. Even with the harsh winter and continued pandemic, our cadets persevered and met their fellow cadets at Fort McHenry to take their exam. The test consists of sit ups, push-ups and 1 timed mile through the scenic Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine.

Our thanks go to all the Cadets and Volunteers who came out to prepare for Spring and Summer Training! ⚓

One Of Our Own

A Very Special Moment

What's it like to receive your commission from the CinC? Former Fort McHenry Division Sea Cadet Petty Officer First Class Joshua Webster, Jr. found out during this year's graduation ceremony at the United States Coast Guard Academy in New London, CT. The President of the United States was the commencement speaker and it was from Joe Biden himself that Webster received his commission as an officer and a gentlemen; an ensign in the USCG. Also there to share the moment was Petty Officer Second Class Joshua

Webster, Sr., a CG veteran and young Joshua's father. When in uniform the son now rates a salute from the old man.

We, of the Baltimore Council-NLUS, offer our sincere best wishes to both of them: To Webster Junior as he begins a rewarding career as a Coast Guard officer; to Webster Senior for his service to the nation and for having raised an extraordinary son. ⚓



Webster Jr., President Biden, Webster Sr.

Read On

At Sea and At Home

By Alan Walden

Same author, different title. James Hornfischer (recently deceased), who wrote *Neptune's Inferno*, the book mentioned in our last issue, is back to tell an even more harrowing tale. "Ship of Ghosts" is, as are all of his books, the result of exhaustive research; journals and letters, rare historical documents, including, in this case, testimony from postwar Japanese war crimes tribunals. Also eyewitness and first person accounts. When he's done the reader can actually feel the drama, experience the action, suffer the pain.

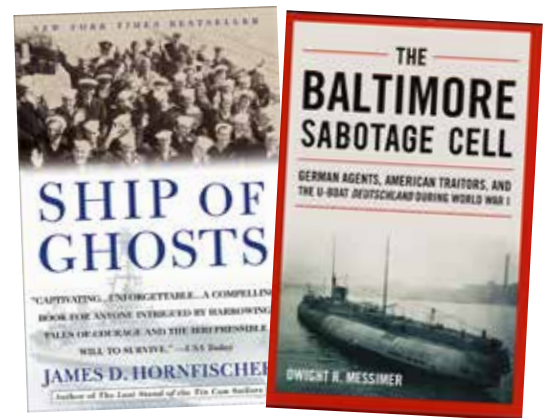
The heavy cruiser USS Houston, originally designated a light cruiser because of her relatively thin armor, was President Franklin D. Roosevelt's favorite warship when she sailed into history. Trapped in the far western Pacific after the attack on Pearl Harbor, with little or no hope of reinforcement, she and the other hopelessly outnumbered vessels in her company were doomed from the outset. As Hornfischer learned during his research, Houston's navigator prophesied the outcome of her last battle when he said to a young officer on the bridge, "Son, we're going to Hell." Battered by gunfire, relentlessly bombarded by enemy aircraft, her decks awash in blood, she

was finally overwhelmed during the one-sided night action in Sunda Strait.

For the survivors that was only the beginning of their misery. There followed years in brutal jungle prison camps where every day brought a new battle against starvation, disease, and torture, both physical and psychological. And yet they fought back, as Hornfischer tells us, with dignity, ingenuity, sabotage, willpower and the absolute conviction the United States would eventually prevail. It's all true; it's all within these pages. Read it. You won't be disappointed



Our second entry takes us to the home front in the days leading up to America's entry into the other World War. It's about the little known success of German efforts to disrupt the Atlantic supply line and to, perhaps, even keep the United States out of World War I. Imagine: More than fifty attacks on American soil by German agents actively supported by American citizens. Fires, bombings, even germ warfare; all apparently coordinated and, to a large degree, bankrolled by one man in one East



Coast City: Baltimore.

The author of "The Baltimore Sabotage Cell" is Dwight R. Messimer, a former lecturer on history at California State University in San Jose. This is real cloak and dagger stuff with the focus on Paul Hilken, a prominent Baltimore shipping executive. Here we also learn more about the visit to pre-war America of "Deutschland," a giant German cargo submarine, laden with contraband; her entry apparently arranged by Hilken who, at that time, ran the local office of the North German Lloyd shipping company. As Maryland Historical Society President and CEO Burt Kummerow has said, "Dwight Messimer has uncovered one of the most amazing tales to emerge from 'The Great War.'" Amazing it us, and utterly fascinating. ⚓

Remembering Our Heroes

Memorial Day 2021



Alan Walden



After two days of torrential rain and unseasonably cool temperatures the weather turned picture perfect for the annual Memorial Day ceremony at Dulaney Valley Memorial Gardens in Timonium, MD. The Covid-19 pandemic precluded an in-person event in 2020. But the participants and spectators were back in force this year to recall the sacrifices of the men and women of the Armed Forces who gave their “last full measure” to the republic and its citizens. Once again, as he has for more than three decades, Baltimore Council past president, now acting VP Alan Walden filled the role of Master of Ceremony. And what a ceremony it was with comments from

Maryland Secretary of Veterans Affairs George Owings, Air Force Brigadier General Matthew Dinmore who is Mobilization Assistant to the commander of the United States Cyber Command, and other prominent figures.

There was music provided by the 229th Maryland Army National Guard Band, the adjutant general's own. Two accomplished musicians from Charm City Winds performed selections appropriate to the moment. And bagpiper Robert McCurdy added gravitas to the closing moments with his rendition of “Amazing Grace.” That they had to compete with the relentless buzz of the Brood X cicada

infestation that occurs every 17 years was only a minor annoyance.

The event ended as always with a 21 gun salute, and a lone bugler sounding Taps from the nearby hillside. Great credit must be given to John and Jack Mitchell, owners of DVMG, and their staff for making it such a special day.

One other thing: Perennial MC Alan Walden actually managed to be in two places at once this Memorial Day: In person in Timonium, and simultaneously, via the recording of a special essay set to music, at a similar ceremony in Harford County. ⚓

What Was, and What Is

The Showplace

By Alan Walden

To look at Baltimore's Inner Harbor now it's hard to believe that a century ago it was a wild, noisy, brawling, messy place populated mostly by ship owners and the hard men who sailed their full rigged ships, barques, and schooners to the four corners of the world and back. A waterfront where honkytonk saloons abounded and where the rugged sailormen could find all the entertainment they desired – for a price. Nor did it change very much during the subsequent steamship era. Yes, it became more respectable. But after sunset it was, by and large, still a place to be avoided by the more genteel citizens of Baltimore.

The biggest change began not that long ago; a matter of a few decades. Now, in place of the forest of masts towering over the waterfront there are the vessels and other artifacts of Historic Ships in Baltimore, dinner cruises, mega-yachts and other pleasure craft, water taxis and paddle boats. Ashore elegant hotels and fine shopping and dining establishments have replaced the run down crab shacks and saloons. There is street entertainment a-plenty. And for strollers, skaters, and bikers there is the bright and welcoming promenade anchored by the National Aquarium, and the Maryland Science Center. While I know that many people remain reluctant to visit the Inner Harbor for a variety of reasons may I suggest you give it a try? One visit may lead to more. ⚓



1911...and 110 years later



ORGANIZATIONS, INSTALLATIONS, AND VESSELS SPONSORED
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Coming Up

- 7/4 Independence Day - (Show the colors)
- 9/6 Labor Day - (Show the Colors)
Rosh Hashannah begins at sundown
- 9/11 Patriot Day - (Show the Colors)
Defenders Day (In Maryland)
- 9/15 Yom Kippur
- 9/22 Autumnal Equinox (First day of fall)

Remembering Our Mission

The NAVY LEAGUE came into being in 1902 with the express purpose “to enlighten the people on naval matters and tell them what a Navy means to the country and what it ought to mean to them.”

We have always conveyed the philosophy of two of our founders, **PRESIDENT THEODORE ROOSEVELT** and **ADMIRAL ALFRED THAYER MAHAN** that America is a maritime nation and that a strong Navy is the most cost-effective means of ensuring peace.

PRIDE • SERVICE • PATRIOTISM



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