

# Kingsville Navy League – Quarterly Newsletter

Edition: 2025Q1:5

**FIRST QUARTER 2025**

January-March 2025



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QR CODE  
to visit our  
**WEBSITE**

*Proudly Serving South Texas Sea Service Families Since 1955*

## KINGSVILLE COUNCIL OF THE NAVY LEAGUE



[www.KingsvilleNavyLeague.org](http://www.KingsvilleNavyLeague.org)



@KingsvilleNavyLeague



@KingsvilleNL



### Our Mission, Goals, & Membership

The Kingsville Council of the Navy League (KCNL) is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) civilian organization with over 110 members. Our Council was founded in 1955 with the mission to support our Adopted Units (listed below). The Navy League of the United States, our national parent organization, with over 30,000 members worldwide, was founded in 1902 with the support of former President Theodore Roosevelt, with the mission to support military members, and their families, of our nation's Sea Services: U.S. Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and U.S.-flag Merchant Marine.

The goal of the Kingsville Council is threefold: to improve the quality of life of the members and their families of our adopted units, to support youth programs, and to educate the public about the need for our nation's Sea Services. **Educate. Advocate. Support.**

Our 6 adopted units and their leaders are:

- NAS Kingsville (NASK): CAPT Michael Bishop, USN
- Training Air Wing TWO (TW-2): CAPT Aaron Rybar, USN (COL Jayson Tiger, USMC, assumes command on 02May2025)
- USS Kingsville (LCS 36): CDR Ludwig Mann III, USN (CDR Kavanagh, USN, assumes command on 22May2025)
- Training Squadron 21 (VT-21): CDR M. Hooten, USN
- Training Squadron 22 (VT-22): CDR C. Hanson, USN
- Donna ISD MCJROTC: SgtMaj Jose Romero, USMC, Ret.

If you would like to join us in our mission, please visit the national Navy League website at [www.navyleague.org](http://www.navyleague.org) to start the application process and/or contact one of our 13 Board of Directors or our President, Charlie Ratliff (361-455-5494). For 2025, our Directors are:

Jeanie Alexander	Dianne Leubert (Secretary)
Barbara Denney	Dick Messbarger
Tom Denney	Fred Neusch
Randy Foust	Charlie Ratliff (President)
Kim Hamm (Treasurer)	Brooke Spitzer
Lance Hamm	Buddy Windham (Vice President)
Alan Harwell	

Our Board of Directors and All-Hands Membership meetings/luncheons normally start at 12 noon at the Cherry Tree Tea Room Restaurant in downtown Kingsville, Texas. Tentative 2025 meeting dates are: 09Jan, 06Feb, 03Apr, 05Jun, 07Aug, 02Oct, and 04Dec (subject to change).

### Thank You to Our Donors & Volunteers

A big **THANK YOU** to our donors for supporting our mission and improving the quality of life of our local Sailors, Marines, and JROTC Cadets. Our gracious donors are listed below, alphabetically (major donors in bold):

- Alexander, Jeanie & Sandy (Member Donors)
- Baffin Bay Seafood Restaurant (Member/Yearly Gift Cards)
- Boeing Corp. (Goshawk Ball Sponsor)
- Bray's Smokehouse Restaurant (Gift Cards)
- Cherry Tree Tea Room (Use of Venue, Member Donors)
- Dodds, Scott (Member Donor)
- Domus Development LLC (Eric Jakimier, Member Donor)
- **Ed Rachal Foundation (Major Donor)**
- El Tapatio Mexican Restaurant (Yearly Gift Cards)
- **Frank, Jonathan & Barbara (Major Artistic Donors)**
- **Gilcrease Foundation (Major Annual Donor)**
- **Hahn & Oldham, PC (Members/Major Donors)**
- **Hamm, Lance & Kim (Members, Major Donors)**
- Harrel's Kingsville Pharmacy (Member/Yearly Gift Cards)
- H-E-B Donna, TX (Donor for Special Projects)
- H-E-B Kingsville, TX (Donor for Special Projects)
- King Barbershop (Yearly Gift Cards)
- **King Ranch Family (Major Donors)**
- Kingsville CrossFit (Gift Cards)
- **Las Vegas Bingo, Corpus Christi (Major Annual Donor)**
- Rolls Royce (Corporate Affiliate & Yearly Donor)
- **Spitfire Elite Consulting (Major Sponsor of Goshawk Ball)**
- TAMUK-President's Office (Donor/Sponsor of Tailgates+)
- **Texas Rose Rentals LLC (Rose Damron, Mbr/Major Donor)**
- **The Tailhook Association (Major Donor, Top Hook Gifts)**
- **Ultra Screen Printing & More (Members/Major Donor)**
- **V2X (Major Sponsor of Goshawk Ball)**
- Woman's Club of Kingsville – Athena Dept.
- Yaklin, Dennis and Lynn (Member/Donors)
- Young's Pizza and Bar (Yearly Gift Cards)

A big **THANK YOU** is also extended to our many volunteers. About one-fourth of our membership cadre are volunteers and/or donors that help make our yearly events and programs very successful.

## January 2025

2025, WOW! Happy New Year! The first quarter of 2025 started off with the Kingsville Navy League hosting their Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors combined with an All-Hands Membership meeting at the Cherry Tree Tea Room restaurant on January 9<sup>th</sup> with 8 Board members present along with 6 other members and 1 guest. Five Directors were absent.

At the meeting, the 2024 financial report was accepted by the Board and reports were presented relating to our December Meeting Minutes and 2024 membership. The report informed the members and guests that the Kingsville Navy League's membership now stands at 113 members strong, an increase of 29 members from January 2024, an increase of over 33%. Our newest two members to join the Kingsville Navy League are CAPT Michael Bishop, Commanding Officer, NAS Kingsville, and CAPT Aaron Rybar, Commodore, TW-2. Welcome aboard gentlemen!



Above: CAPT Bishop receiving his "Welcome Aboard" certificate at the 06Feb2025 meeting.

Picture Below: At the meeting, Lance Hamm (President in January) presented Cindy Pelagio a new member "Welcome Aboard" certificate. Cindy, along with her business partner Tracy Beadle, joined in 2024.



January 2025 started the new terms for three of our newly elected Directors from our December 2024 meeting. Pictured below left to right, are Alan Harwell, Brooke Spitzer, and Dick Messbarger. The other eight Directors are listed on the front page of this newsletter. Welcome aboard!



Pictured below, our elected officers of the Kingsville Navy League for 2025 are (L to R): Lance Hamm (President), Buddy Windham (Treasurer), and Charlie Ratliff (Vice President). Not pictured is Dianne Leubert (Secretary).

There was a new election of officers in February when Lance resigned as President to become the new Lone Star Region President, representing all eight Navy League councils in Texas. At the February 6<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Kingsville Navy League, Charlie was elected President, Buddy was elected Vice President, Kim Hamm (not pictured) was elected Treasurer, while Dianne remained as the Council Secretary.



There were two other primary business items at our January Annual Meeting. A discussion was held about forming council committees and defining the volunteer opportunities of our membership. Lastly, a discussion was held about the upcoming 2025 Goshawk Ball to be held in February and to be hosted by the Kingsville Navy League. Lance and Kim Hamm donated \$1000 to the council to go toward the event. Two other \$1000 donations came in from V2X and Spitfire Elite Consulting. One of the owners of Spitfire, Bill Sims, received his Wings of Gold in Kingsville, and graciously became our first major sponsor of the Ball. James "Buster" Crabbe helped us with the V2X donation. The Directors then voted to donate a total of \$4000 toward the 2025 Goshawk Ball. **THANK YOU to SPITFIRE ELITE, V2X, & the Hamm's for your gracious donations to the 2025 Goshawk Ball.**

All donors to the Kingsville Navy League are listed on our quarterly newsletters (QR code on the front page of this newsletter), as well as our website on the page entitled, "**How We Serve/Our Donors.**" Donors that have contributed \$1000 or more for the year are listed in **bold** as MAJOR DONORS and have their business or family logo identified at the bottom of the donors listing on the website. Please, let us know if you see the need for any corrections. **THANK YOU to all the donors! The mission of the Kingsville Navy League cannot be successful without your gracious contributions.**



## February 2025

Our monthly meeting was held on February 6<sup>th</sup> with 9 Board members, 7 other members, and 6 guests present. The highlight of the meeting was to recognize our Sailors of the Quarter, First Quarter 2025.

The Sailors of the Quarter are pictured below holding their Certificates of Achievement, from left to right:

**HN GeneRussel Gallasa**, Blue Jacket of the Quarter,  
**MA2 Eric Davis**, Junior Sailor of the Quarter, and  
**AC1 Paul Seaward**, Sailor of the Quarter.

Helping to present the awards and gift cards are (from left to right, back row): Charlie Ratliff, Petty Officer Barnes, ADC Miciotto, LCDR Palmer, CAPT Bishop, and Lance Hamm.



On our website, the annual "reminder" post was again issued to local high schools and colleges about our **HAHN MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP** and the upcoming deadline to submit applications.



Navy League of the  
United States  
Kingsville Council

HAHN MEMORIAL  
SCHOLARSHIP

Application Deadline  
March 01, 2025

Michael Hahn

The Kingsville Navy League memorialized its annual scholarship by naming it after **LTJG Michael Hahn, U.S. Navy**. LTJG Hahn grew up in Kingsville and sadly passed away in September of 1991 at a very young age. He graduated from H.M. King High School in Kingsville in 1984. He had a very successful college career and graduated from Texas A&M University in College Station in 1988 where he was a proud member of the Corps of Cadets.

Upon graduation, Michael was commissioned an Ensign in the United States Navy. He earned his "Wings of Gold" in 1991 while stationed at NAS Meridian and was designated a Naval Aviator. Loving family and friends could not have been prouder of this young Kingsville man. His parents, Linda and Dick Hahn, are longtime members and supporters of the Kingsville Navy League.

It is with great honor that the Kingsville Navy League is able to memorialize the life of LTJG Michael Hahn and the dedicated service he gave to our nation as he was only in the early stages of building on the legacy and traditions of Naval Aviation and fulfilling his dream as a young boy growing up in Kingsville, Texas, while watching the Navy jets fly overhead.

In February, the Kingsville Navy League continued to recognize our gracious donors. At our February meeting Lance presented Dennis Yaklin with a Donor Appreciation Certificate for his donations in 2024. Lynn Yakin was also a donor in 2024, but unfortunately was not present at the meeting to receive her certificate.

**THANK YOU**, Lynn and Dennis, for your contributions!



Our donors are always welcome to join us at our meetings, but we know schedules are tight during the work week. Therefore, Lance went out to the community to present two more Donor Appreciation Certificates. Pictured below are family members and owners Alejandro Zaragoza (El Tapatio Mexican Restaurant) and Brenda Zaragoza (Young's Pizza and Bar). **THANK YOU** both for providing many gift cards to the Kingsville Navy League over the past several months and/or years. To our members, please, be sure to frequent these outstanding restaurants and be sure to extend our thoughts of gratitude to these most gracious supporters of our local Sailors and Marines.



**THANK YOU** to these major sponsors of the 2025 Goshawk Ball!



## 2025 GOSHAWK BALL 21 February 2025

### **The Kingsville Navy League Hosts the 2025 Goshawk Ball. BIGGER AND BETTER THAN BEFORE!**

CAPT Aaron “Princess” Rybar, Commodore, Training Air Wing TWO, and fellow member of the Kingsville Navy League, outdid himself. Along with his top-notch Goshawk Ball Planning Committee, they delivered an “over-the-top” and most magnificent evening of near 400 guests engaging in unrivaled Navy and Marine Corps aviation camaraderie and having an unparalleled opportunity for everyone to partake in a whole lot of Naval Aviation culture, all while experiencing the ambiance of the historical hangar bay of the unsinkable World War II warship, “The Blue Ghost,” as in the mighty USS Lexington (CV-16). The Lex’s many volunteers and working staff were superb in their service and professionalism.



As the official host of the event, the Kingsville Navy League, and many of its members, including CAPT Rybar, took full advantage of the opportunity to invite many distinguished guests to help with the camaraderie and pageantry of the evening. Pictured below with CAPT Rybar and Camille Rybar (center & right at the head table) is guest speaker RADM Brophy (Chief of Naval Air Training) and his wife Kara Brophy (lower left).



Kingsville Navy League members, and their guests, present at the Goshawk Ball were (in previous picture, lower left column, second table, L to R): Kim Hamm, Chris “Towny” Townsend (National President, Navy League of the United States), Sandra and Dick Messbarger, and Kyle and Ileana Kruger.

In the picture below, L to R, are pictured more Kingsville Navy League members and their guests: Jon and Patricia Peck, Al Garcia & Norma Nelda Alvarez, Bret Bull, & the Spitzers (Erik, Alex & Andrew). KCNL member CAPT Bishop (Commanding Officer, NAS Kingsville) was present at the Ball, but not pictured. Unfortunately, Kingsville Navy League President, Charlie Ratliff, was unable to attend.



The Goshawk Ball is a hybrid event, incorporating many similar aspects of a squadron’s Dining Out, where many toasts are made throughout the evening, often making some sort of off-color jab at an individual to create embarrassment and humor, resulting in many individuals being “fined” for breaking the “rules,” whereas payment is rendered in the form of consumption of a beverage with unknown ingredients, passionately called “GROG.” Two flavors of GROG are provided to the guests: alcoholic and non-alcoholic.

Below in the picture, center, Navy League’s National President, Towny Townsend, indulges in the GROG with Kingsville Navy League members Bret Bull (on the left) and sharply dressed Erik Spitzer. In the background and on stage is Master of Ceremonies, CDR Nicholas Cornwell. He did an excellent job throughout the evening to keep the “mission” faster and funnier. Here, he is no doubt making fun of non-tactical pilots (helo pilots) as the festivities press on, regardless of activity at the grog table.





There were several highlights throughout the evening of the Goshawk Ball. Many are summarized below.

The Kingsville Navy League invited the Sea Cadets of the Texas Division to perform their precision color guard for the rendering of the National Anthem. LTJG Angelique Rendon is the Commanding Officer of the Texas Division. Sea Cadets included Nathaniel Rendon, Aiden Martini, Luke Kalhoefer, Robert Koonce and Frances Alpiche. League Cadets included Alexander Rendon, Jose Garza, and Eli Kalhoefer. With the aid of the Kingsville Navy League, RADM Brophy presented each cadet with a Certificate of Appreciation and an USS Lexington coin as a memento, all prior to their complimentary meal and before the curfew struck for all minors.



Below, Chris "Towny" Townsend, National President, Navy League of the United States, did an outstanding job for the second year in a row of introducing the guests to the vital mission of the Navy League and to help in the presentation of awards throughout the evening.



## HONORARY NAVAL AVIATOR #38

Arguably the most prestigious highlight of the Goshawk Ball came when RADM Brophy (CNATRA) made a surprise announcement, with help from Commodore Rybar, that the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) had designated

**Mr. DICK MESSBARGER**

**HONORARY NAVAL AVIATOR #38**

for contributions rendered to naval aviation of a truly extraordinary nature. Bob Hope and Tom Cruise are also Honorary Naval Aviators, to give you examples of the prestige and caliber of this award. According to our records, Dick Messbarger has been a member of the Kingsville Navy League for 34 years and this year he started another term as a newly elected Director. Congratulations Dick!



Dick & Sandra surrounded by their "Navy League Family."



After the surprise announcement, the first handshake is offered by CAPT Rybar (mostly responsible for the award submission).





## 2025 GOSHAWK BALL (continued)

Other awards were presented prior to squadron student pilots performing hilarious and sometimes “had to be there” skits in a time-honored and traditional acts of aircraft-carrier theater called “**Foc’sle Follies.**” Sorry, no pictures of the Foc’sle Follies are permitted (for in-person theatrics only).

**TW-2 Instructor of the Year for 2024** was awarded to Major Anthony “TOLD” Garner, USMC, (center) from VT-21. Helping to present the award was (L to R): Chris Townsend, CDR Hooten (CO, VT-21), Lance Hamm (President Emeritus, Kingsville Navy League), and Commodore Rybar.



**TW-2 Landing Signal Officer (LSO) of the Year for 2024** was awarded to LCDR Cameron Benner, USN. Unfortunately, he was not present at the Ball to receive his award, but his plaque is displayed below. Congratulations to both Instructors of the Year!



For the 2025 Goshawk Ball, Commodore Rybar, for the first time, introduced a weeklong sporting competition between squadron staff, base staff, instructor pilots, and student pilots. The week involved three afternoons of rigorous competition in the sport of pickleball, dodgeball, and bowling. For the first time, the champions of the Goshawk Ball Olympiad would be presented in all their glory and bragging rights the evening of the Goshawk Ball. The Kingsville Navy League proudly volunteered to sponsor the Championship “Traveling” Trophy, and needless to say, we went “over the top” in its design and presentation. Below, L to R, are Townsend, Hamm, and CAPT Rybar preparing for the announcement of the Champions.



**VT-21 Student Pilots  
Champions of the 2025 Goshawk Ball Olympiad**





## February 2025 (continued)

After all that, the Kingsville Navy League still had a couple of events remaining in February. We continue to support TW-2 by providing hors d'oeuvres during the Patching Ceremonies the night before the Winging Ceremonies. Below is a picture of the food typically provided by the Kingsville Navy League for the Wingees, their families, and friends. Be sure to visit our website to see the calendar of events, including Patching and Winging Ceremonies.



Patching Ceremony on 27Feb2025



### Kingsville Navy League Bowling League!

On the evening of February 28<sup>th</sup>, coinciding with a Winging Party at The Club, the Kingsville Navy League held their first Bowling League social at the NAS Kingsville Stars and Strikes Bowling center next door to The Club. The plan is to hopefully have a few of these bowling socials throughout the year. Base access is required and KCNL members can be escorted on base by other members with a military background or members can apply for a MWR guest card.

Below, L to R: Lance Hamm, Erik & Andrew Spitzer, Buddy & Melissa Windham, Bret Bull, Brooke Spitzer, Jana Bull, Sophia Hamm, and Alex Spitzer. Later in the evening Sabrina Hamm showed up with Kenny and little Charlotte.

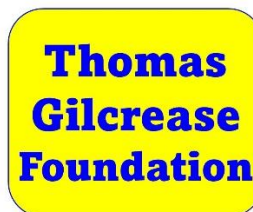


On the Left... The Spitzers: Erik, Andrew, Alex, and Brooke.  
On the Right... Aunt Sophia Hamm and Charlotte Moore.



Sophia swings away as Buddy, Melissa, and Bret enjoy the competition. Melissa was the best bowler by far (BTW, she brought her own shoes and ball).

Here's more of our major donors to the Kingsville Navy League...  
**THANK YOU** for your support!





## March 2025

In 2025, the Kingsville Navy League transitioned to bi-monthly meetings so there was no council meeting in March.

On March 8<sup>th</sup>, Charlie Ratliff, President of the Kingsville Navy League, traveled to Houston to join Lance Hamm (President of the Lone Star Region of the Navy League) for the Annual Meeting of the Lone Star Region. The Directors of the Kingsville Navy League voted to pitch in \$200 toward this meeting to help support the expenses of the meeting as well as help support the Sea Cadets that were invited to provide color guard duties during the playing of the National Anthem.



2025 Annual Meeting of the Lone Star Region, Houston, Texas.

Above, left to right: Charlie Ratliff, CAPT Jim Jones (Area Commander, Sea Cadets), Will Alford (President, Dallas Navy League), Lance Hamm, COL Michael Fossum (Superintendent, Texas A&M Maritime Academy), Karen Maddox (NLUS Vice President, Membership Engagement), Burt Quintanilla (President, Alamo Navy League), and John Shanahan (President, Houston Area Navy League).



Above, left to right: LTJG Dennis Taylor (CO, Houston Area Sea Cadets), COL Michael Fossum, CAPT Jim Jones, Cadet Lillian Edwards, Cadet Luke Bruno, Cadet Tatiana Echevarria, Cadet Aquila Wilson, Lance Hamm, and Cadet Charles Burton.



Above, Charlie Ratliff (fourth from the left) is taking in the day-long meeting of the Lone Star Region of the Navy League. The Kingsville Council is one of eight councils in the Texas Region. Chris "Towny" Townsend (National President of the Navy League) was on the Zoom.

## Our nation's newest Naval Aviators as of 28 March 2025.



Below, LT Vadodkar earns the **Commodore's List Award** & highest grades ever! His plaque was sponsored by the Kingsville Navy League.



Below: A special THANK YOU goes out to all the spouses and other family members for their sacrifice and enduring support to ensure these newest Naval and Marine Corps Aviators achieved their monumental milestone of earning their Wings of Gold.



## Upcoming events in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter of 2025:

1. Our next meetings of the Kingsville Navy League will be 03 April and 05 June.
2. A Winging Ceremony will be held on 04 April 2025.
3. The Kingsville Navy League will present a Theodore Roosevelt Youth Medal to a Weslaco JROTC Cadet who is also an U.S. Navy enlistee on 12 April 2025.
4. CAPT Rybar will retire from the U.S. Navy and have his TW-2 Change of Command on 02 May 2025.
5. The Kingsville Navy League will present two Theodore Roosevelt Youth Medals to Donna ISD MC JROTC Cadets on 13 May 2025. One of the awardees has enlisted in the USMC. The presentation will be at a School Board meeting.
6. The USS Kingsville will hold a Change of Command on 22 May 2025. CDR Kavanagh will relieve CDR Mann as CO.
7. Navy League National Convention, 04-07 June in Jacksonville, Florida.