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The Ship's Whistle

An occasional e-mail bulletin of newsworthy information for Members of the **Massachusetts Bay Council**, Navy League of the United States and other friends of the Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard and U.S.-flag Merchant Marine. The Navy League is a civilian organization dedicated to the education of our citizens, including elected officials and the support of the men and women of the sea services and their families.

Coming Events:

- December 18-26 Hanukkah
- December 25 Christmas
- December 26-Jan 1 Kwanzaa
- January 7 Annual Meeting
- January 30 Board Meeting



[some of the 416 toys and games collected. Picked up by USMC SGTs Riviera and Castillo with Council VP Ivan Samuels assisting]

The Council's Fiftieth year of supporting the Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots program resulted in donating some 418 items to be distributed amongst needy families in Middlesex and Essex Counties. Thanks go to our Members who contributed over \$3600 for purchases and Chairs Eleanor Samuels and Krystyna Maksymowicz; with large numbers of toys from Jeb DeLoach' daughter, Tom Hennessey's wife; and purchased by super-shopper Alison (nee Samuels) Beader.



HAVE A HEALTHY AND HAPPY HANUKKAH, CHRISTMAS AND/OR KWANZAA AND A



SEA CADETS



CADET SWIM MEET A SUCCESS

In a return after a two-year hiatus, area Naval Sea Cadets and League Cadets from Gosnold Division on Cape Cod, Michael Murphy Division of Long Island and Naval Construction Battalion Center Division (NCBC) of Quonset, R I, competed in the Annual "All Regional Swim Meet" at Mass. Maritime Academy.

CPA. We need a Certified Auditor willing to work pro bono on the Council's books.

Contact Tom Hennessey at tomhjr@gmail.com.

SECNAV names future LHA 9 as USS FALLUJAH



Following the tradition of naming amphibious assault ships after U.S. Marine Corps battles, early, sailing ships or legacy names of earlier WWII carriers, LHA-9 will be named for two 2004 battles in the Iraqi city: an April-May battle to retaliate for the deaths of four U.S. contractors; and a larger November-December fight to retake the city. With over 100 coalition forces killed and over 600 wounded, Operation Phantom Fury is considered the bloodiest engagement of the Iraq War and the fiercest urban combat involving U.S. Marines since the Vietnam War's Battle of Hue City"

SEA CADETS



David G. Ouellet Division

Members leading the parade. The Division participated in Veterans Day events at Gloucester High school and at the American Legion post. The next day some cadets helped prepare meals for families in need at the Food Pantry.

KWANZAA (Source: *The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica*; updated by *Adam Augustyn*. *Republic Day*)

Kwanzaa is annual holiday affirming African family and social values and is celebrated primarily in the United States from December 26 to January 1. Both the name and the celebration were devised in 1966 by Maulana Karenga, a professor of Africana studies at California State University in Long Beach. Karenga borrowed the word *kwanza*, meaning “first,” from the Swahili phrase *matunda ya kwanza*, adding the seventh letter, an extra *a*, to make the word long enough to accommodate one letter for each of the seven children present at an early celebration. The concept of Kwanzaa draws on Southern African first-fruits celebrations.

It was conceived as a nonpolitical and nonreligious holiday, and it is not considered to be a substitute for Christmas.

Each of the days of the celebration is dedicated to one of the seven principles of Kwanzaa: unity, self-determination, collective responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith. There also are seven symbols of the holiday: fruits, vegetables, and nuts; a straw mat; a candleholder; ears of corn (maize); gifts; a communal cup signifying unity; and seven candles in the African colours of red, green, and black, symbolizing the seven principles. On each day the family comes together to light a candle and to discuss the principle for the day. On December 31, families join in a community feast called the *karamu* with some participants wearing traditional African clothing.

The Ship's Whistle is published by The Massachusetts Bay Council, Navy League of the U.S., 25 Dorchester Ave., P.O. Box 51662, Boston, MA 02205. To be removed from this mailing list, contact: Editor: Ivan Samuels at go2navy@verizon.net.

HANUKKAH

Several Members have asked about the meaning of Hanukkah and why it is celebrated.

The story of Hanukkah does not appear in the Torah (the first five books of the Old Testament) because the events that inspired the holiday occurred after it was written. It is, however, mentioned in the New Testament, in which Jesus attends a ‘Feast of Dedication.’

The eight-day Jewish celebration commemorates the rededication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem during the second century B.C., where Jews had risen up against their Greek-Syrian oppressors in the Maccabean Revolt.

The events that inspired the Hanukkah holiday took place during a particularly turbulent phase of Jewish history. Around 200 B.C., Judea (now Israel/ Palestine) came under the control of Antiochus III, the king of Syria, who allowed the Jews to continue practicing their religion. His son, Antiochus IV Epiphanes, proved less benevolent and he outlawed the Jewish religion and ordered the Jews to worship Greek gods.

In 168 B.C., Antiochus IV Epiphanes’ soldiers descended upon Jerusalem, massacring thousands of people and desecrating the city’s holy Second Temple by erecting an altar to Zeus and sacrificing pigs inside its sacred walls.

Led by the Jewish priest Mattathias and his five sons, a large-scale rebellion broke out against Antiochus and his monarchy. When Mattathias died in 166 B.C., his son Judah took the helm. Within two years the Jews had successfully driven the Syrians out of Jerusalem and regained the rights to practice their religion. Judah called on his followers to cleanse the temple and light a menorah with oil, blessed by the high priest, all night, every night, until the new altar could be built.

The menorah (a gold candelabrum) whose seven branches represented knowledge and creation was meant to be kept burning every night. But there was only one flask of oil left and that would only last for one night. They lit it anyway and it stayed lit for eight days, the amount of time needed to press new oil.

According to the Talmud, Judah Maccabee and the other Jews who took part in the rededication of the Second Temple witnessed what they believed to be a miracle. Even though there was only enough untainted olive oil to keep the menorah’s candles burning for a single day, the flames continued flickering for eight nights, leaving them time to find a fresh supply. This wondrous event inspired the Jewish sages to proclaim a yearly eight-day festival.
