



Savannah Steamer

2009 Mackie Award Winner

Founded May 15th, 1957

February, 2011 Vol. 37 Issue 2

Savannah Council, Navy League of the United States

President's Message

Savannah Council Adopts USS ALASKA (SSBN-732)



Some great news for the Savannah Council! After careful consideration by the Council's Board of Directors, it was decided by the Board that Savannah Council would formally adopt the US Navy ballistic missile submarine USS *Alaska* (SSBN-732). This will give us the opportunity to support **two** Navy ships – the *Alaska* and USS *Samuel B. Roberts* (FFG-58). We are planning to visit both crews in the next couple of months in order to take part in their respective recognition award ceremonies. There will also be a formal adoption event sometime in late April or early May for the *Alaska*. All council members will be invited to attend and participate in these events. *Alaska* is home ported in Kings Bay, GA, and the *Sammy B* is in Mayport, FL (Jacksonville).

The USS *Alaska* Gold Crew is currently in a training phase at Kings Bay, while their boat is on patrol with the Blue Crew. We are in the process of making arrangements for the Gold Crew to march in the St Patrick's Day Parade, along with the crew from the expected visiting US Navy destroyer. This will give council members a chance to see them and cheer them on during the parade.

This happy news is the result of Tom Latham's recent visit to Kings Bay on our behalf. During his visit, Tom had occasion to ask Rear Admiral Barry Bruner, Commander, Submarine Group



TEN, if by chance one of the subs there would be an adoption candidate. He was quickly informed that USS *Alaska* could be "our boat". *Alaska* had previously been adopted by councils in Spokane, Washington, and Anchorage, Alaska, but those relationships were almost impossible to maintain when *Alaska* was transferred to Kings Bay. Now Savannah Council can support these great sailors.

As noted above, *Alaska* has two crews – Blue and Gold. Each crew consists of about 15 officers and 140 enlisted. USS *Alaska* is one of the 14 remaining *Ohio* Class SSBNs, America's sole sea-based strategic deterrent force. *Alaska* just completed her "mid-life" major overhaul last year, and is now refreshed and ready to serve at full capacity.

Please be on the lookout for future announcements regarding visits to our two adopted ships.

Bob

Beaufort Marine and Family Receive “Extreme Home Makeover”

National TV Show Helps Members of Our Adopted Unit

SSGT Bill Dickinson of MALS-31 watched live via satellite as his new home in Beaufort, a 4,000-square-foot plantation-style house with six bedrooms and four bathrooms, was revealed before a huge crowd late last month.

The work is the result of 3,000 volunteers, coordinated by H2 Builders at the request of the ABC TV Series “Extreme Home Makeover.” The team demolished the Dickinson’s previous home which was plagued with mold that caused health problems for the Dickinson’s 16-month-old daughter. The effort, which was completed in one week, would normally have taken a year.

SSG Dickinson has been deployed to Afghanistan since November. He and his wife India have five children – two boys and three girls – ranging in age from sixteen months to sixteen years.



Membership Corner

Help Us Make the Call!

We Need YOU to Help Us Stay in Touch with Members

Keeping up with the annual renewals of local and national membership dues is a big job – and it’s easy for folks to fall through the cracks. Every member of the Savannah Council is important – and we want to make sure everyone keeps renewing every year!



We need volunteers to make a few phone calls each month to help us reach out to members whose renewals are due.

If you’re willing to help with this process, please let Bob Gephart know by calling (912) 897-1051 or emailing bgephart31410@yahoo.com.

February Dinner Meeting

Beaufort Navy Hornet Squadron Leaders to Speak

Commander Max McCoy and Command Master Chief Travis Brummer will be the featured speakers at our next



CDR McCoy

CMC Brummer

monthly dinner meeting, 6-8:30pm, Tuesday, February 22nd at the Hunter Club on Hunter Army Airfield.

The "Sidewinders" of VFA-86 are the only US Navy fighter squadron based at Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort, South Carolina. The F/A-18 Hornet pilots and crews recently completed a cruise aboard the aircraft carrier USS *Nimitz*. Soon the squadron will leave Beaufort permanently for a West Coast home, bringing them closer to their California-based air wing and making room for the arrival of new F-35 squadrons in Beaufort.



CDR McCoy and CMC Brummer will discuss the upcoming move as well the squadron's recent deployment. They will also talk about this year's Centennial of Naval Aviation.

**February 22nd
Dinner Meeting 6:00 pm,
Hunter Club - Hunter AAF**

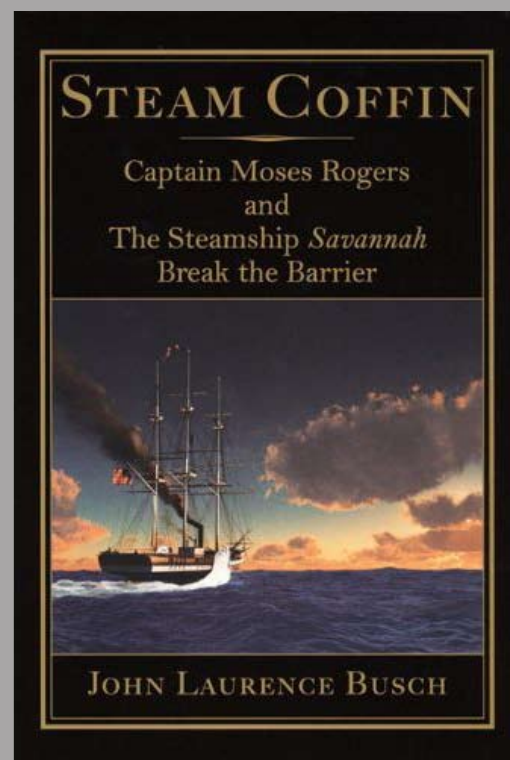
Reserve your seat today! Reservations are due no later than close of business on Friday, February 18th. The cost is \$20 per person. Please contact Aunette Shipes at (912) 330-0932 or savfoxy@bellsouth.net to reserve your place.

Maritime History Author to Speak in Savannah

Topic Explores Savannah's History-Making Maritime First

On Thursday evening, February 24th, author John Laurence Busch will present his book, *Captain Moses Rogers and the Steamship Savannah Break the Barrier*, a new history of the first trans-Atlantic crossing under steam power in 1819. The program will begin at 6pm at the Ships of the Sea Maritime Museum, 41 MLK, Jr. Blvd. in downtown Savannah, and admission is free.

For more information, call the museum at (912) 232-1511.



Our Last Dinner Meeting: Fathoms Below!

A full house of members and guests turned out to hear our dinner speaker last month, Grays Reef National Marine Sanctuary Research Director and former US Navy diver Greg McFall. Greg's presentation included stunning underwater imagery of shipwrecks and marine life. He explained how technical divers use a variety of mixed gases at different depths to avoid the bends and other deadly dangers, and even told a story about strapping onto the outside of a moving Trident submarine to shoot video during his Navy days! Thanks to Greg for an enjoyable and interesting talk.

At the beginning of our meeting, we installed the new class of officers and directors, and later, outgoing Council President Tom Latham passed the gavel to his successor, Bob Gephart. Also, Debbie Keller was recognized as 2010 Navy Leaguer of the Year for her outstanding service to the Savannah Council.

We were also pleased to welcome as our guests BM3 Brandon Sungur, Sailor of the Quarter at the Coast Guard's Tybee ANT (Aids To Navigation Team) and his Executive Officer BM1 Matthew Alexander.



Celebrate St. Patrick's Day Navy League-Style!

Reception, Plus Visiting Crews to March in Parade



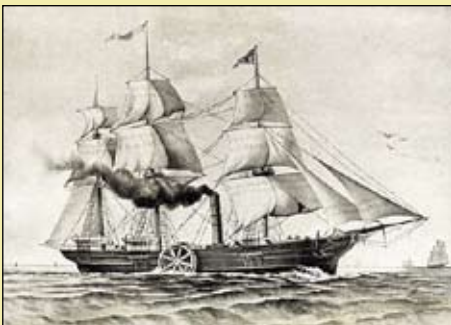
Mark your calendar now for the upcoming reception aboard our visiting naval vessel Tuesday night, March 15th from 6-8pm. All Savannah Council members in good standing are on the security list at the gate; please contact Tom Wright as soon as possible at twright3@hotmail.com or (912) 897-1582 to add a guest to the list. You will need to pay the Council \$5 per non-member guest, and everyone--members and guests included--must bring to the ship a photo ID that matches their name.

The ship, a US Navy guided missile destroyer, is scheduled to sail up the Savannah River the same day, receiving the traditional cannon salute from Old Fort Jackson. Its crew will participate in the Jasper Greene Ceremony downtown at 4pm on Wednesday, March 16th, and will march in the parade behind their commanding officer, who plans to ride in the Council's vehicle. As an extra plus this year, we will also be joined by the Gold Crew of the USS *Alaska*, our newly-adopted submarine.

Maritime History Trivia Question

The Monthly Maritime Trivia Question Returns:

The Steam Ship *Savannah*, commanded by Captain Moses Rogers, made history in 1819 when it became the first steam-powered vessel to cross the Atlantic Ocean. Name the US President and two foreign leaders who visited the ship.



Savannah Council Recognizes Local Coast Guard Standouts

This month, we've advanced our mission of recognizing outstanding members of our Savannah-area sea services by participating in two ceremonies at local Coast Guard units.

On February 2nd, Savannah Council President Bob Gephart presented Air Station Savannah Guardian of the Quarter, IS3 Ryan Sullivan, a \$100 US Savings Bond and a book from the Commandant's reading list.



Air Station Guardian of the Month IS3 Ryan Sullivan and Savannah Council President Bob Gephart

Later the same morning, First Vice President Michael Jordan made a similar presentation to BM3 Lee Acker, Sailor of the Quarter at Marine Safety Unit (MSU) Savannah.

Both Guardsmen and their spouses are invited to be our guests at the upcoming dinner meeting on February 22nd.



From left to right, Alyssa Acker, BM3 Lee Acker, Michael Jordan, and CDR Lonnie Harrison.

2011 Officers and Directors

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Vice President	Mick McCay
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Savannah Steamer Newsletter

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The Navy League of the United States is a civilian organization dedicated to informing the American people that the United States of America is a maritime nation and that its national defense and economic well-being are dependent upon strong sea services-United States Navy, United States Marine Corps, United States Coast Guard and United States Merchant Marine.

Upcoming Events

Tuesday, February 22nd, 6pm

Monthly Dinner Meeting
Hunter Club, Hunter Army Airfield

Thursday, February 24th, 6pm

SS *Savannah* Program at
Ships of the Sea Museum
41 MLK, Jr. Blvd., downtown Savannah

Tuesday, March 1st, 5:30pm

Board of Directors Meeting
Coast Guard Air Station, Hunter Army Airfield

Tuesday, March 15th, 6-8pm

Reception Aboard Visiting US Navy Destroyer

Thursday, March 17th

Crew of Visiting Destroyer and USS *Alaska*
Gold Crew March Behind Navy League
Vehicle in St. Patrick's Day Parade

Tuesday, March 22nd, 6pm

Monthly Dinner Meeting
Hunter Club, Hunter Army Airfield

Our Navy League Community Affiliates



Savannah Marine Repair
www.savannahmarinerepair.com

Savannah Riverfront
www.riverstreetsavannah.com



Savannah Maritime Association
www.savannahmaritime.com



Crescent Towing www.crescenttowing.com

Visit our website at www.savannah.navyleague.us

Official Document: Savannah Council of the Navy League of the United States



**SAVANNAH
COUNCIL**

Recipient of the Outstanding Council Award