



January 7, 2022

For Those Who Serve

Alert: Happy New Year Navy Leaguers! Lots happening in the next several months, but let's take things one step at a time.

First, please join us for our monthly Legislative Affairs Committee Meeting on Wednesday, January 19th at 4pm EST. This is a change from our usual schedule in which we hold the committee meeting on the third Monday of each month, due to observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day on the 17th and a previously scheduled Navy League event on the 18th. Join us on the 19th at 4pm to discuss the upcoming Sea Service's Hill Surge (virtual fly-in).

Second, please join us for the monthly Legislative Affairs Grassroots Training session on Monday, January 24th at 4pm EST. We will discuss all of the resources needed for a success Hill Surge!

Third, not too much action on the Hill this week concerning the Sea Services. Washington's first snowfall caused more gridlock than Congress fighting over the budget. Senator Tim Kaine was stuck on I-95 for over 20 hours as he attempted to reach the Capitol!

And we have two important items included in this week's newsletter. First, we are honored to tell the story of Jim Semerad, a veteran, hero, and Navy League leader. Second, it is with great sadness that we inform you of the loss of Joan Donovan, a vital and beloved member of the New York Navy League Council. Please read more below.



CDR Jim Semerad

The following was submitted by Jim Semerad, Navy League member and American hero. We are grateful to CDR Semerad for sharing his story with us. His career took many twists and turns but he remained steadfast in his belief of the importance of service and duty. Sir, on behalf of all of us here at the Navy League Legislative Affairs team, thank you for your service and thanks for sharing!

Jim Semerad, U.S. Navy. Born in Baltimore, MD with 32 cousins and 18 Aunts and Uncles, I was hanging out with an OK crowd that grew up to work in the trades. Some friends did not make it to long lived adults. My parents moved the family of 5 to New Orleans and as the youngest boy and a 16 year old, I got conned into joining the Navy Boot Camp and A-School in Chicago for the winter was a wake-up call. My first ship USS Paul FF 1080 in Mayport. FL was my next duty.

Today I can say I visited 18 countries and 28 cities in Europe before I turned 21 years old. Serving in the 2x6 program, I left to pursue college, paid for by the GI Bill. I needed a college in Louisiana and was looking to get away and focus on a career. LA Tech had a new program in the late 1970's called computer science and the counselor thought this would be a good fit for a Fire Control Technician in the Navy. I was soon learning PL1, Cobol, Fortran, etc. I had enough money left to get an MBA in Finance.

Fast forward, I worked at General Dynamics at Carswell AFB in Ft Worth Tx, in the Data Center and assembling F-16 Fighters, then EDS and moved to Detroit in 1986 and watched the internet take off and producing amazing stuff. Getting tired of living in airports and hotels, I joined VisionIT as a contractor.

Meanwhile, I stayed in the Navy Reserve for monies to support college and gain some mad money. I enjoyed the travel. Along the way, someone talked me into signing some papers that would be an application for Supply Corps School. A few months later, I was congratulated on acceptance as an Ensign. I did not know I would work my butt off for the next two years and perform Annual Training in Athens, GA. Six of the thirty people graduated from Class 6.

The recession came in 2008 and I applied for Active Duty. I was assigned to the Military Sealift Command at the Washington Navy Yard, then Cyber Command in Norfolk, then the Pentagon and Assistant Secretary of the Navy, then Naples Italy for COMNAVEUR and AFRICOM. I retired in 2012 as an O5 Commander after 36 years.

Leveraging my skills at EDS/HP/VisionIT and the US Navy as a Supply Officer, I have become very skilled in IT, Supply Chain Management, Government Contracts, and Program Management.

My Mom would say, Jimmy, joining the Navy was the best decision you ever made. The Navy was a lot more work than EDS but a lot more fun and meaningful. I will encourage everyone to give the Navy, or any service, a chance.



Don't forget to share your stories with us!

Your stories are important and they matter to your representatives. Please connect with us here at the Navy League so that we can relay your stories to the representatives that can affect real change in support of our Sea Services.

[Tell your story here!](#)



Joan Donovan

The phrase "lifetime achievement" could have been invented to describe the unremitting efforts of Joan Donovan.

-- Excerpt from the Lifetime Achievement Award citation, 111th Anniversary Dinner, April 18, 2013

It is with a heavy heart that I announce the passing of longtime New York Council member, supporter and leader, Joan E. Donovan, who passed away on December 31, 2021. If the New Year's Eve fireworks sounded louder than usual as 2021 came to a close, I like to think that it was Joan, giving us one last forceful directive to keep our focus on the Council's mission.

Many of us are fortunate to have heard Joan's stories of success and survival, from her career at Merrill — where she started as a sales assistant in 1948, sitting between Merrill and Lynch, and rose to become a top-producing senior vice president by 1997 — to her escape from the South Tower on 9/11. Many more are fortunate enough to still experience her legacy as a leader of the New York Council. Joan joined the Council in 1977 and was an active leader for more than 40 years, serving on both the Advisory Committee and the Board of Directors. She was a unique force over those decades, helping to build the financial foundation for Council programs that have supported tens of thousands of military members and their families. As noted in the program from our 111th Anniversary Dinner, at which Joan was recognized with the Council's Lifetime Achievement Award, her motto captured the spirit that enabled her to touch the lives of so many: "Work hard, maintain high standards, and you will be rewarded." As members of the New York Council Navy League, we will keep that spirit alive in memory of Joan.

-Captain Frank R. Russo Jr., USN (Ret.)
President, New York Council



Navy League Advocacy Updates

ENERGIZING AMERICAN SHIPBUILDING ACT

Click to act
NOW

America and the international community are caught in the grips of a global shipping crisis and a global energy crisis. There is one bipartisan bill currently introduced in Congress which could help America to navigate its way through both of these disasters. This is the Energizing American Shipbuilding Act, which will substantially expand the U.S. shipbuilding industrial base and the U.S. Flag Fleet by giving American vessels a larger role in the export of Liquefied Natural Gas.

[TAKE ACTION NOW!](#)

Sea Service Updates

The big stories this week revolve around foreign policy rather than domestic policy. While Congress did commemorate the one-year anniversary of the January 6th attack on the Capitol, the deteriorating situation in Ukraine and Kazakhstan took center stage.

As the US and Russia prepare to send diplomats to a scheduled January 10th meeting to discuss the Russian military buildup on the Ukrainian border, a completely unforeseen [development in Kazakhstan](#) is roiling the entire post-Soviet bloc of central Asian nations. In a remarkably fast and wide spread uprising, people across the country forced the resignation of numerous longstanding government officials. Russia, which depends on Kazakhstan as a reliable regional ally, has agreed to send troops alongside several other neighboring nations, to deal with the situation. The impact of the Kazakhstan uprising on Russian policy in the region remains to be seen.



NAVAL STATION GUANTANAMO BAY, Cuba (Jan. 2, 2022) Aviation Machinist's Mate 2nd Class Shana Martin, assigned to the "Sea Knights" of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 22, Detachment 5, cleans the transmission of an MH-60S Sea Hawk helicopter on the flight deck of the Freedom-variant littoral combat ship USS Milwaukee (LCS 5), Jan. 2, 2022. Milwaukee is deployed to the U.S. 4th Fleet area of operations to support Joint Interagency Task Force South's mission, which includes counter-illicit drug trafficking missions in the Caribbean and Eastern Pacific. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Danielle Baker)

Sea Service News

The State of the Sea Services

[Navy says it ensured sub safety after fake strength tests surfaced, but won't detail how - Navy Times / Jan 6](#)

The Navy says it has worked to ensure submarine safety following revelations late last year that a Washington state metallurgist spent decades faking the strength tests results for steel used to make subs.

[Naval Surface Warfare Center invests in additive manufacturing prototypes - C4ISRNET / Jan 6](#)

The Naval Surface Warfare Center is investing in six additive manufacturing prototypes through its Crane, Ind., division as it looks for new ways to protect military technologies.

COVID

['Not a surprise': US military COVID-19 cases set pandemic record in South Korea - Stars and Stripes / Jan 7](#)

U.S. Forces Korea reported 682 new cases of COVID-19 for the week ending Monday, a new peak in the coronavirus pandemic for the command responsible for more than 28,500 U.S. troops.

Great Power Competition

[Japan and U.S. vow more defence cooperation to counter Chinese threat - Reuters / Jan 7](#)

The United States and Japan on Friday voiced strong concern about China's growing might in unambiguous terms and pledged to work together against attempts to destabilise the region.

[Veteran U.S., Russia diplomats to tackle Ukraine tensions in Geneva - Reuters / Jan 7](#)

Talks between U.S. and Russian diplomats begin in Geneva on Monday after a weeklong stand-off over Russian troop deployments near its border with Ukraine, with veteran envoys on each side trying to avert a crisis.

Navy League of the United States
2300 Wilson Blvd, Suite 200
Arlington, VA 22201
703-312-1571



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