

NAVY LEAGUE NEWS

FORT LAUDERDALE COUNCIL

January 2026



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Members,

Happy New Year! As we welcome 2026, I send my heartfelt wishes to you and your families for a year filled with health, joy, and meaningful connections.

Looking back on December, our Holiday Dinner Meeting was a powerful reminder of why we do what we do. We were honored to host **Captain John-David A. Lentine**, Chief of Resource Management for the Coast Guard Southeast District. His insights into leadership, engineering, and operational excellence left a lasting impression. Captain Lentine's distinguished career and personal dedication to service embody the values we uphold at the Navy League.

Now, as we look ahead, I couldn't be more excited about our upcoming **Seven Seas Gala on Saturday, January 24, 2026**, at the **Westin Fort Lauderdale Beach Resort**. Our Guest of Honor will be **Rear Admiral Brendan C. McPherson, USCG, Director of Operations, (J3) U.S. Southern Command**

This year's theme, "*Anchored in Amalfi*," promises a vibrant evening of celebration and camaraderie as we come together to support the men and women of our sea services. I encourage you to reserve your seat and bring a guest. It will be a night to remember.

I also want to express my sincere appreciation to our **Board of Directors** and dedicated volunteers whose hard work behind the scenes continues to move our mission forward.

Thank you for being part of this journey. With your support, we'll make 2026 another extraordinary year for the **Fort Lauderdale Council** — united in purpose, proud in service, and steadfast in our mission.

Stay safe, stay inspired, and may God bless you and our great nation.

Sincerely,

Abiud "Abi" Montes
President
Fort Lauderdale Council
Navy League of the United States



In This Issue...

| | |
|---|------------|
| 2026 Fort Lauderdale Council Officers | Page 2 |
| Membership..... | Page 2 |
| Birthdays | Page 2 |
| Seven Seas Gala..... | Page 3 |
| Seven Seas Gala Guest of Honor | Page 4 |
| February Dinner Meeting | Page 5 |
| View from the Bridge | Page 6-7 |
| Sea Cadet Funding in 2026 | Page 8 |
| USS Fort Lauderdale LPD 28 | Page 9-10 |
| Social Calendar | Page 11 |
| December Dinner Meeting | Page 12-13 |
| Community Affiliates | Page 14 |
| Fort Lauderdale Council..... | Page 15 |

FORT LAUDERDALE COUNCIL 2026 OFFICERS

President: **Abiud Montes**

First Vice President: **Barbara Kelleher**

Second Vice President: **Aaron Bresnahan**

Third Vice President: **Peter Apol**

Treasurer: **Diana Molina**

Secretary: **Elaine Nasta**

MEMBERSHIP

Beginning January 1, 2026, Premium Council Membership will be \$400 per person. This fee includes eight dinner meetings (each typically \$55 per person, offering a \$40 discount overall) as well as the \$50 annual dues, resulting in total savings of \$90 per year.

To join and maintain membership in a Navy League council, an individual must be a member in good standing with the Navy League of the United States. It is incumbent upon the member to maintain current national membership.

From page 2-10 of the Navy League of the United States Operations Manual revised November 6, 2021:

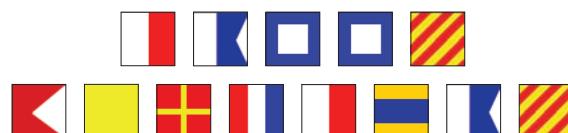
"II.D.6. A council may establish local dues or membership fees as it may deem to be appropriate but such dues or fees must be in addition to, not in lieu of, the national dues."

Join the Navy League:

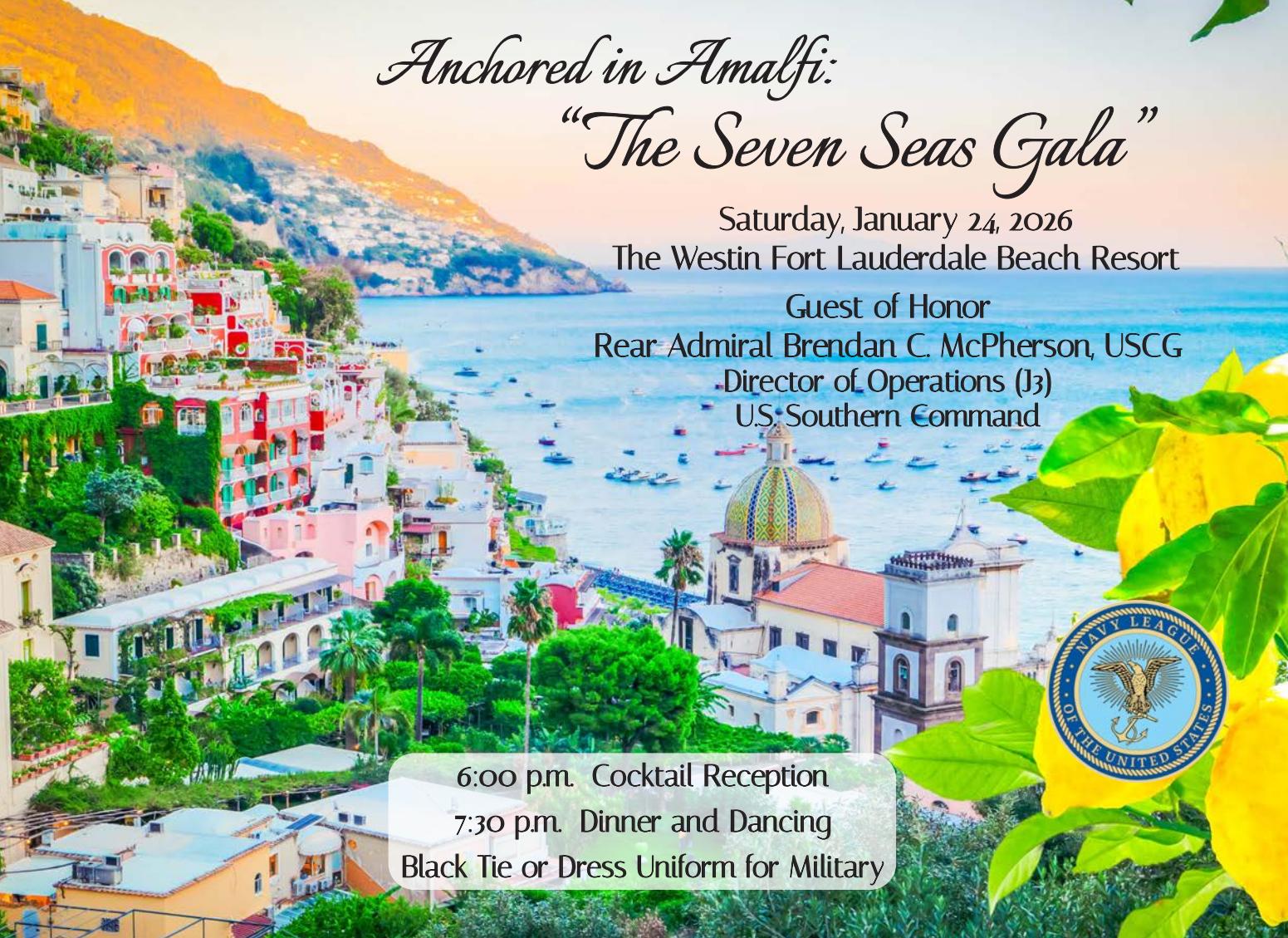
FtINavyLeague.org/JoinUs

<https://ftinavyleague.org/joinus>

NAVY LEAGUE OF THE UNITED STATES FORT LAUDERDALE COUNCIL JANUARY BIRTHDAYS



| | | | |
|--------------|------|-----------------|------|
| Mary Anzick | 1/2 | Kathy Mayhew | 1/16 |
| Diana Molina | 1/6 | Monika Lent | 1/18 |
| Alan Stotsky | 1/8 | Carolyn Mulhern | 1/25 |
| Robert Alden | 1/15 | | |



Anchored in Amalfi: "The Seven Seas Gala"

Saturday, January 24, 2026
The Westin Fort Lauderdale Beach Resort

Guest of Honor
Rear Admiral Brendan C. McPherson, USCG
Director of Operations (J3)
U.S. Southern Command

6:00 p.m. Cocktail Reception

7:30 p.m. Dinner and Dancing

Black Tie or Dress Uniform for Military



R.S.V.P.

Name _____

Address _____ Suite/Apt. _____

City/State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email: _____

Number attending _____ \$175 per person _____ Table of Ten \$1700 _____ \$ _____

I would like to contribute to underwriting the Gala \$ _____

Total \$ _____

Enclosed is my check payable to Navy League of the U. S. - Fort Lauderdale Council

Charge my credit card: MasterCard VISA AmEx

Account # _____ Expiration Date _____ Zip _____ CCV _____



Reservations

Number attending _____ Meal option: Chicken Fish Vegetarian

Complimentary Valet or Self Parking (entrance on Granada Street)

Space is limited. Please R.S.V.P. by January 16, 2026

Contact Lynn Atkinson for information: 954-325-9102 or lynn@druckermail.com

Online payment at: <https://FtlNavyLeague.org/Gala2026>

SEVEN SEAS GALA GUEST OF HONOR
REAR ADMIRAL BRENDAN C. MCPHERSON, USCG
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS (J3)
U.S. SOUTHERN COMMAND

Rear Admiral McPherson assumed the duties of Director of Operations (J3) at United States Southern Command in 2024. He previously served as Deputy Commander, Coast Guard Pacific Area, in Alameda, California, beginning in June 2023, where he helped lead Coast Guard forces responsible for operations from the Rocky Mountains across the Indo-Pacific, Arctic, and Antarctic regions to the coast of eastern Africa. He concurrently served as Deputy Commander, Defense Force West and provides Coast Guard operational support to the Department of Defense (DOD) and Combatant Commanders within the region.

Rear Admiral McPherson previously served as Commander of the Coast Guard Seventh District in Miami, Florida from July 2021 until June 2023. His prior Flag Officer assignment included Military Advisor to the Secretary of Homeland Security in Washington, D.C.

Rear Admiral McPherson was promoted to Flag rank in 2019. He is a career cutterman with more than 34 years of military service including nearly 12 years cumulative sea time aboard six cutters. He also served as the Commanding Officer of the following cutters: MIDGETT, VIGOROUS and BARANOF. His staff assignments included Chief of Staff of the Coast Guard Thirteenth District in Seattle; Chief of the Response Division and Enforcement Branch of the Coast Guard Seventh District in Miami; Press Assistant to the Commandant of the Coast Guard in Washington, D.C; Chief of Strategic Communications in the Headquarters Office of Governmental and Public Affairs; Public Affairs Officer for the Atlantic Area/Fifth District in Portsmouth, Virginia; and an assignment to the Seventh District Tactical Law Enforcement Team in Miami. Rear Admiral McPherson started his career as an Ensign aboard cutter DAUNTLESS in Miami Beach in 1989.

In addition to his regular duties, Rear Admiral McPherson was assigned to several joint and interagency unified commands in response to national contingency operations. Following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, he was responsible for leading public affairs efforts for all Coast Guard forces within the Atlantic Area and U.S. Maritime Defense Zone Atlantic. In 2002, Rear Admiral McPherson deployed to Joint Task Force Guantanamo Bay, Cuba (JTF GTMO) Joint Information Center in support of Global War on Terror (GWOT) detention operations there. Rear Admiral McPherson prior roles include working as a Press Secretary to the Principal Federal Official for disaster response and recovery operations in the aftermath of hurricanes Katrina and Rita along the Gulf Coast in 2005.

A native of Bradley Beach, New Jersey, Rear Admiral McPherson graduated with Honors from the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in 1989 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Management. He also earned a Master of Arts degree in Public Relations from the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill School of Journalism and Mass Communication and holds a Master of Arts degree in National Security and Strategic Studies from the U.S. Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island.

His personal awards include two Coast Guard Distinguished Service Medals, one Legion of Merit, six Coast Guard Meritorious Service Medals, two Coast Guard Commendation Medals, one Navy Commendation Medal, two Coast Guard Achievement Medals, and various service and unit awards.



**GUEST SPEAKER AT OUR FEBRUARY 18TH DINNER MEETING
VICE ADMIRAL WILLIAM BURKE, USN (RET)**



Vice Adm. (ret) Burke, a native of Hornell, N.Y., graduated from the United States Naval Academy in 1978 with a Bachelor of Science in Systems Engineering. In 1985, he completed a Master of Business Administration at Marymount University. In 1999, he earned a Master of Science degree in National Security Strategy at the National War College in Washington, D.C. He is a graduate of Massachusetts Institute of Technology Seminar 21 Program in International Politics.

His submarine assignments include USS Lafayette (SSBN 616), USS Key West (SSN 722), USS Omaha (SSN 692), USS Cavalla (SSN 684), and command of USS Toledo (SSN 769). He commanded Submarine Squadron Two from July 2001 to July 2003.

His Washington D.C. shore assignments include a tour in Chief of Naval Operations' Attack Submarine Division; assistant deputy for House Liaison in the Navy Office of Legislative Affairs; Chief of Training, Doctrine, and Assessment; Assistant Deputy Director for Combating Terrorism (JCS J34); and head of Warfighting Assessments Branch (N812) followed by a tour as the Executive Assistant to the Vice Chief of Naval Operations.

Promoted to rear admiral in Sept. 2005, his flag assignments include Commander, Logistics Group Western Pacific/Commander, Task Force 73/Commander Navy Region Singapore; Director, Assessment Division (N81/N00X) and the Director, Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR/N00X).

In April 2010, he was promoted to vice admiral and reported for duty as Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Fleet Readiness and Logistics (N4). His final assignment was as Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Warfare Systems (N9).

Burke wears the Distinguished Service Medal (two awards), Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit (three awards), Meritorious Service Medal (three awards), the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal (four awards), and the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (two awards). While onboard Cavalla, he received the Admiral Chick Clarey Award for the 1992 Outstanding Navy Officer Afloat from the Honolulu Council of the Navy League.





United States Naval Sea Cadets Corps

FORT LAUDERDALE DIVISION & TRAINING SHIP RADFORD

Sponsored by the Fort Lauderdale Council of the Navy League of the United States
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 21101, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33335-1101
Headquarters: 300 S.W. 25th Street, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33315



LT Rosa Ryan, USNSCC
Commanding Officer

A VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE

U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps, Fort Lauderdale Division

The Fort Lauderdale Division Sea Cadets had a very active month in December. On December 6th, we celebrated with our annual Holiday Party at Sea Cadet Headquarters, catered by Mission Barbecue. Cadets received awards to recognize their achievements, and we celebrated the promotion of our exceptional Commanding Officer, Rosa Ryan, from Lieutenant Junior Grade (LTJG) to Lieutenant (LT) in the Sea Cadets.



A VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE
U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps, Fort Lauderdale Division
continued

Cadets and Staff decorated the Archer 40 ft. Bayliner boat with a patriotic theme, including red, white, and blue lights and an American flag, in preparation for the Winterfest Boat Parade. The December 13th parade was a big success, with the Cadets manning the rails in their white uniforms as they passed the Judging Stand. Thank you to our staff and to our amazing Captains, Brian Ettinger, Jose Carbonell, and LCDR Trent Moon, USCG, for making the journey fun and safe!



7
MIAMI





Support Sea Cadet Funding in 2026 Defense Appropriations!

1827 actions taken

173 needed to reach next goal

The Issue

The U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps is a federally supported youth program that provides hands-on training to approximately 8,000 participants each year. The program develops skills in shipbuilding, cybersecurity, aviation, skilled trades, and maritime operations. Nearly half of graduating cadets enter military service.

Congress authorized \$4.3 million in supplemental funding for the Sea Cadets in the FY 2025 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), but these funds were not appropriated due to the passage of a full-year continuing resolution. In December 2025, Congress again authorized \$4.3 million for the program in the conference version of the FY 2026 NDAA. However, members of the House and Senate must still approve this funding in the conference report for the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, which has not yet been released.

The House-passed defense appropriations bill fully funds the Sea Cadets under the Recruiting and Advertising section of the Navy's Operations and Maintenance Budget. The Senate's draft does not include this provision. Until negotiators agree to include Sea Cadet funding in the final appropriations bill, the program's funding remains uncertain.

The Solution

If enacted with the relevant provision, the FY 2026 Defense Appropriations Bill would make available the \$4.3 million authorized in the FY 2026 NDAA for the U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps. The appropriations process determines whether authorized funds can be spent. As of December 2025, a conference report for the appropriations bill has not yet been released. Ensuring that the conference bill includes Sea Cadet funding will secure the program's financing for next year, provided the House and Senate pass the negotiated bill.

Why You Should Take Action

If appropriated funding is not provided in FY 2026, the Sea Cadet program may face reduced training opportunities and higher costs for participants. The program relies on federal funding to maintain robust training and keep participation affordable for families. Its mission is to support national security workforce development and provide career pathways in defense and maritime industries. The Sea Cadets have historically received funding in appropriations legislation, and continued support is essential to sustain this critical program.

Act Now!

[Sign up with Facebook](#)

To register to participate in the Navy League Quorum Action Center and our Voice to Congress campaigns, please enter your information below. Fields with an asterisk (*) are required.

First Name*

First Name

Last Name*

Last Name

Address*

Street Address, City, and State

Email

Email

Council

By registering with the Quorum Action Center, you agree to receive the Legislative Affairs Weekly Roundup email. You may unsubscribe from the Weekly Roundup at any time by following the links provided in each email.

[Sign Up](#)

<https://navyleague.quorum.us/campaign/seacadets/>

USS FORT LAUDERDALE LPD 28

December 22, 2025

ST. CROIX, U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS - U.S. Sailors and Marines, assigned to the Iwo Jima Amphibious Ready Group – 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable), aboard San Antonio-class amphibious transport dock USS Fort Lauderdale (LPD 28) volunteered to clean up and conduct facility maintenance at St. Croix Animal Welfare Center and Shelter, Nov. 29, 2025.



“While here in St. Croix, Sailors and Marines were offered the opportunity to give back to the community,” said Cmdr. Jamie McQuiniff, executive officer of Fort Lauderdale. “Many of our Sailors and Marines spend significant amounts of their time giving back through community service [at home], and enjoy continuing that while deployed. Sailors and Marines were able to connect with the local community, providing hands-on assistance with animal care and facility maintenance.”



In 2017, Hurricane Maria caused significant damage to the shelter and its staff was forced to relocate operations to a temporary facility. Since the hurricane, staff has been unable to perform renovations due to limited resources. During the community service event, Sailors and Marines stepped in to assist the shelter by painting walls, cleaning animal living spaces, and walking dogs.



“If we have a whole team of people that are willing to help us for the day, that’s such a blessing to us, for our staff to have a refresh of the space because they do a lot of hard work. The more we can reinforce that they’re valued and that they’re appreciated, that’s great,” said Ashley Bouzianis, the shelter’s director of Marketing & Fundraising.

The St. Croix Animal Welfare Center and Shelter was founded in 1973 and is currently home to 82 dogs and cats. The unique facility is the only open-door animal shelter on the island of St. Croix which allows staff to accept all animals that are surrendered. The facility also partners with ‘Paws from Paradise’ to relocate pets to the continental U.S. where there are more adoption opportunities.

Community service projects are a cornerstone of a deployment. Each opportunity allows Sailors and Marines the opportunity to connect with and give back to the community while fostering vital relationships with partners and allies across the world as ambassadors of the United States. “At the end of the day I think

USS FORT LAUDERDALE LPD 28

continued

giving back is what everybody needs," said one of the participating Sailors from Fort Lauderdale. "[Giving back represents a sense of] self-accomplishment, and it's good to be able to help people that need help—it feels good."

USS Fort Lauderdale (LPD 28) is part of the Iwo Jima Amphibious Ready Group (IWO ARG) and among the Navy assets deployed to the Caribbean in support of the U.S. Southern Command mission, Department of War-directed operations, and the president's priorities.



#DoltForDale #TogetherWeFight #USNAVY #BlueGreenTeam #makingadifference



Navy League of the United States Fort Lauderdale Council

Social Calendar 2026

Saturday, January 24, 2026, Seven Seas Gala, Westin Fort Lauderdale Beach Resort

**Guest Speaker: Rear Admiral Brendan McPherson, USCG
Director of Operations (J3), U.S. Southern Command**

Wednesday, February 18, 2026, Dinner Meeting, Lauderdale Yacht Club

Guest Speaker: Vice Admiral William Burke, USN (Ret)

Wednesday, March 18, 2026, Dinner Meeting, Lauderdale Yacht Club

Guest Speaker: Ssgt Eliezer Olea, USMC, Marksmanship Training

Wednesday, April 15, 2026, Dinner Meeting, Lauderdale Yacht Club

Guest Speaker: Ken Denison, Former VP Broward Marine

Wednesday, May 20, 2026, Dinner Meeting, Lauderdale Yacht Club

Guest Speaker: LT Matias A. Suelo, USNR (Ret)

Tuesday, September 22, 2026, Sea Cadet Night, Lauderdale Yacht Club

Wednesday, October 21, 2026, Dinner Meeting, Lauderdale Yacht Club

Guest Speaker: TBD

Wednesday, November 18, 2026, Dinner Meeting, Lauderdale Yacht Club

Guest Speaker: TBD

Tuesday, December 15, 2026, Holiday Celebration Dinner/Toys for Tots Drive

Guest Speaker: TBD

Dinner Meetings and Events Web Page:



DECEMBER 2025 DINNER MEETING

We had a record turnout for our annual Holiday Celebration and Toys for Tots drive on December 16th. Many thanks to our guest speaker, CAPT John-David Lentine, Chief, Resource Management, U.S. Coast Guard District Southeast. Captain Lentine graduated from the United States Coast Guard Academy in 2000 with a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering. He also holds a Master of Science from Oregon State University and Master of Business Administration from Tulane University.



Sea Cadets with Toys For Tots



Sea Cadets collect Toys For Tots



Toys For Tots



FOUNDA TION

DECEMBER 2025 DINNER MEETING

continued

The captain spoke about his upbringing in Fairbanks, Alaska, and described the motivation behind his decision to seek an appointment to the Academy. He provided insights into his diverse career assignments, which contributed to an engaging and occasionally lighthearted presentation.



Sea Cadets Color Guard



Captain Lentine with Abi Montes



Captain Lentine

COMMUNITY AFFILIATES



Hard Work Gets Results

954-658-7128 Mobile



GARY PIRTLE
Sales Associate
gpirtle@Realty100.com
ardenpalmbeach.com
gpirtle.realty100.com



*We proudly support the
Navy League, Fort Lauderdale Council
and the U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps,
Fort Lauderdale Division.*

JOEY STOTSKY
Luxury Travel Specialist – Franchise Owner
Phone: 954-557-8108
Joey.Stotsky@cruiseplanners.com
oceanwalktravel.com

Ferrea
RACING COMPONENTS

Your Mission. Our Components.
**Build a Powerful
ENGINE!**

We are extending our thanks to the Military community with a new discount program. All Active Duty Military Members and Veterans receive discounts on all purchases made online at www.FERREA.com with approved military verification.

Ferrea is a proud community affiliate with the Navy League.

Ferrea.com
Tech Line: 954-733-2505 • Toll Free: 888-733-2505

EDITORIAL STAFF

Lynn Atkinson, Editor
Jim Black
Elaine Hogg
Elaine Nasta
Oscar Romano

**FORT LAUDERDALE COUNCIL
2026 OFFICERS**

President – Abiud Montes
1st Vice President – Barbara Kelleher
2nd Vice President – Aaron Bresnahan
3rd Vice President – Peter Apol
Treasurer – Diana Molina
Secretary – Elaine Nasta

**FORT LAUDERDALE COUNCIL
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Peter Apol
Lynn Atkinson
Jim Black
Pat Du Mont
Elaine Hogg
Alan Stotsky

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Wednesday, February 4, 2026 3:30 PM EDT
Join Zoom Meeting:
Meeting ID: 899 9626 3102
Passcode: GoNavy

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Anchored in Amalfi:
“The Seven Seas Gala”

Saturday, January 24, 2026
Westin Fort Lauderdale Beach Resort
GUEST OF HONOR

Rear Admiral Brendan C. McPherson, USCG
Director of Operations (J3)
U.S. Southern Command

Space is limited. Please R.S.V.P. by January 16, 2026

Contact Lynn Atkinson for information:
954-325-9102 or lynn@druckermail.com

Online payment at: <https://FtlNavyLeague.org/Gala2026>

visit us on the web at www.ftlnavyleague.org

