



# NOW HEAR THIS!

NAVY LEAGUE OF THE UNITED STATES  
BREMERTON-OLYMPIC PENINSULA COUNCIL



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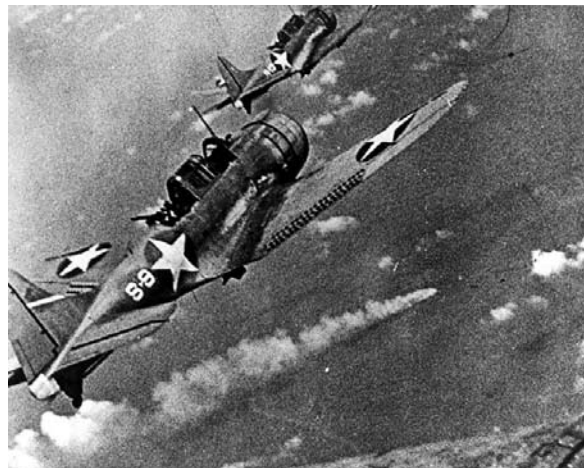
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## NEW MEMBERS

- ★ Nick Hankings
- ★ Bob Murphy
- ★ Patty Murphy

## Battle of Midway July 13 Luncheon Program

Come hear how Admiral Chester A. Nimitz delivered a striking victory in the Pacific near the small island base of Midway, which caused a crushing blow to Japan's swift and overpowering conquest of South



*SBDs over the burning Japanese cruiser Mikuma*

East Asia, starting six months earlier with Japan's surprise attack on Pearl Harbor. This United States naval sea and air victory broke the back of Japanese naval aviation! Japan was forced to change its national strategic philosophy from one of awesome offense to that of desperate defense directly effecting the duration and outcome of World War II.

As Commander of the Pacific Fleet, Admiral Nimitz achieved an incredible

victory through the brilliant use of limited resources, the element of surprise, smart code breaking, dedicated professional naval aviators and pure unadulterated "LUCK". His forces consisting of 27 ships

faced off against the overwhelming Japanese force of nearly 147 ships. With such odds Nimitz was not expected to win.

The intense battle lasted only about three hours concluding with the Japanese Carrier Force Commander, Admiral Nagumo, (the victor at Pearl Harbor) eventually being forced into a difficult tactical position by our dedicated and professional naval aviators from which there was no escape.

Midway continued on page 2

## Upcoming Events - Save the Date

- ★ June 26 – Fathoms O' Fun Parade, Port Orchard, 6 p.m.
- ★ July 4 – Independence Day
- ★ July 9 – SAFE Boat tour
- ★ July 13 – Battle of Midway Luncheon, Bangor Plaza 11 a.m.
- ★ July 24 – Whaling Days Parade, Silverdale 10 a.m.
- ★ July 26 – US Coast Guard Tour, Seattle



## President's Message

On Memorial Day, prior to laying the traditional Memorial Wreath over the side of the ship, a warm hearted crowd huddled up in the crew's mess of the USS TURNER JOY avoiding the rainy weather to hear Rear Admiral Aucoin's Memorial Day address along with my reading of General Collin Powell's colorful speech on the "Government Issue" American Soldier, better known around the world as the American GI.

From its World War II roots the term "GI" stands the test-of-time as the venerable "GI Joe"- foot soldier. Today we've added a new acronym to describe our Navy's service men and women... "IA" or Independent Augmentee who stand side-by-side "in country" with the modern day boots on the ground "GI."

The United States entered WWII on December 7, 1941 but our merchant marines and sailors were already in-the-fight transporting Lend Lease War Materials to Europe and later Russia, suffering relentless attacks from German submarine "Wolf Packs" on their convoys. Following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the war in the Atlantic raged on while adding the equally dire and

overwhelming naval battles in the Pacific to the war effort.

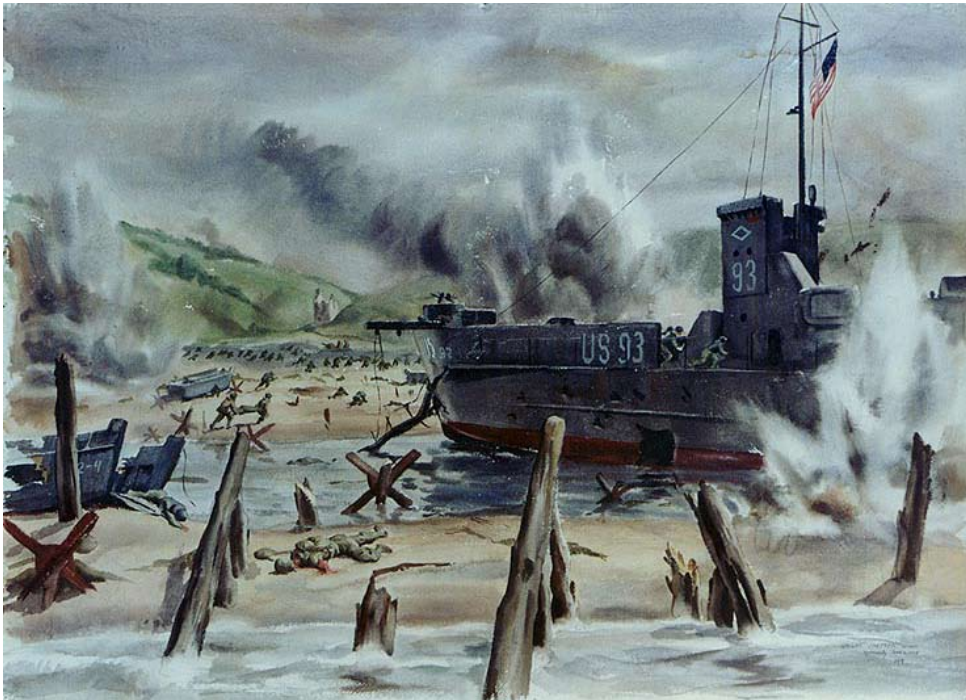
Whether landing on the beaches of Normandy or the coral sands of the Pacific, our Marine "GI's" and Navy Sailors stood in harm's way together, wave by wave, in vulnerable landing craft while shuttling GI's from the heaving sides of a troop ship back to the treacherous beaches again and again.

Today we are fighting in an "Asymmetric" battle space where beach landings have become desert and mountainous roadways where IED's, ambush and suicide bombs face the GI's 24/7 with Navy and Marine IA's standing together with the "GI's", shoulder-to-shoulder, in harm's way.

As the tragic and heartwarming stories of our M16 - Hershey Bar packing service men and women filter home, it's clear that little has changed over the last 69 years ... "let's get the job done and get home safe". Our modern day hero's stand and fight and/or simultaneously perform humanitarian relief services all in the same battle space or natural disaster catastrophe.

How can we ever say "thank you for your service"... enough.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Gary S. Gunderson*



"The Tough Beach" - Watercolor by Dwight Shepler

## Midway (Cont'd)



VT-6 TBDs on USS Enterprise

Captain Mark Olson, NBK Commanding Officer wrote the following about the Battle of Midway: "We cannot, nor should not forget this battle; we are here today in this free and proud country because of those



On board USS Yorktown after she was hit by dive bombers

people who were desperate and determined to turn the tide of the Japanese offensive, and because so many of them gave their lives to see it through.

Theirs is a legacy of courage and they rate a spot in our history, our memory and our hearts." (Northwest Navigator-Kitsap-Everett Edition, Friday, June 4, 2010, page 4)

Captain Will Lent, USN, Retired and our Bremerton-Olympic Council Program Chair has prepared an exciting presentation on this battle that is described as one of the most important naval battles in the history of the United States. Find out about Will's very personal connection to this battle.

*Prepared by Will Lent and  
Gary Gunderson*



# Louis Mejia – Navy League Board Member



A native of El Monte, California, Louis graduated from El Monte High School with honors and joined the Navy soon afterwards. Louis served as a Radioman on seven ships: LCU-164, the Peoria, the Thomaston, Tarwah, Ranger, Whipple and Lahey, enjoying travelling from port to port. The Navy offered him several opportunities to visit the places where history was made – actually seeing

what he used to only read about in books. Awestruck that he could walk on the same ground that battles were fought on, such as the Battle at Corregidor he continues to visit historical sights when he travels.

While the most interesting city he visited while in the Navy was Hong Kong (it seemed like nothing ever closed), his favorite liberty spot was Singapore (a Western city in the middle of the Orient). One of the most unusual duties he had was on board the Ranger. It is notable because Louis is an avid “Trekkie”! Star Trek 4 – The Voyage Home was filmed on board the Ranger. Not only did Louis get to meet members of the cast - he was part of Walter Koenig’s security detail during the filming!

After 23 years of honorable service, Louis retired as a RM1/E6 then went to school to earn two associates degrees to become a lab technician. After several years of commuting, he became a real estate agent with Reid Real Estate in Bremerton so he could stay in the county, where he has been a resident since 1992 and lives with Suwimonm, his wife of 13 years.

Louis joined the Navy League after participating in the Stennis’ change of homeport event in 2002 because he believes in the Navy League’s mission of supporting the Sea Services and has been on the Float Committee and a board member since 2003. Over the last seven years he has seen the awareness of Navy League in the community grow steadily and hopes to do what he can to continue that growth.

*Submitted by Susan Larsen*

## “Got Talent” Show

The Puget Sound Oakleaf Club organized the Second Annual Naval Hospital Bremerton’s “Got Talent” Show. This year they had a wonderful variety of performers from pianists, singers, and dancers to a Taekwondo Demonstration. The “Great Cris Larsen” kept everything very lively in his role as Master of Ceremonies.

This great event was the capstone event for the Armed Forces Festival Activities that spanned a six-week series of events honoring “Those Who Serve.” This year, in addition to the military, members and families of law enforcement and firefighters were also recognized and honored.

This Talent Show highlighting how various cultures enrich our daily lives and was open to the public The silent auction was a big hit and some

of our Navy League members took home some great items. Proceeds from the Talent Show help fund a reading program: Reach Out and Read Washington State. At each well-child visit from 6 months through 5 years of age, medical providers at Naval Hospital Bremerton give children a new developmentally and culturally appropriate book to take home. In the waiting room, a literacy-rich environment encourages reading and book sharing among parents, caregivers, children and volunteers. Doctors and nurses talk with parents and caregivers about the importance of reading aloud to their young children, and offer age-appropriate tips and encouragement.

To read ore about this program, visit <http://www.reachoutandreadwa.org/>.

## US Marine Corps Sunset Parade on July 28

This year Marines will perform their traditional Sunset Parade at the Silverdale Stadium at Olympic High School in Silverdale at 6pm on July 28. Everybody is welcome to enjoy the precision drills performed by the United States Marine Corps Battalion stationed at Bangor.

The official Sunset parades are performed only here and in Washington, D.C. If you enjoy watching super patriotic events with stirring military music and lots of flag waving, then this is the event for you. Come celebrate and thank our Marines at this great event.

# Farewell to our Friend Admiral Symonds



Navy League members, guests and local active duty members bid farewell to Rear Admiral James Symonds and his wife Anne at our June

luncheon. Rear Admiral Symonds was our keynote speaker for almost 120 people. He shared his experiences of being the first Commanding Officer of the USS Ronald Reagan and bringing this Nimitz Class Carrier from the shipyard on the East Coast to its new homeport in San Diego in 2004. He indicated that in many ways this experience of being the commanding officer of one of the 12 largest warships ever made was perhaps the highlight of his career.

His photos of bringing the carrier through the Straits of Magellan were

absolutely amazing.

Rear Admiral Symonds began his career 35 years ago flying jets off an airplane carrier. He and Anne were stationed at Naval Air Station Whidbey for 14 of those years and now he will soon have his retirement ceremony in the same hangar that he reported to in September 1976 as an ensign.

We will miss both of these wonderful people and will remember them for their wonderful leadership in community projects and for being so supportive of the many local projects and activities. They opened their home and their hearts to us. We hope they will maintain contact as they move into the next phase of their lives.



MK2 Eric Gernatt receives special recognition at the June Council luncheon for his outstanding work with the Maritime Force Protection Unit at Bangor, Washington. Left to right in the photo are members of the United States Coast Guard, MCM Penny Koons, MK2 Gernaat, CDR Michael Baroody and LT JG McKenzie who told of Gernaat's many accomplishments. In addition to receiving the special plaque provided by Patriot's Landing, MK2 received a gift certificate to a local restaurant and a photo sitting provided by Hudson Photography. Photo by Karen Ebersole

# Fleet Week/Sea Fair Ship Ride



The annual Parade of Ships in Seattle on August 4 is a day long fun event, and you can get your name in the hat for going out on Navy or Coast Guard ships by going to [www.shipriders.com](http://www.shipriders.com). This is a link to the Navy MWR Web site with the rules, regulations and cost. Normally the ship puts on a "Steel Beach Picnic" and if you are interested, sign up right away.

This can be a six to eight hour trip to and from the Port of Seattle. Experiencing fleet week from the water is a whole new experience than being on land.

If you have a friend who might be

interested in the ship ride or joining our council...please use this information to your advantage.

Our Council President says that this will be the fourth year that he has taken Sea Cadets, NJROTC, Sea Scouts and Tribal Youth on the ride from Everett to Seattle the day before and expects that this year he will have close to 250 kids. He will also have a group of Sea Cadets living on board one of the ships for the week again for the third year.

*Information provided by  
Gary Gunderson*

## Exciting Future Tours

### July 9 & 16-SAFE Boat Factory Tour- Port Orchard

**Tour limit: 6 people per tour**

SAFE Boats International specializes in platforms for military, law enforcement, commercial and pleasure. In Puget Sound, we see SAFE Boats used by the Coast Guard patrolling the ferry crossings, boating events and commercial shipping. We have even seen them used for rescue work. I just saw a SAFE Boat that had just been sold to the Texas Fish and Game.

According to their website, "SAFE Boats International is 100% American owned and operated and dedicated to our motto of "God, Country & FAST Boats." Their boats are now used worldwide. They are advertised as being extremely safe and durable without sacrificing speed, stability or functionality.

If interested, call Byron Faber at 360 638-1235 or email to [byfaber@centurytel.com](mailto:byfaber@centurytel.com).

If enough people are interested, maybe Byron can arrange for additional tours.

### July 26-US Coast Guard-Seattle Tour limit-35 people

**Cost: \$10 per person. This includes lunch on base.**

**Time: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.**

This is an exciting tour as you watch ships being tracked as they enter and exit the Sound and see the major Command Post that is ready for coordinating major emergencies.

We will visit the wonderful Coast Guard Museum and board any available ships or boats. These trips always have surprises, so plan on attending and having a great day.

Contact Byron Faber at 360.638-1235 or [byfaber@century.com](mailto:byfaber@century.com).

More tours are being planned. Reservations are essential, so contact Byron today.

*Adapted from Byron Faber's notes*

## Memorial Day Services

Memorial Day Services were held once again on the USS Turner Joy. Only this year, instead of being held on the fantail, members of the Bremerton-Olympic



Peninsula Council Navy League escorted everyone into the crew's mess for services due to the heavy rains.

The weather certainly didn't dampen the spirits of over 100 people as the Kitsap Battalion Sea Cadets did a Presentation of Colors and Captain James Puttler provided the Invocation. Council President, Gary Gunderson shared General Colin Powell's essay on the American G. I. (Government Issue) and all that they have given to their country. Keynote speaker, Rear Admiral Joseph P. Aucoin, Commander, Carrier Strike Group 3 spoke about Memorial Day from his personal perspective as well as from a military perspective. Each year, a wreath is placed upon the water in memory of our fallen heroes and veterans. This year,



the skies cooperated and the sun came out just in time to allow Mr. Gunderson and RDML Aucoin to lower the wreath on the water. The Peninsula Veterans Color And Honor Guard performed the rifle salute and the eagle watched from his special perch.



# USS Maine Change of Command Ceremony

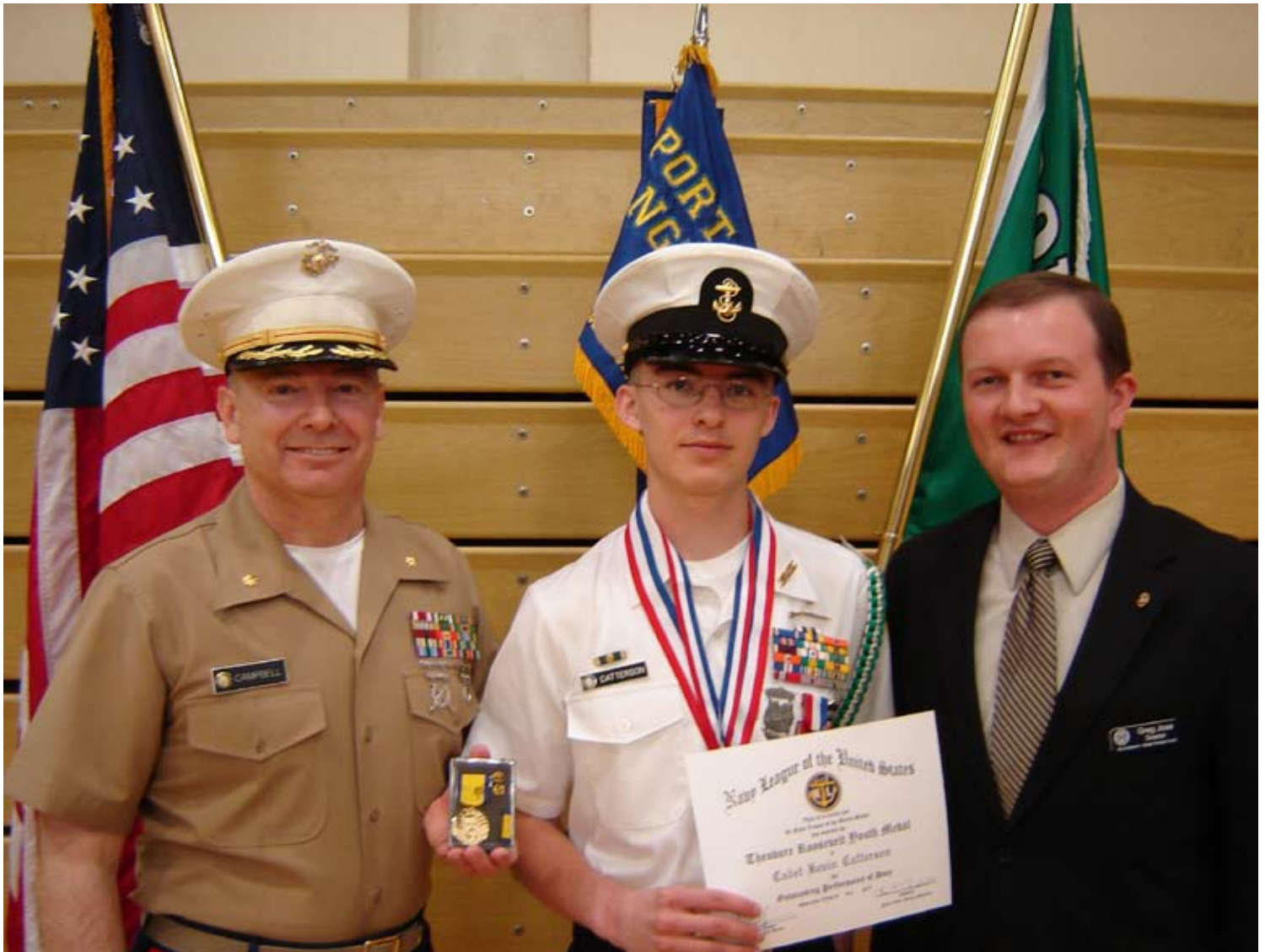
On June 4, 2010, Captain William J. Breitfelder, USN was relieved by Commander Richard N. Massie, USN as Commanding Officer of the USS Maine (SSBN 741) (GOLD) formal at Naval Base Kitsap, Bangor. Family, friends, crew and guests were invited to witness the reading in of the new commanding officer.

According to the program, the change of command



ceremony is based upon the strongest of naval tradition. Command, the ultimate and total responsibility and accountability of the unit, is unique to the military. Because of the absolute nature of the command, only one individual may be in command at any given time.

Captain Mark Olson's welcoming remarks were warm and personal and well received since Captain Breitfelde and he had served together in previous assignments.



Major Leo Campbell USMC Ret, Military Science Instructor, Cadet Kevin Catterson and Greg Jose. No "Citations" were allowed ...

## Leo Perry

Born July 27, 1908

Died June 10, 2010

AGE 101

Mr. Perry served in the US Navy for 26 years, including World War II and the Korean War.

He proudly rode on our Navy League float for the last several years.



Leo Perry on the Navy League float

## Navy League of the United States Mission Statement and Goals

A civilian organization dedicated to informing the American people and their government that the United States of America is a maritime nation and that its national defense and economic well being are dependent upon strong sea services – United States Navy, United States Marine Corps, United States Coast Guard and the United States Merchant Marine.



### Navy League Goals

1. Educate national leaders and the nation.
2. Support the men and women of the sea services.
3. Provide assistance to the sea service families.
4. Support the youth program.

## Planning Ahead

For best service, register early for the luncheon and the tours.  
See article on tours for registration information and dates.

July 7	Council Board Meeting, 5:30 p.m. Reid Real Estate, Silverdale
July 8	Luncheon Registration Deadline Call CTC 360.782.5500
July 13	Battle of Midway, by Will Lent, luncheon, 11 a.m. Bangor Plaza, Bangor
Aug. 4	Fleet Week Ship Rides, register online now!
August	Council Board meeting cancelled for Fleet Week/Seafair activities

**Now Hear This!** is the official newsletter of the Bremerton-Olympic Peninsula Council of the Navy League of the United States. It is published monthly and provided to all members.

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