NAVY LEAGUE OF THE UNITED STATES
Citizens in Support of the Sea Services

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Denver Council November 20th, 2026 Holiday Dinner Meeting Hosting Air Force LT. COL. Mike Kelly, Commanding Officer, Air Force ROTC, University of Colorado, Boulder and Honoring Top Performers of the USCG Cryptologic Unit Colorado



The Final dinner meeting of the Denver Council in 2026 is scheduled For Friday, November 20th at American Legion Post 161 located at 6230 West 60th Avenue, Arvada, CO 80003. Our guest speaker is LT. COL. Mike Kelly, who will share with us his experience as a U2 Pilot. We will also present awards for the USCG Cryptologic Unit Colorado.

As is our custom at the November meeting, we will hold a toy drive to benefit the Marine Corps Reserve TOYS FOR TOTS Program. Please don't forget to bring a new, unwrapped toy to the meeting for donation to this very worthwhile program that seeks to bring the joy of Christmas to less fortunate children in our communities.

The election of the Denver Council's officers and board members for 2027 is on the agenda for the November meeting. We are still looking for candidates to fill the following positions: Treasurer, Membership, Newsletter Editor, Council Awards, Programs Coordinator and Navy Ball Coordinator. If you have any interest or would like further information, please contact me at fmackin@mackinweb.net.

I look forward to seeing you at the November meeting.
Florence Mackin, President

LT. COL. MICHAEL "SHADER" KELLY, USAF

LT. COL. Michael Kelly is a Colorado Native. He Received his commission in May 2009 through the Air Force ROTC program at the University of Colorado at Boulder.

After attending pilot training at Sheppard AFB, Texas, he was assigned to fly the C-130H at the 36th Airlift Squadron, Yokota AB, Japan. He held various positions



there culminating with Aircrew Support Flight Commander and C-130H Instructor Pilot. He then transitioned to the U-25 at Beale AFB, CA, deploying globally to deliver high altitude reconnaissance to combat commanders and the National Command Authority. While at Beale AFB, he served in various positions including Deputy Program Manager of Advanced Programs and Special Technical Operations, Squadron of Tactics, Acting Director of Operations of the U-2 flying training squadron, the 1st Reconnaissance Squadron and the Wing Chief of Tactics. Prior to his current position, LT. COL. Kelly was first the Director of Operations for the 99th Reconnaissance Squadron, Beale AFB, CA, then assigned Commander of the 99th Reconnaissance Squadron where he was responsible for delivering effective, disciplined and sustained U-2 expertise and deployment-ready airmen in support of the Air Force's Global integrated Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance (ISR) core function. He commanded a squadron of over 150 active duty, reserve, civilian and contract support personnel.

LT.COL. Kelly is currently Commanding Officer of the Air Force ROTC Unit at the University of Colorado at Boulder. He resides in Superior with his wife, Kendra, son, Myles and daughter, Alice.

LT. COL. Kelly is a senior pilot with more than 3,000

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LT. COL. KELLY
flight hours in multiple aircraft. He has flown 264 combat hours and 157 combat support hours in support of Operations ENDURING FREEDOM, INHERENT RESOLVE and FREEDOM'S SENTINEL as well as commanding sensitive reconnaissance missions in support of NORTHCOM, EUCOM, CENTCOM and INDOPACOM.

September Dinner Meeting Hosted Local Educator Chris Stofac MEd and Honored Marine Corps Recruiting Station Denver's and Sea Cadet Lexington Division's Top Performers

Mr. Slofac presented a fascinating account of his 24-hour behind-the-scenes tour aboard aircraft carrier USS Nimitz during aircraft launch and recovery operations as part of the Navy's **Educators at Sea** Program run by the Navy League. Awards are discussed in the following section.

AWARDS/HONORS

During the September Dinner Meeting the Council honored Sergeant Justin Lively, USMC as the Marine Corps Recruiting Station Denver's Top Performing Recruiter and presented the Navy League Theodore Roosevelt Youth Medal to Sea Cadet Lexington Division's Cadet of the Year PO2 Mason Spanos, NSCC. Congratulations to the award recipients.

TOYS FOR TOTS

Please support the Annual **Toys for Tots** Drive sponsored by the United States Marine Corps Reserve Association by bringing a NEW, UNWRAPPED TOY to the November 20th Dinner. **Let's show them how generous we can be!**

National and Local Dues Please remember to keep up with your Navy League national dues (and keep Sea Power magazine coming to you) and our local Council annual dues of $15 per individual or $25 per couple. These local dues became mandatory in January 2025 and are a key element in supporting Council initiatives.

VETERANS DAY

November 11th is Veterans Day, a national holiday and day of remembrance during which we honor all military veterans of the United States Armed Forces who have served our country in war and in peace.

SEA CADET UPDATE
August–September 2026

Lexington Division and Training Ship Colorado (LEX-151) maintained strong momentum into the late-summer and early-autumn training cycle, focusing on field operations, tactical skills, and high-visibility community and naval service support. Cadets demonstrated outstanding teamwork, military bearing, and leadership across two major evolutions: an intensive Field Operations weekend in Longmont and support for the Air Force vs. Navy Football Game in Colorado Springs.



August Field Operations Drill (28–30 August): Longmont Field Ops

The unit conducted a full three-day overnight field training evolution hosted at Condie Farm in Longmont. Cadets camped outdoors for the duration of the drill, immersing themselves in practical fieldcraft and tactical skills. Training covered patrol formations, reconnaissance, search and rescue, radio communications, ambush and counter-ambush techniques, as well as drone operations and shovel/e-tool fieldwork. Cadets underwent thorough gear and backpack inspections at check-in and maintained high standards of field discipline, teamwork, and accountability throughout the overnight alpine/field environment.

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October Drill & Community Support (2–3 October): Air Force vs. Navy Football Game & Tailgate

Cadets and staff traveled to Colorado Springs for a fast-paced 24-hour evolution supporting the annual Air Force vs. Navy football game at Falcon Stadium. The weekend began on Friday evening with check-in, dress white uniform inspections, and physical readiness testing at the Naval Reserve Center before traveling to Colorado Springs.

On Saturday morning, cadets mustered at 0600 in full Dress Whites to assist the U.S. Navy Parents Club with their morning breakfast tailgate south of Falcon Stadium. Cadets represented the unit and the U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps with exceptional professionalism while interacting with parents, naval officers, and game attendees. Following tailgate duties, cadets attended the game at Falcon Stadium and concluded the evolution with field day cleanup at the Navy Parents tent before returning to the NRC.

LEX-151 remains deeply grateful for the ongoing support of the Navy League of Denver, whose partnership directly enables these leadership, field training and community service opportunities for Colorado's cadets.

LTJG Jason Chun-hsing Chen,MBA/MS



USS COLORADO UPDATE *from Don Price*

COLORADO has had a very busy period of time since completing their availability at Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard earlier this year. On September 23, USS Colorado's Commanding Officer, Justin Reeves, held a Zoom call with Association members, updating them on recent activities. Since leaving the shipyard in June, the boat has been mostly at sea conducting local operations, exercises and inspections.

The boat has taken on several Australian sailors as part of the crew. This is in support of the AUKUS program which ultimately aims to equip Australia with nuclear submarines, first by purchasing some of our own Virginia Class boats and ultimately by building their own.

The Commanding Officer stated that he expects his Change of Command to occur in January. His relief recently rode COLORADO as part of the training pipeline. The boat is hoping to schedule the next crew visit to Colorado in April-May, 2027 timeframe if funding remains available and operations permit.

Congratulations to the CO as he was recently promoted from Commander to Captain.

Denver Council Navy League Peak Newsletter is an official publication of the Denver Council, serving the members and community of Colorado. This publication does not necessarily reflect the official views of the National Navy League or Department of Defense. Stories and artwork may be submitted via email to the editor at mahaffey10@aol.com

Proposed Slate of Candidates for November 2026 Council Election

The Board of Directors has developed a slate of proposed candidates for Council Officer and Executive Board Member positions to be voted on during the November meeting. Nominations will be accepted from the floor. These positions and candidates are:

Council Officers:

- President, Ed Duffett
- Secretary, Gray Buckley
- Treasurer, OPEN

Executive Board:

- Membership, OPEN
- Council Contact, Florence Mackin
- Youth Programs, David Fong
- Social Media, OPEN
- Media and Public Relations, Joe Suchman
- Council Chaplain, Gray Buckley
- Legislative Affairs, Chris Schutzenberger
- Council Awards, OPEN
- Newsletter Editor, OPEN
- Navy Ball, OPEN
- Programs, OPEN
- Member-At-Large, Art Cyphers

The Council is seeking volunteers for the OPEN positions. Those interested in any position should email David Fong at dfong@lexdiv.org. Board Members must be active members in good standing with the Denver Council of the Navy League.

To browse all available albums of Navy League photos even going way back. CTRL and click this link:

www.flickr.com/photos/131150115@N07/albums/

ONLINE RESOURCES FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE
(CTRL + Click to follow link)

Navy League National:
https://www.navyleague.org/

Denver Council Navy League:
www.navyleague-denvercouncil.org/

Denver Council Facebook:
https://www.facebook.com/DenverCouncil/

USS Colorado (SSN-788) Submarine Association:
https://usscoloradosubassoc.org/

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

The SHIPS for America Act

A strong U.S. shipbuilding industry is essential to our national security. To strengthen America's shipbuilding capacity, Congress must take action. The SHIPS for America Act is a comprehensive plan to revitalize U.S. shipbuilding and maritime competitiveness. Since its introduction, the legislation has earned broad bipartisan support, with 142 House cosponsors and 28 Senate cosponsors. However, it has not yet been enacted into law.

Earlier this year Representative Trent Kelly (District 1, Mississippi) successfully secured an amendment to include the SHIPS Act in the House version of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), which passed in July. Unfortunately, the Senate version of the NDAA does not include this provision.

As House and Senate negotiators work to finalize the NDAA, now is the time to show strong support for the SHIPS Act.

HOW YOU CAN HELP!
(Continued on the next page)

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Contact your Senators and ask them to cosponsor **S. 1541,** the **SHIPS for America Act**. Adding their names as cosponsors will send a clear message that they support strengthening America's shipbuilding industry and want the SHIPS Act included in the final NDAA. The more Senators who publicly support the SHIPS Act, the stronger the case for keeping these critical shipbuilding provisions in the final defense bill.

The Navy League website (link below) has on the page a document in blue that offers participation in the Navy League Quorum Action Center and Voice to Congress campaigns. Fill it out (you can easily cancel later if you aren't interested) and submit it. And then a letter will magically appear with which you can not only learn everything about the Ships for America Act (if you want to) but includes, by using that already-typed-out letter, that you can send to your senators by clicking on *submit the letters*. This is a very convenient way to do a good deed for our country.
https://navyleague.quorum.us/campaign/senateshis/

Chris Schutzenberger



Cadets mustered at o6oo to assist the Navy Parents Club with their breakfast tailgate before the Air Force/Navy Game.

November Holiday Dinner Meeting
Friday, November 20th, 2026,
5:00 PM

Your reservation may be made online no later than Sunday, November 15th, 5:00 PM on our Navy League RSVP site.
https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/navy-league-dinner-friday-november-20--2026

If you prefer to RSVP by ground mail, please print out this page, complete the form and send it TO ARRIVE NO LATER THAN SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14TH, with a check for $35.00 per plate payable to NLUS Denver Council to:

Mrs. Florence Mackin
2137 Night Sky Lane
Lafayette, CO. 80026
720-291-9771 fmackin@mackinweb.net

Reservation Request For
NLUS Denver Council Holiday Dinner
Friday, November 20th, 2026
5:00 PM Social Hour, 6:00 PM Dinner

Name(s)_____

Guest(s)_____

Number of Dinners @ $35.00_____

American Legion Hall, Post 161
6230 West 60th Avenue
Arvada, Colorado 80003

A REMINDER

THANK OUR VETERANS

FOR THEIR SERVICE