

**Navy League of the U.S. | Imperial Valley Council
October 2019 Speaker Biography**

COMMANDER WILLIAM A. GAY, USN. (Retired)

Author, *Unseen Body Blows*

Bill Gay is the author of *Unseen Body Blows* – the true story of life aboard one of the first WWII tank landing ships as it operated in seven Pacific campaigns from 1943 through 1945.

The LST landed soldiers and Marines with their equipment throughout the Pacific. Bill will tell us about LST 479 in a gripping “you are there” story of a group of very inexperienced crewmembers who saw service aboard her.

Bill was commissioned as an ensign in the Navy in 1968 upon graduation from the University of Missouri Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps. He served nearly four years as a Surface Warfare Officer, first aboard the USS Portage (PCE 902) in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and then the aircraft carrier USS Ticonderoga (CVS 14) on the West Coast. Bill transitioned to the Selected Reserve after active duty where he spent more than 20 years, most of it as a public affairs officer. He retired in 1994 with the rank of commander.

Following Bill's Navy service, he continued his career in journalism and public relations in the private and public sectors. From 1972 to 1997, Bill was a reporter, editor and finally general manager of the Imperial Valley Press. In 1997, Bill and his wife Sue founded their El Centro-based public relations agency, Reliance Public Relations, Inc.

In 2016, Reliance Public Relations commenced publishing Imperial Valley Alive, a quarterly lifestyle magazine that covers life in Imperial County.

Bill holds an Accreditation in Public Relations, and was inducted into the Public Relations Society of America's College of Fellows in 2014. He has a master of arts from the University of Redlands, Redlands, California and a bachelor of journalism from the University of Missouri, Columbia, Missouri.

The Author will be conducting a book signing before and after the dinner.

