



**NAVY LEAGUE**  
of the United States  
"Citizens in Support of the Sea Services"

**GREATER  
KANSAS CITY  
Council**



December 2017

Volume 11

**Council Elections**

**Jeffrery Wheat new Council President**



Jeff Wheat, our new president, was born and raised in Southeast Kansas, attended the University of Kansas and after receiving a degree in Computer Science found himself in the Department of Defense world in the DC area in 1986. Soon after he found himself in the outback of Australia for DoD where he met his lovely bride Gabrielle. After 8 years in the red center Jeff and Gabby returned to the land of Oz in

1997 to raise a family where they have two children, Madison and Brandon. In the past 20 years life moved fast with Jeff taking leadership positions in both the commercial sector and DoD environments and has left him now as the Director of Cyber Security Operations globally for Qualitest. In the past he provided technical consulting to the US Navy SEALs at Trident Spectre which along with stints in Annapolis Maryland drew his daughter Madison to the Naval Academy flame and membership in both the Sea Cadets and Naval ROTC at KU. It was her involvement and the support to those organizations by the Navy League that drew Jeff into membership and leadership roles within the organiza-

tion. The Wheat family embraces service with both Jeff and Gabrielle serving on various boards around the KC area including the Command General Staff College where Gabrielle (who is the CEO of the Global Town Hall) was a board member to the FBI's Infragard where Jeff is a current board member. His son Brandon is following in his footsteps working on a Computer Engineering degree at the University of Kansas and has been the local Navy League's webmaster for the past two years and also has a desire to start a career with the Department of Defense. The service to community and youth along with the friendship of its members is what draws and will continue to draw Jeff and his family to the Navy League of Kansas City.



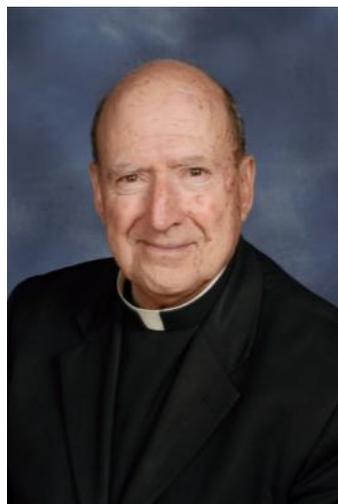
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**NAVY LEAGUE  
OF THE  
UNITED STATES  
P. O. Box 411361  
Kansas City, MO 64141**



***In Memoriam***

**The Reverend Jeremiah L. Spencer**

*March 5, 1939 - November 30, 2017*

***A Mighty Warrior***

A funeral service was held Wednesday, December 6 at Cure of Ars Catholic church Leawood, Kansas, for our Council Chaplain, Father Jerry Spencer. Since his retirement from Kansas University Medical Center as Staff Chaplain in 2012, he had

been serving as Priest in Residence in that parish. His was a sudden death following a brief bout with pneumonia at his beloved Kansas University Medical Center where he had served 45 years. His proper name was Jeremiah Lee Spencer but we all knew

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## Presidents Gavel

The future is always clouded with uncertainty. That is why we live by faith. Opportunities to serve others many times come by surprise. Willing servants step up with eyes that see an opportunity to make a difference by playing their part in the great scheme of things whatever and wherever that may be. Young people do that often unknowingly when they are sworn in as members of the Armed Forces of our great land. Later they are often humbled at the place they filled when they least expected it. Many of us are surprised by destiny at later ages as well. Such

was the life of Fr. Jerry Spencer, our beloved Council Chaplain. So it is with all of us as we seek to serve others. Our election in November changed three significant positions in our Council. We welcomed Jeff Wheat, Pete Vogt and Walter Schley to new roles as leaders helping us fulfill our mission in the Navy League of the United States. It is a time of change and is clouded with uncertainty. I am no longer the President and am using my Gavel for the last times before a new president is installed. That feels like a welcome change and I look for new opportunities to serve our membership in the Navy League.

I invite all our members to increase

their involvement by finding new opportunities to lead and to follow. We are all volunteers, but the rewards are high because our mission is lofty and we follow the highest ideals, going way beyond simply a love of country.

We have a great team here in Kansas City and I still want to be on that team in a new capacity. God bless you all for what you have done, are doing now and will be able to do in the future.

*Ron Brooks, President*

## Fr. Jerry Spencer *(continued)*

him as Father Jerry. During his long career in the priesthood he had served only two parishes as Pastor: Holy Trinity Parish in Lenexa and Holy Name Parish in Kansas City, Kansas. After graduating from St. Thomas Seminary in Denver Colorado in 1965 and receiving Ordination a ministry of caring for the sick and suffering which eventually grew into a full time ministry at KUMC. He carried a pager as part of his duties and was on call 24/7 for Pastoral Care. He had not intended to pursue hospital chaplaincy, but it came to him and he loved it. At the hospital or in the parish he was always answering the phone, the pager or the door. As one fellow priest said, "He loved the work and looked for it". Even as his own aging brought multiple health issues, he continued to reach out to others with his lively sense of humor and his faith.

His work continued in retirement at Cure and he found time then to do something he had long wanted to do—to serve as our Navy League of Greater Kansas City Chaplain. His presence was always welcome, his

spirit contagious and his prayers were thought provoking. His spirit and his prayers will be missed at our meetings. His attendance and his prayers were impeccable.

## Support The Navy Band In Kansas City

The Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts is the venue chosen for the appearance of the Navy Band in Kansas City March 6, 2018. The concert will begin at 7:00 p.m. in the evening.

Preparations have been underway since last August. Our Council is helping organize and support the event. Hopefully the weather will provide a wonderful evening for our sailor musicians to regale our citizens with their very best music. The band must pay its own way and is soliciting funds from the community. If you want to support the event financially, mail your check payable to Navy League, P.O. Box 411361 Kansas City, Missouri 64141 with a note in the Memo line for "Navy Band".

We are excited that we have been chosen as a stop in their tour for this concert season. Mark your calendar and plan to attend. You will be notified about details as they become available.

## A Navy Presence

Veterans Day was November 11 and fell on a Saturday this year, a great day for parades and other observances. Our Council normally has a float entry in the Parade in Leavenworth, Kansas due to the efforts of Janette Labbee and Forrest Holderman but this year they were in Hawaii for a very significant reunion. Usually The Navy Presence is visible with our float riders and banners, an important part of a parade in an army community like Leavenworth. As an alternative this year, our Council joined with others in hosting a military reception for VIPs, retirees and active duty personnel sponsored by the Main Street Economic Council at the Exchange Bank. Our presence was visible on the streets and at the reception with the Navy League Logo being clearly visible all over town.

## Red Team Thinking

More than the title of a new book coauthored by Bryce Hoffman and Steve Rotkoff, published in 2017, Red Teaming is a new style of leadership training offered in branches of our military service especially the Army and Marine Corps. The idea is to avoid something known as “Group Think”. It uses critical thinking to come up with a strategy to solve the problem or win the war by allowing alternative thinking. Leaders are encouraged to stand up or stand out by daring to think and say something contrary to the popular point of view. The speaker for our November 16 Council meeting, Col. Steve Rotkoff, USA-R., described how students in today’s military universities and colleges are being



encouraged to promote different points of view in the chain of command. At the same time senior leadership is being encouraged to realize that just because they are

senior doesn’t mean they are right. Intelligence changes quickly and sometimes even while a tactical plan is being implemented and someone with a different point of view may save the day. It’s all about recognizing the merits of differing points of view in a real world scenario.

This kind of leadership breaks with the rank and file structure of leadership and authority in the military and is difficult for all engaged to utilize and incorporate into a command. Col Rotkoff was able to provide solid illustrations to make his point, but conceded that this style appeals more to junior officers than it does to senior officers. And yet, it is challenging for junior officers to take the risk of disagreeing with the Commanding Officer.

## Lunch With The Skipper of CVN-75

Some Missouri sailors got to come home in November without taking leave. Captain Nicholas Dienna, Commanding Officer of the USS HARRY S. TRUMAN (CVN 75) visited the ship’s supporters in Missouri with a delegation from the crew. They visited groups in



Capt Nicholas Dienna, Commanding Officer

St. Louis, Columbia, Jefferson City and our Council in Kansas City. Altogether there were 10 members in the party, including Mrs. Dienna,

The Public Affairs Officer, LCDR Laura Stegherr, the Command Master Chief, Antonio Perryman, Chief Aviation Electrician’s Mate, Alfredo Trinidad, and several Petty Officers from a variety of rates. Three were from Missouri and one was from Kansas City.

Our Council hosted the entire party at a special luncheon at Plaza III on November 9. Each of the service members introduced themselves after the Master Chief told about the group visiting us. The CO then spoke, reminding us of the great heritage the ship has after being named by the President from Missouri. He was obviously a scholar of Harry Truman and also a fan. He gave us some details about life on the ship and in the navy today before taking questions from the floor.





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### *What's next.....*

January will be different because our Council meeting will be the 4th Thursday of the month and we are meeting dinner instead of lunch. Same place, Plaza III on the Country Club Plaza, different day and time. It will be our Annual Membership Meeting and the installation of our 2018 officers and Directors. This dinner meeting will begin at 5:30 pm on Thursday, January 25, 2017, with a time for gathering, catching up, greeting guests and meeting new members. Dinner begins at 6:30, but come early enough to have some social time before it starts.

For up-to-date information on our monthly meeting and programs, visit our website  
<http://www.navyleaguekansascity.org/>

### *Your 2018 Navy League Officers & Directors*

The Board of Directors finalized and approved a slate of officers and directors for 2018 at their October 26 meeting. The Nominating Slate was presented to the membership at the November 16 Council meeting. During the business meeting, with the President of the Council presiding, there was an election for the coming year. There were no nominations from the floor and all nominees were elected by unanimous vote. The list reads as follows:

#### **OFFICERS**

President	Jeff Wheat
Past President	Ron Brooks
1st Vice President	Bill Teel
Vice President of Membership	Jack Rush
Secretary	Peter Vogt
Treasurer	Tom Holden
Assist. Treasurer	Matt Seward

#### **DIRECTORS**

Bill Teel	Walter Schley, Jr.
Debra Schultz	Jack Rush
Peter Vogt	Jeff Wheat
Wayne Zetzman	Ward Cook
Ron Schumaker	Ron Brooks
Jerry Lechtenberg	Mary Ellen Stone
Matt Seward	Tom Holden

### *Our Navy Birthday Party*

Two hundred forty two years old last October 13. That's how old we are. We celebrated the day at our November Council meeting with a beautifully decorated cake designed for the occasion. Various members read greetings from the Secretary of the Navy, the Chief of Naval Operations, the Secretary of Defense and the President of the United States. Each reminded us of significant moments in our history and the importance of our heroes and traditions from the past.

We marked several other birthdays this year as well. United States Coast Guard was August 4, The Sea Cadets celebrated September 10, the Marine Corps on November 10 and our founder, Theodore Roosevelt on October 27. He used part of the money he received for being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize to organize the Navy League in 1902. He really loved the Navy and created many legends about his pride in ships, seagoing sailors and amphibious Rough Riders (Marines).

