

# Missouri State Society Daughters of the American Revolution

Proudly Honors

Patriot of the Month

April 2024



## Captain Vernon P. Kemper

United States Navy

Sponsored by:

Sainte Genevieve Settlement Chapter, NSDAR

Captain Kemper, a native of Festus, Missouri, joined the US Navy on May 23, 1985. He did all the interviewing and “raised his right hand” without telling his wife. Captain Kemper graduated from the Missouri University of Science and Technology in 1986 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Chemical Engineering. He was commissioned in November 1986 following completion of Naval Officer Candidate School in Newport, Rhode Island.



His sea-going assignments have included duty aboard both attack and ballistic missile submarines in the Atlantic and Pacific Fleet: division officer tours aboard USS GLENARD P LIPSCOMB (SSN 685) and USS FINBACK (SSN 670), duty as the Navigator and Engineer Officer onboard USS JAMES K POLK (SSN 645), and assignment as Executive Officer aboard USS NEBRASKA (SSBN 739) (BLUE). It was while he was assigned to the USS NEBRASKA that he was reporting at the Pentagon when the 9/11 attack took place.

His shore assignments have included duty on the staff of the U.S. JOINT FORCES COMMAND in Norfolk, Virginia, where he served as Maritime Operations Officer, and Navy Personnel Command, where he served as Assistant Director of the Center for Career Development. From April 2005 to June 2006, he was assigned as the Deputy Commander of COMSUBRON SEVENTEEN, where he was responsible for the training and readiness of eleven submarine crews.

He served as Commanding Officer, Naval Submarine Support Center, Bangor from June 2006 to October 2008, providing maintenance, logistics, administrative, legal, medical and religious programs support to over 4,000 Sailors in 22 submarine crews assigned to the PACNORWEST Region. Following his command tour, Captain Kemper served as the Commander Submarine Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet Representative at Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, where he was responsible directly to the Force Commander for the training and readiness of the propulsion plant and propulsion watchstanders of SUBPAC nuclear submarines and submarine tenders undergoing modernization or overhaul.

In his final Command prior to retirement from military service, Captain Vernon P. Kemper served as the Commanding Officer of the NROTC units at the College of the Holy Cross and Yale University (reconstituting the unit at Yale after an absence of 40 years). Before that Captain Kemper served as commanding officer of Officer Training Command, Newport from February 2012 to May 2014, where he was responsible for the training and development of approximately 3100 officers per year in five schools: Officer Candidate School, Officer Development School, Direct Commission Officer Indoctrination Course, Limited Duty Officer/Warrant Officer Indoctrination School, and the Naval Science Institute.

His personal awards include the Legion of Merit (2 awards), Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal (3 Awards), Navy Commendation Medal (4 awards), Navy Achievement Medal (5 awards) and various campaign awards.

When asked about the most interesting thing he did, Captain Kemper stated it was “super classified” and he can’t talk about it. That’s why they call it the “silent service”. As to the most interesting thing he saw, that’s another story. The coolest thing he saw while at sea was being on the water late at night, where you can’t see the shore and all you see are the stars in the sky. “If you don’t believe in God before you see that, you will after.”

The best advice he received during his command training – “They don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.” You have to take care the people that report to you and they will take care of you.

Captain Kemper also holds a Master of Science degree in Financial Management from the Naval Postgraduate School, where he was designated a Conrad Scholar and received the 1993 Department of Defense Award for Excellence in Financial Management.

Captain Kemper currently works as the Director of Training Assessments, Continuing Improvements and Readiness for Meta (parent company of Facebook, Instagram, etc.). He and his wife, Judy, have 2 daughters, Katherine and Lauren.