



# Navy League of the US Yuma, AZ

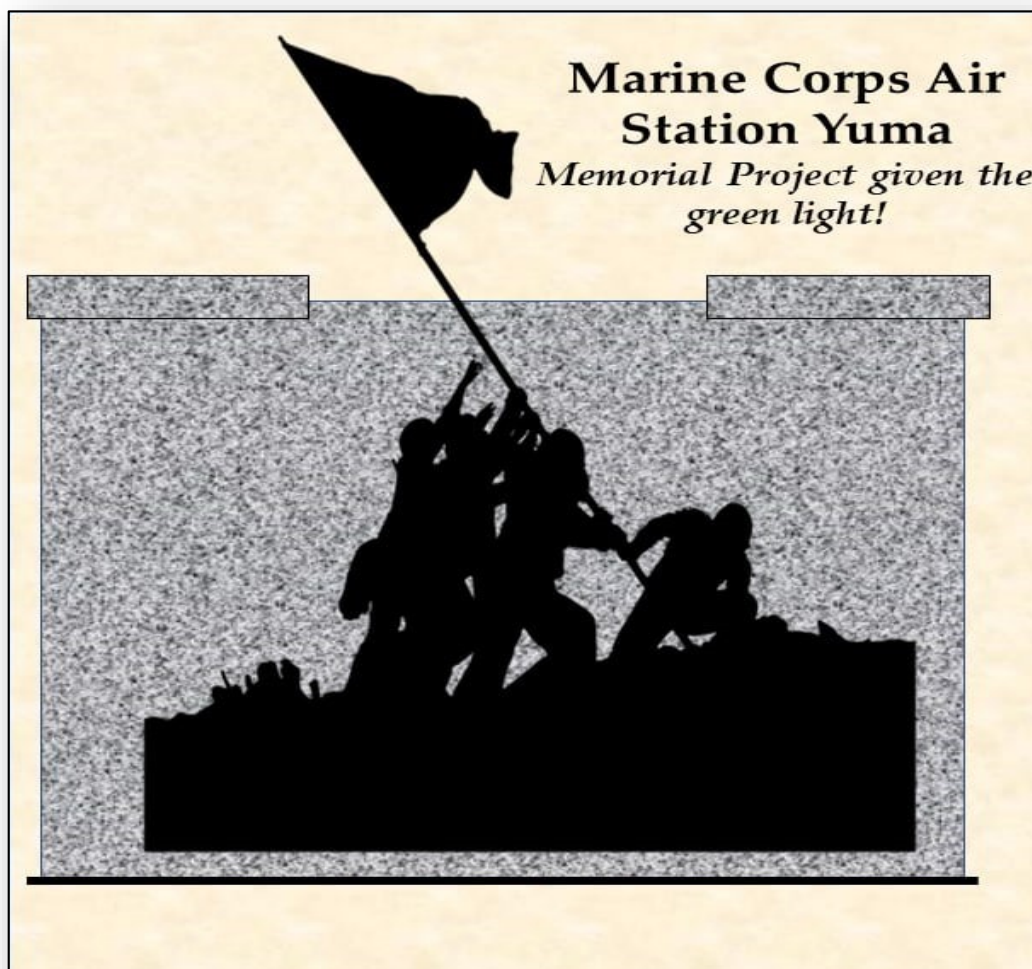


SERVING OUR COMMUNITY'S MARINES, SAILORS, COASTGUARDSMEN,  
US MERCHANT MARINERS & THEIR FAMILIES SINCE 1963

VOLUME 8, ISSUE 1

MARCH, 2021

## The Rope Yarn Gazette



### MEMORIAL TO YUMA MARINES & SAILORS SET FOR MAJOR UPGRADE AND RELOCATION

Established by the Yuma Navy League in 1965 as a tribute to Yuma Arizona's active duty Marines and Sailors, MCAS Yuma's current memorial has begun to show its age. In addition, MCAS' "big blue wall" location was increasingly undesirable due to its blocking the view of the gate from within the air station. The question was what to do - demolish or fix?

Sometimes, taking the more difficult path leads to greater success. With the backing our board of directors, an initial design for a new ceremonial site was presented to then MCAS Yuma's Commanding Officer, Colonel Suggs, in 2019. The concept was to include a new 80' flag pole, larger concrete apron for ceremonies, and a 17 foot tall Iwo Jima silhouette; *now funded for 2021.*

Estimated to be completed this year, MCAS Yuma's existing main gate "blue wall" will be removed and the memorial relocated east of MCAS' HQ.

Cont. PG 5



MAR 2021

### 2021 Council Officers

*President*

Dean 'doc' Hager

*Vice President*

Nancy Ramsey

*Treasurer*

Marie Michael

*Secretary*

Rochelle Holman

*Judge Advocate*

Open

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*Community Liaison Team*

Dean Hager (Chair)

Rochelle Holman

Gina Blackwell

*Scholarship Committee 2021*

Rochelle Holman

Rochelle Thompson

Nancy Ramsey

### Questions / Comments?

#### Letters to the Editor?

Please contact us at:

NLUS Yuma Council

PO Box 393

Yuma, AZ 85366

## U.S. NAVY LEAGUE

### YUMA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE RELINQUISHES CONTROL OF THE "MAC."

*"As all things change, they stay the same"...* Yuma's Military Affairs Committee (known fondly by its members as THE MAC) will be conducting over the next quarter an internal transition; from a Chamber committee to a stand alone independent council. As most Yuma NL members are aware, our council leadership have been active in the MAC for decades - even having council sea service veterans chair the committee 12 of the past 13 years. During this time, the MAC grew from a small committee of a half dozen veterans service organizations to a county-wide consortium of over 35 Federal, State, County service groups and philanthropic agencies.

The Yuma MAC has a wonderful history in providing support for our active duty / veterans community and families in need. While most services are provided independently, there are times when a more team work approach is required. "It's when a need's costs exceed a service organizations capacity or an agencies mission when the MAC family shines", according to former MAC Chair and council member 'doc' Hager. "With a few phone calls, a family in need can obtain housing assistance, a square meal, and assistance with Veterans Administrative system delays. Over the past ten years, the Yuma MAC and its members have evolved into an efficient community-wide resource we can be proud of."

We must not forget it was senior Yuma MAC veterans (and NL council members) that founded Yuma Military Appreciation Day, restored our State's USS Arizona's Battleship replica, worked with our Chamber to create our USMC "single marine program" Transportation Fund, and led efforts for Yuma vets induction into the Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame.

So, as of today, why the change? Well, for one, the MAC's growth has outpaced the Yuma Chamber's human resources. A recent review of their Mission Statement (as well as current COVID-era finances) resulted in a directive by their Board of Supervisors to return the Chamber's focus on their mission of County Business Advocacy. So, while the Chamber of Commerce will be relinquishing control of the MAC, it will be an orderly process, and no one is departing the family. The Chamber remains a valuable community resource and will retain full membership within Yuma's new MAC.

For the next month or so, a transition team representing all sectors of our veterans support community (including of course your own Navy League Council) will sort out a few items like AF Park plaques, local event advertising and web page coordination. As for us, everyday activities remain the same; periodic vets assist phone calls, youth group support, monthly MAC meetings and current business sponsor coordination activities remain unaffected. It's business as usual.

So... Like an old Abbott and Costello bit, we'll ensure council members know "Who's on First" as more information becomes available. ~Ed.

## ***ATTENTION MEMBERS!***

**NEED TO RENEW MEMBERSHIP?** Don't let your membership expire. Checking your date is easy. You can log in to National's web page to check - even RENEW right there! If you are more comfortable with paper, see Bill Bonsky at our General Meeting for the renewal form. Fill it out with a check and we'll mail it and follow up to ensure National gets it correct!

**New JOINS:** Email us via CONTACT US at [yumanavyleague.com](mailto:yumanavyleague.com). Current member Renewal Question?: contact Bonsky or 'doc' Hager - we'll figure it out!



### **2021 DONATION EVENTS**



NAVY & MC RELIEF, MCAS YUMA:	MAR 2021 - <b>COMPLETED!</b>
YUMA COUNCIL YOUTH TRAILER:	MAR 2021 - <b>COMPLETED! / STAGE ONE PAINT</b>
YUMA COUNCIL YOUTH TRAILER:	APR 2021 - STAGE TWO / WRAP
YOUTH PROGRAMS:	APR 2021 -
YUMA NL SCHOLAR AWARDS:	MAY 2021 -
MEMORIAL WALL PROJECT:	JUL 2021 -
SINGLE MARINE PROGRAM:	SEPT 2021 -

### **KEY COUNCIL EVENTS**

<u>15 APR</u>	GENERAL MEETING, THE PATIO at HILLS CC (1800-2000), NL LIVING HISTORY PRESENTATION: USMC ROTOR AVIATION
<u>20 MAY</u>	GENERAL MEETING, THE PATIO at HILLS CC (1800-2000), NL SCHOLAR DINNER
<u>05 JUN</u>	SATURDAY POT LUCK BBQ - (1700-2100), GLORIA'S CASITA



### **ADVOCACY: OUR NAVY LEAGUE OF U.S. NEEDS YOUR 2 CENTS**

**LOBBYING CONGRESS** is so much easier! GO TO: [www.navyleague.org](http://www.navyleague.org)

E-mail letters to congressmen are easier than ever before. Make your voices heard!

Key issues: Submarine Force Funding, Jones Act Strengthening, Coast Guard shortfalls,  
Mare Island Veterans Cemetery Funding

GO TO: Navy League Legislative Action Center > then the Online Advocacy Platform.

Each topic has a Facebook link. Pick your officials and a letter is generated for you.

**Shipmates, this is a big deal. Members that need PC assistance - just call 'doc'**





With glasses charged and all seats full, council members were treated to an informative brief by Frances and Ana of our Yuma air station's Marine Corps Community Services (MCCS).

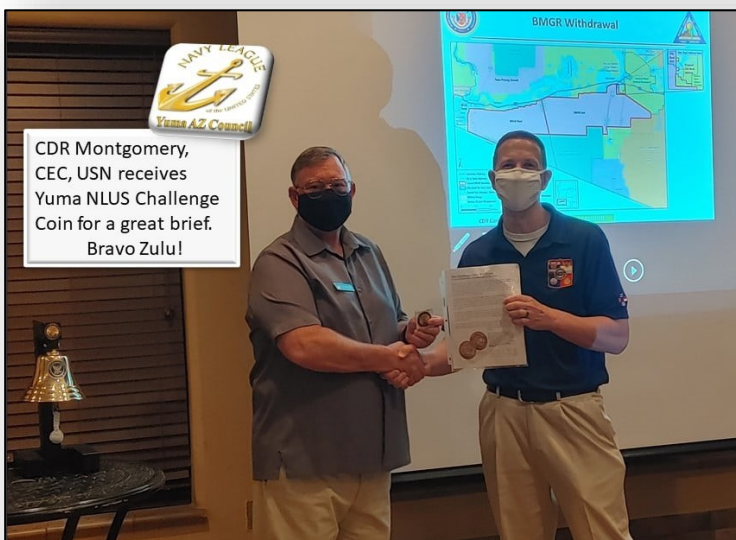
Many Yuma Council members who are veterans recalled when all services and clubs fell under the base Commander, so it was very necessary to understand today's Marine Corps base organization and get acquainted with the fine folks who assist us in supporting the needs of our active duty Marines, Sailors and families. Good brief - *Semper fi!*

JAN: 2021 has certainly presented its share of challenges for our council. COVID masks and distancing requirements aside, the majority of our crew continued our mission. While our January car show was cancelled, we were very fortunate to receive a significant series of grants from Walmart that ensured no cuts would be required. All mission objectives are fully funded.

Our January meeting was well attended and members intrigued as we all learned about what Marine Corps Community Services (MCCS) is - who does what - and how services onboard MCAS Yuma are conducted. Our sponsor community point of contact and MCCS marketing Director were well received. Bravo Zulu for a great presentation.



February kicked off our spring donation season with our two new NL scholar checks sent out to U of A Tucson. Then, over to the station's HQ to present \$1,000 to Commanding Officer Col. Chuck Dudik, USMC for Navy & MC Relief. Great timing as members had just received a wonderful briefing at the February general meeting by MCAS Yuma N&MC Relief's Director Anastasia D'Ambrogio.



Rolling into March, our council had several action items on our plate. Topping the list was corralling our community sponsors and communicating project milestones for support of this year's MCAS Memorial Project (refer Pg 1). Next on our list was delivering our youth trailer to Touch of Class Auto Body for a well deserved body and paint refurbishment. It's looking good!

It's been two years since our members received an update from MCAS Public Works, so it was great to receive a most thorough and professional presentation at our March meeting. A "Big BZ" to US Navy Commander Montgomery, I&L Director for his presentation.

### MCAS Memorial (pg1)



This memorial project could not have been possible without the direct support of our current air station commander, Colonel Dudik USMC and the dedicated staff at Installation & Logistics. Architectural design, engineering, project management and public works oversight ensured all administrative and contractual requirements were met as scheduled. and... a **Big BV** to our station's legal folks for their administrative minefield navigational assistance.

*Civilian - Military Partnerships are wonderful.*

From Day 1, the people of Yuma County were considered partners in this undertaking. With our Navy League coordinating local sponsor efforts, Yuma will once again have an opportunity to say "thank you" to our active duty and those who have served before. Not a single citizen or business, when contacted for support during these COVID economic times, said "No". That says a lot about our town.

To date: The metal Iwo Jima silhouette is scheduled to be fabricated by Arizona Western College's Welding Club with materials provided by our council within the month. Granite Benches to surround the new flag pole have been pledged: Navy/USMC (Yuma Navy League), USCG/USMM (RADM Bob Sloncen USCG ret, Welton), and USA/USAF (American Veterans of Yuma). In addition, three (3) command metal wall insignias are also being confirmed as we speak by local business leaders/veterans organizations.

**It is privilege to provide a ceremonial and remembrance site worthy of our United States Marines Corps Air Station personnel and families. Semper fi!**



### YOUR NAVAL TERM OF THE DAY: KNOT

**Ever wondered why ship's speed is measured in knots and not in miles/hour or meter/sec? Well, read on:**



During earlier days, mariners used to measure how fast their boat was moving by throwing a piece of wood or other floatable object over the vessel's bow and then by counting the amount of time elapsed before the vessel's stern passed that piece of wood or the floatable object. This method was known as a *Dutchman's log method*. By the end of the 16th century, sailors started using a

chip log to measure speed. In this method, knots were tied at uniform intervals (14.4018 meters or 47 feet, 3 inches) in a length of rope and then one end of the rope attached to a pie-slice-shape piece of wood, lined with lead on the bottom. Sailors would throw the wood piece into the sea, behind the ship, and the rope would start unwinding from the reel. The faster the ship was moving forward the faster the rope would unwind. The line of rope was allowed to roll out freely for about 28 seconds, which was tabulated with an hourglass. The number of knots that had gone over the ship's stern was counted and used in calculating the vessel's rate of speed. A knot means one nautical mile per hour. Therefore, a ship travelling at 10 knots would go 10 nautical miles per hour. That is how the term "Knots" came into existence.



## Yuma Sea Eagle Squadron

US Naval Sea Cadets

Recruiting Event  
Saturday, April 10th  
9am to 1pm  
At American Legion Post 19  
2575 S. Virginia Drive



2020-21 has been a cruel time for all our Yuma youth leadership groups. Mandated to not train together but conduct virtual training courses, it's not surprising to watch the significant drop in participation occur. Our Yuma Sea Eagle Squadron also had the double whammy of a large number of High School graduates depart the unit concurrent with a reduced number of Navy League cadets available to "fleet up" and recharge the ranks. Similar, but slightly less severe, were 20 to 30% participation drops in both our Young Marines and Kofa High's MC JROTC programs.

### *Improvise, Adapt, Overcome*

True to the teachings of Yuma's leadership programs, cadets, adult volunteers and senior instructors rallied and did not shy away from rebuilding.

Our Territorial Young Marines found ways to conduct physical training and perform outdoor community services safely. Recharging their numbers are a top priority and we should see this unit back to pre-COVID strength by the summer. Open enrollment is now scheduled.

JROTC is back... and with in-school classes commencing, senior instructor SgtMaj Laarman is confident they'll be back to 120-140 cadets by April. Color Guard, Marksman and Physical Fitness teams are already preparing for competitions. We're certain they will excel.

While our Naval Sea Cadets took the most lumps this past year, signs for a turnaround are beginning to show. It appears we will officially have a new Unit Commanding Officer shortly. Sea Eagle cadet leading chief petty officer Blackwell let us know a major recruitment effort is well underway coinciding with resumption of group training this April - Good News. Assisting in this effort is the shiny upgraded NL youth trailer being prepped for a designer wrap this April (should make a great first impression during public outings).

**HONOR, COURAGE, COMMITMENT**





**JOIN US!**

**Annual enrollment now open**

Saturday, March 27, 2021

9:00 – 12:00

American Legion Post 19  
2575 S. Virginia Dr. Yuma, AZ. 85364  
For more information, please call  
(858)900-4908



### **The Marine Corps is converting a fifth squadron to the F-35B Lightning II strike fighter.**

In a Jan. 29 ceremony at Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Yuma, Arizona, the “Vikings” of Marine All-Weather Fighter Attack Squadron 225 (VMFA(AW)-225) were re-designated Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 225 (VMFA-225) as they engaged in the process of learning to operate and maintain the F-35B version of the Lightning II, according to a release from the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing.

The squadron retired its last F/A-18D Hornet strike fighter a year ago, on Jan. 23, 2020.

VMFA-225 follow VMFAs 121, 211, 122, and 242 as the Corps’ fifth operational F-35B squadron. VMFA-225 moved from MCAS Miramar, California, to MCAS Yuma, Arizona, to join 211 and 122, both of which have flown combat missions in the Middle East. VMFAs 212 and 242 are based at MCAS Iwakuni, Japan.

“It’s an exciting day for [VMFA-225],” said Lt. Col. Alexander Goodno, the commanding officer of VMFA-225. “We will grow over the next 18 to 24 months to a full, combat-ready, capable squadron and be ready to do the nation’s bid in the war.”

“We have aircraft afloat right now from VMFA-122; we’re flying combat missions,” said Col. Benjamin Hutchins, commanding officer of Marine Aircraft Group 13, in the release. “We have VMFA-211 getting ready to deploy on [HMS Queen Elizabeth]. This is a busy business, this is our nation’s business, this is our Corps’ business.”



### **Yuma Aviators to Deploy onboard HMS Queen Elizabeth**

It was announced last meeting that the UK’s new Flagship and Lightning Force of F-35B stealth strike fighters will also be complemented by a detachment of the fifth generation aircraft from the US Marine Corps (VMFA-221, MCAS Yuma), and a US Navy destroyer during her first operational strike group deployment. HMS Queen Elizabeth and her strike group will spend time developing collective war-fighting skills when NATO navies gather for exercise

Strike Warrior off Scotland during the spring, before departing for the Mediterranean.

Last year, UK’s Prime Minister Boris Johnson, confirmed that HMS Queen Elizabeth will be at the center of a Carrier Strike Group deployment to the Mediterranean, the Indian Ocean and East Asia.

She will embark F-35B from 617 Squadron (the “Dambusters”), Royal Navy Merlin helicopters, and be escorted and supported by Royal Navy Type 45 destroyers, Type 23 frigates and support ships of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary.



**NLUS YUMA  
COUNCIL**

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**American liberty is built on a  
strong national sea service.**

*"Speak softly and carry a big stick;  
you will go far"  
US Pres. T. Roosevelt*

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**REMEMBER YOUR HISTORY - 100 DAYS TO LIBERATE KUWAIT**

