



ALL AHEAD FULL

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

SPRING 2024



FROM THE BRIDGE

Greetings All,

Not a happy time in Baltimore, especially for maritime interests, following the near total collapse of the Francis Scott Key Bridge, rammed by a heavily laden freighter early on the morning of 26 March. The human toll was mercifully low. But the economic impact on one of the most important ports on the East Coast will be tremendous. A full story of the disaster can be found following this message.

Here, at the Baltimore Council, things are moving forward as well as can be expected. The good news is the addition of two new board members, both of whom will add considerable substance to our company.

Molly Seeman, a practicing attorney, will serve as the council JAG, its legal officer. Molly is no stranger to the sea services. Her husband is CAPT Al Seeman, former commanding officer of the Navy Operational Support Center (NOSC) in Baltimore. And she, like Al, is deeply committed to the men and women who wear the uniform. Molly will help mightily with our and protocol duties. She brings talent, youth, and enthusiasm into our midst.



Molly Seeman

➤ to page 2

Collision and Collapse

“Things That Go Bump In The Night”

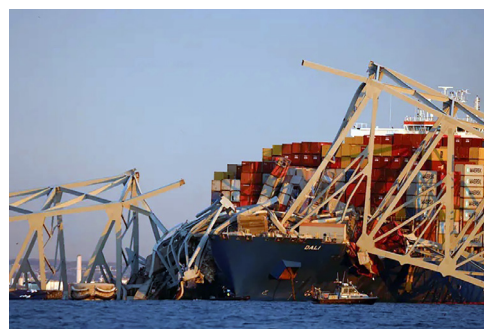


How it was

By Alan Walden

It was and is, by any measure, a disaster of epic proportions. In the gloom of early morning, on 26 March, the heavily laden cargo ship MV Dali collided with one of the main supports of the Francis Scott Key Bridge at the entrance to Baltimore’s Inner Harbor and, in a matter of seconds, the bridge was gone. As of this writing Baltimore harbor is closed to all seaborne traffic and a thousand-yard security zone has been established around the site.

WHAT WE KNOW: The Singapore flagged vessel, operated by Synergy Marine Systems and chartered by Maersk Shipping Container Company, was outward bound. As it approached the bridge it lost power; twice. A Mayday alert warning of a possible collision was issued on VHF Emergency Channel 16. Port Authority Police, responding with thunderclap speed, instantly stopped all motor vehicle traffic approaching the bridge on I-695, the Baltimore Beltway. At 1:30 a.m., all power lost, the ship drifted out of the channel and, subject at that point to wind and current, struck the bridge support at a speed of approximately 9 knots. The less time than it takes to tell the entire structure, roadway, girders, construction/maintenance vehicles and their personnel, other cars and trucks that were on the span at that moment, simply collapsed and fell.

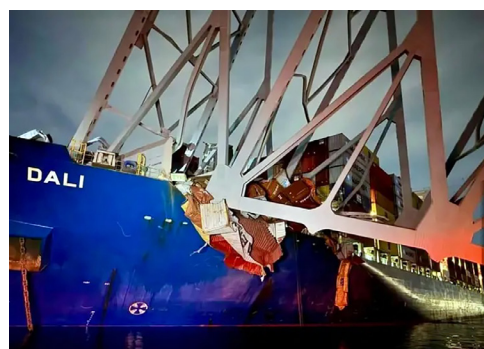


How it is

One person was rescued, miraculously unharmed. Another was recovered in very serious condition. Others (there were several) may still be missing. Although some of the debris fell atop the ship, no one on board was injured. President

Biden quickly announced that the federal government will pay the full cost of bridge replacement estimated at about \$600,000,000. Plans are in the works to provide financial compensation to those workers who have been idled; About 140,000 people, 2,500 longshoremen among them, are employed by port related firms and facilities. Lloyds of London, the ship’s insurer, says its payout may be the highest ever, perhaps as much as \$2,000,000,000 (two BILLION dollars). Lloyds’ management has

➤ to page 2



Debris atop the ship

From the Bridge
Continued from page 1



Ted Knach

Ted Knach has worn the uniform of three of the sea services. Yes, three! Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard.

He becomes assistant to treasurer Chris Costello and will focus on coordinating special events and recruiting activities. He will also have a role to play in our newly reinstated Visiting Ships committee. Ted's background in the Armed Forces should greatly enhance our pursuit of the many missions for which the Navy League has assumed responsibility.

At this point we'd be talking about Fleet Week and the active role the Baltimore Council would play in that celebration. But planning is on hold because of the collision and bridge collapse that has blocked the entrance to Baltimore Harbor to both ingoing and outgoing seaborne traffic. In any case we invite you to check our web site at www.balimorenavyleague.org. It tells you all about us and also includes past issues of All Ahead Full which we hope you may find both interesting and entertaining.

As always, we continue to support the other standard Naval Organizations and community activities in our mission statement and welcome your input, questions, and recommendations,

Wishing you blessings in 2024.

"Freedom isn't Free" ⚓

Joe

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

Collision and Collapse
Continued from page 1

assured those concerned that it is prepared and able to honor that commitment.

FACTS AND FANCIES: The cause of the ship's power could be traced to any number of sources: Contaminated fuel, computer failure, a malfunctioning electronic device or circuit. But the likelihood of deliberate sabotage has been fairly well discounted. Then there's the matter of the tugs. After escorting the vessel into the channel above the bridge (she was then under power and in the hands of two harbor pilots) they turned back, as they usually do. Could they have made a difference? Probably not. Powerful as they are they would have had (1) no time to take effective action and, (2) Dali was/is a seafaring behemoth, more than three football fields long and displacing, at the time of crash, about 190,000 tons (380,000,000 pounds). You can't just hit the brakes on a huge dynamic platform, moving up and down and side to side, on a surface that is, itself, moving up and down, side to side.

PRIORITIES: Once all those missing are accounted for the channel must be cleared. That before anything else. Heavy equipment is already on site. Debris must be lifted off the ship, then from the channel. The ship must be moved out of the way. With waterborne traffic stalled Baltimore is in danger of losing millions of dollars in revenue every day. Already two cruise ships have been diverted to Norfolk and other inbound commercial traffic will be going elsewhere as well. And there is the matter of entrapment within the harbor. Many merchant ships including bulk carriers, tankers, and motor vehicle carriers. And the Coast Guard Yard at Curtis Bay

That a new bridge must be designed and built is the secondary issue. It will happen. But it will take years. In the meantime, because of size restrictions in the two cross-harbor tunnels and prohibitions on hazardous material transport in both, all truck traffic must be diverted to the Beltway (I-695) north of Baltimore City and/or on local roads through the city. It won't be pleasant for anyone; especially during rush hours.

One final note regarding fact and fancy. Somewhat esoteric, but on topic. Back in 1980 a ship collided with a support of the Key bridge with less disastrous results. 44 years ago a freighter crashed into the Sunshine Highway Bridge over Tampa Bay and its 1,600-foot-long central span fell into the water. In the past few months there have been similar events, in China and Argentina, in which bridges collapsed. Last year MV Dali suffered a power failure in South America which required



Before and after

repairs to its propulsion system. In 2016 the same vessel collided with a pier in Belgium. No one was hurt, but the pier was wrecked. Amid all the conspiracy theories that are growing relative to this disaster, consider The Black Swan theory. "The Black Swan: The Impact of the Highly Improbable," is the title of an influential 2007 book by Lebanese author Nassim Nicholas Taleb. The book explains his belief that sudden, unexpected, highly anomalous events, (deviating from what is considered normal) "are both more common and more momentous than previously imagined." And that they are usually misinterpreted.

Good luck to all of us, and to our city and port. ⚓

FRANCIS SCOTT KEY BRIDGE RESPONSE
SALVAGE OPERATIONS PLAN

The situation remains dynamic, and the plan and the graphic will be continuously updated as the engineering data becomes known.

OBJECTIVES	PRIORITIES
<p>A Stabilize DALI to prevent pivoting.</p> <p>B Analyze internal bridge truss structure.</p> <p>C Position 1000-ton and 600-ton floating cranes.</p> <p>D Cut diagonal truss to lift from vessel and swing wreckage for removal.</p> <p>E Refloat DALI away from wreckage.</p> <p>F Disassemble and remove bridge.</p>	<p>1 CLEAR FEDERAL CHANNEL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish wreckage consolidation point Position cranes to remove bridge span from Dali Clear wreckage from DALI Remove wreckage from Federal Channel <p>2 REFLOAT & REMOVE DALI</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess cargo and remove containers as necessary Stage assets for repositioning of DALI Refloat and move DALI from hard grounding <p>3 CLEAR REMAINING WRECKAGE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Systematically clear wreckage from outside of the federal channel Facilitated under the direction of Maryland Department of Emergency Services

PHOTO CREDIT: SHANSKA/RESOLVE

U.S. ARMY Corps of Engineers

NAUUSACEARMY.MIL

EPOQ

A Job Well Done

Baltimore Council President Joe Nattans and Coast Guard Council Liaison Bruce Copeland visited the USCG Yard at Curtis Bay on 30 Jan, 2024 to, again, support the Enlisted Person of the Quarter program. An Award of Achievement from this council, accompanied by a check, were made available to Captain Andrew Pecora and Command Master Chief Derrion Foster of the Surface Forces Logistics Center which were, in turn, presented to BM3 (Bosuns Mate Third Class) Phillip Casano for his performance both on and off duty from September through December of 2023. The selection of BM3 Casano as EPOQ was documented in a nomination form that spelled out a variety of activities in which he displayed an outstanding sense of duty and personal commitment in carrying out both professional USCG assignments and voluntary activities in his free time.



EPOQ

The EPOQ program is an important management tool for both productivity and morale among the various commands at the only Coast Guard Yard in the nation. President Nattans and Council Liaison Copeland both received the thanks of

Captain Pecora and Contracting & Procurement Division officer Millie Escobosa. Both stressed how important outside recognition is in reinforcing their efforts and expressed their sincere gratitude for the Navy League's commitment to the program and to the men and women of all the sea services.



The Coast Guard in Baltimore is, by the way, seeking public support to find a serial intruder who has, since mid-February made sixteen hoax calls requesting response to non-existent emergencies. CDR Roberto Concepcion, chief of response for the Sector Maryland-National Capital Region of the USCG, says the calls, all of which were made on VHF Channel 16, a marine frequency used internationally to summon assistance, are distracting watchstanders from real emergencies; therefore "putting people's lives at risk." Anyone who may recognize the caller's voice is asked to call (410) 576-2555. A reward of \$1,000 is being offered for any information that may lead to identification, arrest, or prosecution. ⚓

Welcome Aboard

Newly Assigned

There's a new hand at the helm of the Fort McHenry Division/ Training Ship Constellation Division of the Sea Cadets, the unit most closely associated with and heavily supported by this council. LTJG Alyssa Haley has taken over the job of guiding the men and woman of the corps in their pursuit of their many goals and objectives. And her leadership is already being felt.



Alyssa Haley

The Sea Cadets have been involved in any number of educational activities in recent months. In the Wreaths Across America program for one. And in travel to events and installations outside the Baltimore area where they have opportunities to learn more about maritime activities from the professionals of the uniformed services and interact with their

peers from other Sea Cadet units.

The Baltimore unit continues to grow in both size and commitment in its guidance of youth toward the goals of self-discipline, teamwork, individual and group cooperation, and the understanding of why the sea services are so vital to the nation. ⚓



Meet And Greet At the Yard

By Bruce Copeland

Council President Joe Nattans and I, as Coast Guard liaison, were invited recently to a familiarization meeting with incoming officers at the USCG Yard. CAPT David Obermeier took command on 19 February. Also on hand were CAPT Emily Tharp, Industrial Manager; Yard Comms, Kristen Soper; and BMC Morgan Merritt; join us for the meet and greet along with CAPT Andrew Pecora, CO Surface Forces Logistics Center joined the group for lunch.

CAPT Obermeier talked about the history of the Yard as depicted in a beautiful mural in the Meeting room of Administration Building #1. It was way back in April of 1899 that what was then called the Revenue Cutter Service leased 36 acres in Anne Arundel County as a shipyard; just four small buildings and a lumber mill. The Yard now boasts 133 acres as the USCG's sole shipbuilding and major repair facility, and part of the Coast Guard's core industrial base and fleet support operations.



Meet and Greet

CAPT Tharp provided a running description of the Yard's buildings and outdoor facilities including the "Ship lift", which obviates some dry dock needs, providing enhanced ship repair capabilities, greater repair productivity and much reduced costs for repairs and Service Life Extension Project (SLEP) operations.

The tour was followed with the opportunity to experience a Yard support service; The Dry Dock Club. That experience led me to observe that the Yard personnel eat well. We enjoyed

a delicious lunch topped off with chocolate cookies right from the oven.

An altogether delightful and useful encounter.



(Editor's Note: Council USCG liaison Copeland also took the occasion to initiate action with NLUS National Headquarters and its governmental affairs representatives to make certain that that Yard's appeal for additional space and facilities be given high priority in the allocation of funds for future development. The Baltimore Council, through Copeland, also received notes of thanks from both the Coast Guard and the Charleston, SC Board of the Navy League, for our support for the commissioning of USCGC Calhoun. Because of technical problems on board the ship it was decided that the commissioning will take place in Charleston, Calhoun's home port, rather than in Baltimore. A moot point as it turned out, because of the Key Bridge collapse.) ⚓

Better Late Than Never In Gratitude

Long after the commissioning of U.S.S. Carl M Levin Baltimore Council President Joe Nattans was finally able to link up at M & T Bank Stadium with Ryan Stango, Senior Coordinator of Guest Experience for the Baltimore Ravens. The Ravens were extremely helpful during the commissioning activities in making the crew of DDG-120 feel welcome and in providing them with an up close and personal connection to what we, in Baltimore, regard as the best team in the NFL and its home field. Not only did the Ravens make a substantial monetary contribution to the event and its attendant



Ryan Stango and Joe Nattans

activities, they also invited members of the crew to meet with former members of the team and a few very attractive cheerleaders, led them on a tour of the stadium and its facilities, and were the hosts at a lunch for all in attendance.

General Joe presented to Stango and, by extension, to the Ravens, a much-coveted U.S.S. Carl M. Levin Plankowners Plaque in recognition of all they did to ensure the success of the commissioning. In return we were assured of continued support from the Ravens of the Navy League and this Council for similar events in the future. ⚓

A Wider Net Too Many Empty Berths

For the first time in almost a quarter of a century The U.S. Navy will start to enlist applicants who have not graduated from high school or obtained a GED. This as the service continues to struggle with its recruiting goals.

In explaining the change Vice Adm. Rick Cheeseman, the Navy's chief of personnel, told the Associated Press, "We get thousands of people into our recruiting stations every year that want to join the Navy but do not have an education credential. And we just turn them away."

The new plan will allow recruits who don't have an education credential to enlist as long as they score a 50 or above out of 99 on the qualification test; marking the first time the Navy has allowed such recruits since the year 2000. And some long-standing and time-honored regulations are being eased as well. From now on sailors will be allowed to have their hands in pockets unless a salute is required or on formal occasions. And female members of the service are being allowed to wear false eyelashes provided they are not overly long. In other words whatever it takes to fill the ranks.

The hunt for more personnel is not, by the way, exclusive to the Navy. Despite a variety of incentives, all of the Armed Forces of the United States face similar difficulties in attracting both attracting new recruits and reenlisting those who have either reached retirement age or whose initial commitment has expired. ⚓

Looking Aft

“You may fire when ready, Gridley.”



USS Olympia



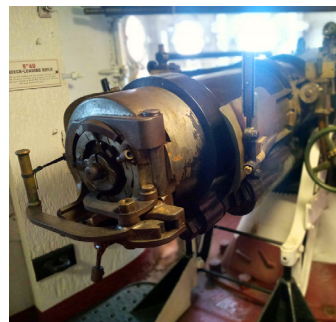
Over the forward main battery

By Alan Walden

Put me in close proximity to a site dedicated to significant U.S naval artifacts and I am drawn to it like a worker bee to nectar. So it was in mid-March when, the day after lunch in Philadelphia with two old friends, I made a bee line (pun intended) for the Independence Seaport Museum on the banks of the Delaware River; specifically to USS Olympia. Oldest all steel warship still afloat Olympia (C-6), a protected cruiser, was the flagship of George Dewey, later our one and only six-star Admiral of the Navy, when he led the attack on and annihilated an enemy fleet in Manila Bay during the Spanish-American War of 1898. It was a cold as blowy day. But that couldn't stop my companion and me from climbing all over her, inside and out.



The galley



Secondary armament below



USS New Jersey (BB-62)

The pictures tell the tale and, I hope, will convince the readers to add the ISM and its artifacts to

their bucket lists. It also provided a perfect location to see, in all her glory across the river in Camden NJ, “Big J,” a.k.a “The Black

Dragon.” The mighty USS New Jersey, headed for drydock a few days later, is one of the Iowa Class, the four largest battleships every to fly the Stars and Stripes all of which are still afloat as museum ships.

Finally, I couldn't resist. How could a Navy Leaguer not have his picture taken at the helm of one of the historic ships nearby. Ah, well. ⚓



Steady As She Goes

Coming Up

- 4/22 Passover begins at sundown
- 5/8 VE Day (1945) - Show the colors
- 5/12 Mother's Day
- 5/18 Armed Forces Day - Show the colors
- 5/27 Memorial Day - Colors at half-staff until noon, then raised
- 6/6 D-Day (1944)
- 6/14 Flag Day (1777) - Show the colors
- 6/16 Father's Day

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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