



ALL AHEAD FULL

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

FALL 2023



FROM THE BRIDGE

Greetings Mates,

As we progress to the Fall of 2023, I reflect on the accomplishments of our Baltimore Council despite the challenges of the past winter and spring. Overcoming the obstacles of Covid and its impact on “normal” activities of social life and business, we prevailed and successfully continued our mission.

Our Sea Cadet Program continued to expand and flourish. The participation of its members in the pre-commissioning Carl M. Levin crew crab feast, the color guard performance at the banquet, and seating assistance at the pier commissioning site are most worthy of both mention and praise.

Our “All Ahead Full” Newsletter has continued to receive “Kudos” for its content and consistency. Thank you, editor Alan Walden. Also, appreciation is in order for all the support of the Baltimore Council and the Commissioning Committee “team” in making the USS Carl M Levin (DDG-120) commissioning event a huge success. (More about that in this issue).

In weathering the storms of this past year major credit goes to the Board of Directors of the Baltimore Council and the many Patriotic organizations and individuals (too many to list here) who have supported the Navy League of the United States and our Baltimore Council in particular in support of our

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Memories Linger Day By Day

In our last issue you were promised the full story of what occurred prior to, during, and subsequent to the commissioning of USS Carl M. Levin (DDG-120) in Baltimore. Hence, what follows.

After more than a year of planning and fundraising under the tireless guidance of Brigadier General Joe Nattans, president of the Baltimore

Council and chair of the commissioning committee, the celebration began with a buffet dinner and party for the crew, members of the committee, supporters, family and friends at the Museum of Industry on Key Highway. It was chance for those most intimately involved in what was about to occur to relax for a few hours before dealing with the pageantry to follow. And pageantry it

was the following evening at a full-dress banquet at the Four Seasons at Harbor East Hotel overlooking the Inner Harbor. The story is best told in the extensive photo array that accompanies this text. But suffice it to say that with guest speakers led by Hon. Carlos del Toro, Secretary of the Navy, celebrated astronaut

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THE MUSEUM OF INDUSTRY



The Crab Feast



LCDR Rolanda Franklin and Joe Nattans



RADM Vic See, Alan Walden, CDR Kelly Craft

RECEPTION AND BANQUET AT THE FOUR SEASONS

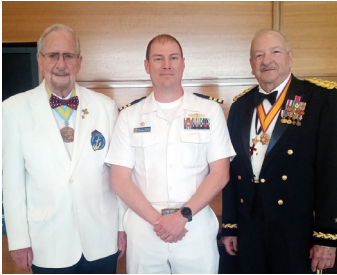


Brig. Gen. Joe Nattans and son Jeff Nattans



Sea Cadets Color Guard

RECEPTION AND BANQUET AT THE FOUR SEASONS *cont.*



Alan Walden, CDR Kelly Craft, CO of ship, and Joe Nattans



Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro



Joe and Donna Nattans



CAPT Al Seeman and Alan Walden

Memories Linger
Continued from page 1

Mike Lopez-Alegria, and Senator Levin's three daughters, it was an audio-visual spectacle. Baltimore Council VP Alan Walden acted his accustomed role as master of ceremony as many gifts were presented to the ship and crew, and to the lead sponsors of the project.

Then, on June 24th, there came the main event: the actual commissioning of the ship at the North Locust Point Marine Terminal. Despite the threat of rain, the crowd was large and appropriately boisterous as Captain (CDR) Kelly Craft, commanding officer of USS Carl M. Levin was given the order to, "Bring you ship alive." Here again, the pictures tell the story.

As they also do for the informal post-commissioning party held at the Owings Mills home of Committee Chairman Nattans. He and his always charming and hospitable wife, Donna, made sure there was plenty to eat and drink, and even provided music in the person of vocalist and guitarist Brendan Pelan, who entertained the crowd with both popular and traditional Irish folk songs. It was a time to decompress as more awards were distributed to many of those present by both Joe and Rear Admiral Vic See, USN-ret., co-chair of the commissioning committee.

And it was done. The mighty Arleigh Burke Class destroyer USS Carl M. Levin sailed for the West Coast to join the Third Fleet and, as of this writing, has already been deployed in the

Pacific. We wish her and those who sail on her "fair winds and following seas."

The Baltimore Council has every reason to be proud of what had been accomplished. In an interview published in the September issue of *Seapower*, Senator Levin's daughter, Kate Levin Markel, told editor-in-chief Ann Tropea, "The volunteer effort of the Navy League that went into the commissioning was breathtaking." And, she concluded, "I just want to say that I have a lot of humility and gratitude to the Baltimore Council. It's an extraordinary thing, and an American thing; a giving and doing for others." ⚓

THE COMMISSIONING



The crowd gathers



Preparing for Inspection



Chairman Nattans and co-chair Vic See are welcomed aboard



Sea Cadets standing by



Ship sponsors/Sen. Levin's daughters Erica, Kate (at microphone), and Laura

AT THE NATTANS HOME



Alan and Joe



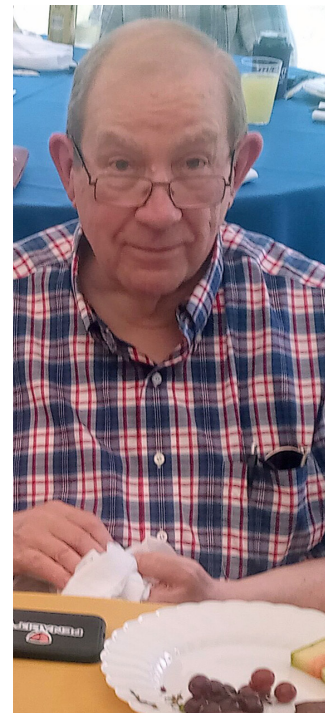
RADM Vic See, Chief of Staff Mark White, Nick Katsiotis



At Ease



Winnie Leonardi and Donna Nattans



Council Treasurer Chris Costello



Troubadour Brendan Pelan



The Challenge Coin, front and reverse

An Uncertain Future

One of a Kind

By Bruce Copland

The Baltimore – Chesapeake Shipwatchers was my contact, advising of a guided tour of N/S Savannah, the historic nuclear cargo/passenger ship, proposed by President Eisenhower in 1955. Since the design process was forbidden to involve the US military, the entire design of nuclear propulsion was accomplished through commercial resources. Savannah was a project of the US Atomic Energy Commission and the Maritime Administration of the US Department of Commerce.

Tour day, August 19, 2023, dawned as a clear, beautiful, comfortable opportunity to visit the entire ship, both inside and on the weather decks. The gangway, at Pier 13 on the Canton waterfront, past its distinctive logo, set the stage for a unique experience. The ship's hull and superstructure provide a smooth, rakish silhouette that compliments the bold emblem displayed adjacent to the bridge. Our guide for the visit, told of his introduction to Savannah – cruising in his boat, he saw her being towed up the Chesapeake and was immediately galvanized by the unique profile – only to “fall in love with her” and become a docent.

Savannah was outfitted with 30 staterooms for passengers. Their facilities included a 1950's style lounge (doubled as movie theater), library, card room, enclosed veranda (with bar and dance floor) adjacent to the swimming pool, and a dining room – all separate from crew facilities. The kitchen was lavishly outfitted for both “fine dining” for passengers and “maintenance” for officers and crew. The hospital suite obviously served both populations.

The passenger profile during Savannah's brief operational life was akin to today's Space-X

passengers; those with deep pockets who wanted to experience the latest technology. The cargo facility consisted of interior “holds,” unlike today's freighters laden with containers piled on deck. Their desired cargo of ship operators American Export, and then American Export Isbrandtsen Lines was high revenue tobacco.

Savannah sailed the seas for barely two years. Launched July 21, 1959 she set out on her maiden voyage in August 1962 only to be retired from service in 1964. For one thing, she couldn't turn a profit. The size of the old style nuclear and the shielding installed to safeguard it severely limited cargo capacity. And the rules for operation were very restrictive and expensive because of her power plant. Each port of call required extensive pre-visit inspections to comply with nuclear safety compliance regulations. Too bad, really, since throughout the operating areas (Bridge, navigation, engine room, control center) of Savannah, there was a red push button marked “SCRAM” that would have instantaneously shut down the atomic reaction. Not once during her operation was that necessary. On a port visit to Baltimore, the radiation detection mechanism did detect excess emissions. But a thorough inspection of the ship determined it was not ship oriented. The emission was finally identified as airborne, from the test of a nuclear device in the far-off Soviet Union.

Today, the future of NS Savannah is uncertain at the very least. Even though her reactor has been removed and damage from a past hurricane is being repaired it's expensive to keep any non-working ship dockside for long periods of time. The federal government is disinclined to pay for her upkeep. And, at this point, it isn't known whether some state



N/S Savannah



Lounge Lighting

or municipal agency or non-profit will step up to claim the financial burden to keep her from being scrapped. A sad note to end a

wonderfully educational tour on board what has become one of Baltimore's premier maritime artifacts. ⚓

They Keep Coming Welcome Aboard



ROKS Hansando

Baltimore Inner Harbor was replete with all manner of maritime visitors during the summer. Most recently two modern Coast Guard cutters were here. Earlier in the season thousands crowded the Light Street seawall as Baltimore played host to modern training vessels from as far away as Brazil and Japan. And there are more enroute.

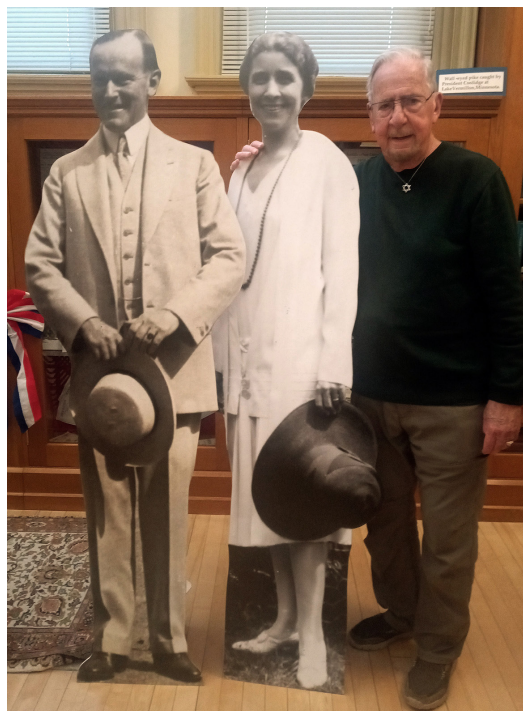
Thanks to the efforts of Sail Baltimore, ROKS Hansando, a helicopter training ship (frigate) from South Korea will make port here on 12 October and will be available for visitors until the 15th. And, as always, we look forward to the holiday Parade of Lighted Boats. The Inner Harbor will be ablaze with all manner of illuminated decorations afloat on 2 December.

It is, by any measure, the most festive time of the year at Harborplace and, if you're in the neighborhood, not to be missed.



While on the subject of visitors: Baltimore Council Vice President Alan Walden, who spends the summer months prowling the historically fertile grounds of Massachusetts, made a pilgrimage to Northampton this year for a visit with the 30th President of these United States. The Calvin Coolidge Presidential Library, modest by comparison with others (as befits someone who, was himself, a study in modesty), is located in the city's Forbes Library. Though born

in Vermont, Coolidge, before ascending to the presidency upon the death of Warren Harding, was, at various times, Mayor of Northampton, Lieutenant Governor, then Governor of Massachusetts. It wasn't a long visit; the collection of memorabilia is, again, modest. But at least Cal and Grace seemed pleased that Walden stopped by, and even joined him, or him they, for a photo op. ⚓



Cal, Grace, and Alan

Save the Date

The Baltimore Council-NLUS will hold its gala annual meeting and banquet this year on Wednesday, 6 December 2023. It will take place in the Marriott Owings Mills at the Metro Centre, 10101 Grand Central Avenue, Owings Mills, MD 21117. This is always a special occasion as we celebrate the events of the past year and look forward to what's ahead in the year to come. At the top of the latter is planning for Fleet Week 2024 in which we will have a central role to play. Within a month all council members will receive a reservation form by separate mailing. But now is the time to mark your calendars. Wednesday, 6 December: The Annual Meeting and Banquet. We hope to see you there. ⚓

From the Bridge Continued from page 1

sea services and the men and women who provide for our national defense around the world.

In closing, I ask that you remember in prayer Father Guy Hawtin, our long time, highly respected and revered chaplain, who went to his Lord earlier this year. (See more in a past issue of All Ahead Full.

And always remember:

“Freedom isn't free...it is an enduring commitment”
May God continue to bless you and our great nation. ⚓

Joe
Brigadier General Arthur J.
Nattans
Baltimore Council President

Coming Up

- 10/12 Columbus Day
- 10/31 Halloween
- 11/5 Begin Standard Time – (Clocks back one hour)
- 11/7 Election Day (Show the colors, and VOTE!)
- 11/11 Veterans Day (Show the colors)
- 11/23 Thanksgiving Day
- 12/6 Baltimore Council Annual Meeting & Banquet
- 12/7 Pearl Harbor Day (1941) (Show the colors)
Hanukkah begins
- 12/21 Winter Solstice (First day of winter)
- 12/25 Christmas Day
- 12/31 New Year's Eve
- 1/1/24 New Year's Day
- 1/15/24 Martin Luther King Day (Show the colors)

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

From the Editor

As always comments and observations regarding this publication are welcomed. They may be sent to the editor at arwmedia@aol.com and/or posted in the comments section on our web site: www.navyleaguebaltimore.org. You are also invited to visit the web site to peruse past copies of All Ahead Full and find out more about the Navy League, the Baltimore Council, and our 120 year old mission in support of the sea services.



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