

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE – January 2014

Building for the Next 35 Years

By FRANK M. DRENNAN, Palm Beach Council, Navy League of the United States.

As your newest president, I want to thank you for your trust and confidence in handing over the reins of our council to me. I'm honored to follow in the footsteps of Navy League giants both at the council and national levels whose selfless dedication and tremendous skill have gotten us to the strong position we have today.

In particular I want to thank Immediate Past-President Ken Lee for his magnificent leadership of our council over the last three years. Ken has and remains both passionate and tireless in support of the council's mission and I am very happy that he will continue serving as Vice President of Maritime Affairs. I hope you will take the opportunity to thank Ken individually for his outstanding work on behalf of all of us.

In 2014 our council will enter its 35th year as a chartered organization of the Navy League of the United States. Beginning in 1980 under the leadership of President Frederick Dehon our council has steadily grown as a trusted partner of the sea services in South Florida through steadfast support for the dedicated men and women of the United States Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and Merchant Marine services and their families, generous support to the Naval Sea Cadet Corps and other youth programs in our region, and unswerving advocacy for strong sea services as a guarantor of economic well-being and national defense for the United States. As we begin our next 35 year, I ask each of you to rededicate yourselves to the mission to which our founder, Teddy Roosevelt, called on "all good Americans interested in the growth of their country and sensitive to its honor" to give hearty support.

Today's conversation about sea services most often leaps over the value of sea services in world affairs to discussions about budgets and numbers of ships. As a result, the discussion ignores the relationship of commercial success and a strong sea service that is evident in the rise of great powers throughout history – Spain in the 16th century, Holland in the 17th, France in the 18th, the United Kingdom in the 19th, and the US in the 20th. Sea Services aren't just a whimsical investment of national treasure. Rather they are an outgrowth of the need to trade and our desire to extract resources from the sea.

Covering more than 70 percent of the earth's surface, the maritime domain is a vital global resource, and its protection is a responsibility of all nations that value security and prosperity. Even with its large land mass, the United States is a maritime nation, and the interconnectivity and stability of our

national economy, commerce, and security is tied to the global maritime nature of international commerce. The oceans, coasts, inland waterways, and Great Lakes provide jobs, food, energy resources, ecological services, recreation, and tourism opportunities. This domain plays a critical supporting role in our Nation's transportation and trade, the global mobility of our Armed Forces, and the maintenance of international peace and security.

It's our mission as Navy Leaguers to constantly remind our citizens of the vital role of our sea service toward the prosperity and security of our nation.

The 2014 slate of officers and directors have been given a strong hand going forward and entering our 35th year our strategy is aimed at making that hand even stronger.

- Our council has over 185 members and a handful of community affiliates – we'll get more
- We are in a strong financial position – we'll get even stronger
- We improved our fundraising significantly – we'll get better
- We provided over \$30,000 in awards, honoraria, scholarships, and support to our local sea service members and youth programs last year – we'll provide more in 2014.

Throughout the hearty support of our mission, we will continue to enjoy the camaraderie of our council members and make our broad and far-sighted patriotism enjoyable for all.

A key element of our strategy involves improving communication amongst our council members and our ability to connect to a broader audience. In 2014, in addition to our council website we have established a Facebook site. Both sites will facilitate efficient communication with council members and enable us to reach a much broader population of potential new members. I encourage all of you to visit these sites at the links below and provide feedback how to make them even more valuable.

<http://www.navyleague-pbcouncil.org/> and <https://www.facebook.com/NavyLeaguePalmBeachCouncil>.

The 2014 officers and I are inheriting a council that is strong and vibrant due to the selfless and caring efforts of our members, board, and officers. With your continued support and teamwork, your passion and compassion for our sea services, I'm confident that we will get off to a great start for the next 35 years.

"I am, you are, we are many, we are Navy Leaguers "

Sincerely,

Frank

Frank Drennan