



Navy League of the United States
Palm Beach Council

June 26, 2017

*Dear BOD, Officers, and Members,
Navy League of the United States*

On behalf of the Palm Beach Council I wish to my express deepest gratitude for sending me to the National Convention in Milwaukee for 2017. The Milwaukee Council did a splendid job hosting the event. Many thanks to their Council for such a fantastic lineup of events, the hospitality was over the top.

Congratulations to the National President Mr. Alan Kaplan. His term will run 2 consecutive years due to a new bylaw change. What a race to the finish. It certainly was exciting to witness the election process. Past President Mr. Witunski and Rear Admiral Cari Thomas USCG (Ret.) NLUS Executive Director and her team directed many new workshops and propelled us into the 21st Century. I will never forget the "Well Done Roast" by Emcee Bobby Ferguson and J. Michael McGrath. Oh, what a night.

Admiral Thomas (Retired) and her staff are a cohesive group. All I can say is outstanding selections. It was a pleasure meeting them and learning about the inner-workings of the Navy League and how it operates at the National level.

I look forward to working with them in the near future. The support they provide is a great asset for the local Councils. I was not aware of how to get plugged in, but now that I am things will be easier. It was an amazing week.

All the valuable information, updates and training will be communicated expeditiously to our Palm Beach Council.

The Development Committee Bill Stevenson led the meeting. He provided good tips and resources for the local Councils. The Development Report and Budget was presented. The development activities covered. Planned Giving newsletter, new Materials, eGiving and grants. As for Community Affiliates, and 2465 NW 66 Drive Boca Raton, Florida 33496 Membership the Palm Beach VP of Development, Peter Petrelis, Membership, Steve Wiggins and I will be meeting to review the connectivity of these roles and how it applies to their position. It is imperative that Membership and Development communicate. We don't want to lose an opportunity. The value of individual members and or Corporate Affiliates amounts to the equivalent of the sum total of the Navy League's sustainability and existence.

We continue to seek Corporate Sponsorships. Please feel free to send me a note if you know anyone that wishes to become a Corporate Sponsor, Community Affiliate and or a Member.

Although we have a small percentage in our Council that still uses snail mail they also are huge supporters that kept this organization running since its inception. There are membership assistants that want to disenroll them, I am opposed to it. We must stay connected and embrace everyone's input and value the work of all members and BOD and Officers.

Our Strategic Plan Training and Mentoring was rolled out for 2016-2017. The evaluation of our current standing was reviewed and will continue so we can identify our strengths and weaknesses. We are seeking out opportunities for growth. and identifying our risk factors. or weaknesses. We must identify factors that are necessary to succeed and set the goals that are achievable. Development of a strategy for accomplishing the target goal. Make them measurable. track them and review and revamp if necessary. Do what works best for your council. Everyone has a stake in the investment of our Navy League PBC. our culture is all inclusive. We are a team and we are accountable for our successes and failures. Together we stand.

Don Giles presented a Grass Roots plan and guide which was informative at the legislative level. The how too's. Our council was one of few that already met one of our Congressmen.

National has a shortfall in this area and is reviewing what can be done to streamline the process and engage all Councils. Some have struggles due to logistics and others thrive due to location and good fortune.

Currently there is a disconnect from AP, RP and local councils. National is working on that portion of the pipeline to facilitate action for the local Councils. There is online training and webinars that are available. The certificate program is TBD.

Look for our Blackbaud which was rolled out for NL from National. Getting in for changes is on a selected basis not for all. Others can check out our portal and see what's happening locally and around the country.

Mark Harden is my mentor and quite knowledgeable on training and mentoring.

Nanci Pruter is a fabulous resource and will be hosting the Fall/Winter Webinar Schedule.

The IT Committee Meeting Chair David Samuels introduced our new Chief Information Officer Alex Mulvey. He has been working diligently and improving our systems and how we roll out information.

As you know Rome was not built in a day. Many challenges arise and we collectively can provide feedback in a positive effective manner. Solutions are what we are looking for to better our abilities. Take time and review areas of interest and contact me. I will forward a survey to seek your input. This is your council too.

There are a few members in the Palm Beach Council that already have the Navy League in their estate planning others are considering it. That is another good reason for audits. The Palm Beach Council requested an independent certified audit. This provides transparency. The benefits are the ability to apply for grants and it also puts donors and grantors at ease. One member actually paid for one of two years being audited because he wants the record to show we are current and proactive with our due diligence.

Communication is huge. We hope Blackbaud will revolutionize the ease of communication between the Local Councils, Areas, Regions and National. As it refines itself after each online meeting surveys monkey will come out asking for feedback. If the same items come up, that would be worth looking at more closely. It took awhile to get up and running but once on the portal the benefit of having the information at my fingertips makes the process easier to find things.

The ability to see Councils and what's happening with the Navy League around the Nation is a big plus for marketing. All facts at our fingertips makes our organization and Membership look professional. The ease of data input or output simplifies the process. The feedback

at the convention was implemented nearly instantaneously. David Samuels is working very hard to improve the platform. Kudos to Dave.

Jeanne Ellinport rolled out our new Brand Manuel 78 pages of the official Navy League logo that is copyrighted. Styles for Council letterhead, presentation, social media, email news and many other tips on the conforming unity of the NLUS branding and logo which includes the size and font. Call me with any questions at (925) 876-8177. Everyone praised Mrs. Ellinport for all that she brings to National Headquarters. She wears many hats and does an outstanding job with major fundraising.

Commissionings were discussed. The Gerald Ford is in a few weeks. the Hampton roads Council President Maryellen Baldin is working hard with the deadlines. New Hampshire has one coming up soon. The USS Colorado (SSN778) is coming up in the fall. Let's work together and help our local Councils reach their goals together.

The Road to the Mackie Award was a great way to share the required steps for the competition. Tom Pruter explained the necessary areas to be included and how the panel rates these items. I did recommend a daily entry page be added for Councils to input items required on Blackbaud as they occur. It would require less effort for locating accurate data when submitting the application as the deadline approaches.

Council Presidents Round-table table topics discussions with the top pain points and exchanging what works at other Councils. Sharing ideas on how to accomplish the mission helps rejuvenate the Council Leaders. Removing roadblocks and breaking through the barriers. Nancy Pruter and all the knowledgeable Leaders that pitched in to discuss the topics and issues were all excellent. Eleanor Samuels Membership spoke about membership issues and resolution. Mark Harden, Dave Reilly and others are exceptional leaders that we are so

lucky to have assisting with mentorship training and workshops.

The Workshop Organizing Action on the local level was a fantastic platform to brainstorm and exchange ideas. Making an action plan and setting goals discussing implementation and follow up is the process. The mentor provided is going to be worth its weight in gold for the returns. I await the outcomes.

Council Presidents: Turning lessons into Council Practices was another winner. It piggybacks on the above principles.

The NLU Financial Health checkup presentation was very helpful. The PowerPoint keeps us on track and is another available resource.

The understanding of Insurance, Legal and Fiscal Responsibilities Workshop was an eye opener for me because I had no idea that National provides insurance coverage to the local councils and in certain instances when requested for special events. The forwarded powerpoint will be viewed by the Council BOD in the near future. I immediately forwarded it to the PBC Treasurer Anita Manuel for review. There are so many talking points and takeaways that should be handed off at the end of the year to the incoming President BOD and Officers. I will be certain to provide this to the incoming BOD and Officers. Ryan is an excellent resource for Legal questions for the Navy League at National.

The Board Development and Ethics was another area that is important and should be outlined and presented early in the year.

The Legislative Affairs meeting was informative. Our Palm Beach Council has already met with Congressman Brian Mast 18 District. Bill Waylett Legislative Affairs set that up rather promptly after I submitted my request. I plan to set up another meeting with Congresswoman Lois Frankel in the near future. Since her District is in our area too I

approached the FT. Lauderdale / Broward Councils to see if they would like to have a joint meeting to save time for Congresswoman Frankel. We agreed that might work best.

September 2017 Washington DC Fly In Plan near Baltimore, Maryland at the Conference Center at the Maritime Institute (CCMT). This is to meet with Members of Congress to present information about the Navy League and Sea Services pertinent to the Navy Leagues Maritime Policy. This is also to promote Navy League membership to be more active with their own advocacy and Legislative outreach. The trip goal is to meet with as many members of the Senate and House of Representatives with a focus on new members of Congress.

Little things make great impacts on the local Councils. I know how much planning went into preparing the agenda and importance of rolling it out effectively. Local Councils need representation at the Convention. It appears that 10 percent attended. With all the information more councils need to commit to attending. There was much more than I included here in this report back to Membership and the BOD. Council Executive Vice Presidents and all BOD and Officers would greatly benefit by attending the National Conference.

Portland Oregon will be the location of the next Convention location for 2018.

It certainly was interesting and informative in Milwaukee. I hope to see you in Portland next year.

The other main highlight was the awards ceremonies. How fortunate we are to show the Active Duty how much we appreciate them. The proud moments for their families and loved ones in attendance was priceless.

The STEM expo gave me an opportunity to see and learn about the

projects from the local High School Youth. They were expressive about their projects and proud to be involved with STEM. What great advancements with robotics and engineering creations. Kudos to the youth.

There are so many Youth opportunities some are Sea Perch, STEM, Sports Programs, Air Force Space Program, Service Academy, Mini Boot Camp, Lead Cadet Orientation Program and many scholarships. There is Congressional funding 2.9 million across the board. We must get the word out and share the opportunities that are available. Sea Perch sent 3000 Cadets to participate. S.C. competition had 45 parties and 3 of them went on to Georgia Tech in Atlanta. The youth build underwater robots. The Air Force Program Cyber Patriot competes to prevent cyber-attacks on other computers. All units that participate have all done well. The Naval Academy has 50-60 apply and 20 are accepted. The STEM camps have 3 sessions over the summer. They start at a sports camp / Naval Academy and receive advanced credits if they do 5 days or more. We must continue to support our youth.

Darkness to Light was discussed. That is online training for all that work with the Youth. The mission is to end childhood sexual abuse. It is a mandatory training for Sea Cadet Leaders and those working with the youth. The class is taken online. This shares solutions, teaches prevention, awareness and education by recognizing and reacting to it responsibly.

A copy of the Proclamation for the Commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War was presented and a Commemorative Pin given to all in attendance that served in Vietnam. That was followed by a standing ovation.

I truly enjoyed the Convention and the activities, workshops, and team-building. There are so many areas I have not mentioned but

know they were all excellent.

Thank you for allowing me to represent our Council and seeing what's new at National Headquarters. They were professional at all times. They were upbeat and positive while under stressful conditions and timelines. It never showed and they did it with a smile.

The training was absolutely the best investment in the future of the Navy League.

Milwaukee Council hosted a fabulous Convention. Curtiss S. Peck Executive Director of the Fisher House welcomed us and thanked the Navy League for the Fisher House that provides a home away from home for Military and Veteran's families so they can be close to their loved ones during periods of hospitalization at the Clement J. Zablocki VA Medical Center in Milwaukee. This is one of seventy-two Fisher Houses in the United States, England and Germany. The Fisher House accommodates up to 16 families at one time. It is 13,000 square feet. It accommodates up to 45 people at one time if needed. There is no cost to stay at a Fisher House. When full to capacity Fisher House pays for the family to stay at a local hotel. What a partnership. This is a great cause for our military and Veteran Families. For more information FisherHouseWI.org.

Captain David H. Jarvis Award for Inspirational Leadership went to Commander Andrew S. Brown for Inspirational Leadership while serving as the Executive Officer of Coast Guard Base Boston. He created a positive Command climate with his inspirational leadership inspiring 541 crew members.

The President's budget for Milwaukee National Convention is under amount budgeted. It was approximately 1800.00. I will report back to the BOD and Officers.

From our Council Dr. Sue Comerford and Ken Lee were in the 1902 Society Recognition. Thank you Sue!

So many thanks to all that you do for us.

*Warmest Regards,
Sonia Foster
President
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