January 2021

SEALIFT

THE U.S. NAVY'S MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND *UNITED* WE SAIL

Military Sealift Command's dry cargo ammunition ship USNS Charles Drew (T-AKE 10) and the fleet replenishment oiler USNS John Erricson (T-AO 194) steam in formation in support of Valiant Shield 2020. Valiant Shield is a U.S. only, biennial field training exercise (FTX) with a focus on integration of joint training in a blue-water environment among U.S. forces. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Codie L. Soule)

Military Sealift Command Ships Support Valiant Shield in Southeast Asia

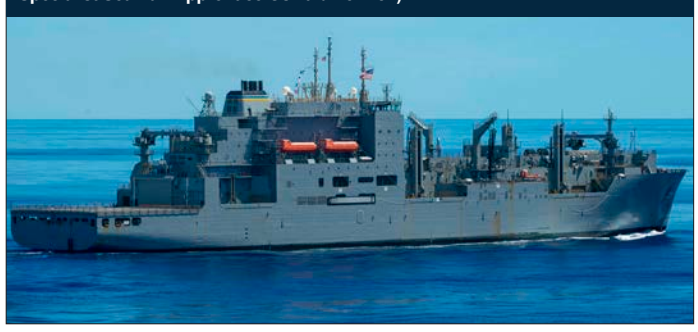
From Commander, Logistics Group Western Pacific

Several Military Sealift Command Far East ships recently took part in exercise Valiant Shield 2020 on Guam and around the Mariana Island Range Complex.

Participating MSCFE ships included the fleet replenishment oilers USNS John Ericsson (T-AO 194), USNS Pecos (T-AO 197); the dry cargo/ammunition ships USNS Alan Shepard (T-AKE 3) and USNS Charles Drew (T-AKE 10), and the expeditionary fast transport USNS Millinocket (T-EPF 3).

This marked the eighth iteration of Valiant Shield, a U.S.-only, biennial field training exercise focused on integrated joint training in a blue-water environment. This training enables real-world proficiency in sustaining joint forces through detecting, locating, tracking, and engaging units at sea, in the air, on land, and in cyberspace, in response to a range of mission areas. Participating forces exercised a wide range of capabilities and demonstrated the inherent flexibility of joint forces, which often hinges on the continuous logistics support of MSCFE crews and ships.

The dry cargo ammunition ship USNS Sacagawea (T-AKE 2) steams in formation in support of Valiant Shield 2020. Valiant Shield is a U.S.-only, biennial field training exercise (FTX) with a focus on integration of joint training in a blue-water environment among U.S. forces. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Apprentice Oswald Felix Jr.)



"MSCFE assets and U.S. naval expeditionary forces routinely train to build a more agile fleet where logistics can be distributed across the Indo-Pacific, allowing for a more responsive, independent, and self-sustaining force," said Capt. Samuel F. de Castro, Commodore of MSC Far East.

The lessons MSC crews learned from exercises like Valiant Shield assist U.S. forces in developing regional and global power projection capabilities that provide a full range of options to succeed in defense of U.S. interests and those of its allies and partners around the world.

"MSCFE crews are prepared to join U.S. forces in order to rapidly respond to crises and contingencies across the spectrum of operations from humanitarian assistance and disaster relief to armed conflict in this area of responsibility," de Castro said.

Valiant Shield is a series of military exercises that promote integration and interoperability among joint forces. Each successive exercise builds on lessons learned from the previous training to validate and enhance complementary capabilities and develop new tactics, techniques, and procedures. This training provides the deterrence and stabilizing effects of a force-in-being, ready at the outset of a crisis or contingency, without the need for force buildup or extensive mission rehearsal.

"MSCFE crews and other Valiant Shield participants had the opportunity to further enhance our capabilities and proficiencies to respond to crises as part of a joint effort," said de Castro.

The fleet replenishment oiler USNS John Ericsson (T-AO 194) steams in formation in support of Valiant Shield 2020. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Codie L. Soule)

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Tippecanoe Crew Reflects on Keen Sword Lessons Learned

By Leslie Hull-Ryde, Military Sealift Command Far East Public Affairs

The Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force Mashū-class replenishment ship Mashū (AOE-425) receives fuel from the Military Sealift Command Henry J. Kaiser-class fleet replenishment oiler USNS Tippecanoe (T-AO 199) during an underway replenishment as part of Keen Sword. (U.S. Navy photo by Christopher Bosch)

After every military evolution, there's usually a "hotwash," also known as an after-action review; basically, a time to determine what worked well, what can be improved, and how lessons learned will impact operations going forward.

That's exactly what the crew of the USNS Tippecanoe (T-AO 199) did following its recent participation in the biennial exercise Keen Sword.

Tippecanoe, Military Sealift Command's Far East's Henry J. Kaiser-class underway replenishment oiler joined ships from Japan, Canada and the United States during Keen Sword. The oiler not only conducted 21 underway replenishments, providing essential fuel and dry goods to help keep the international partners going during the 10-day exercise, but they also took an active part in Keen Sword.

"The exercise enhanced our skills in coordination, fleet tactical communications, steaming in formation, and working closely with our colleagues in the Japanese and Canadian fleets," said Navigator Chris Bosch.

"We have a better appreciation of the hard work that goes into coordinating such a complex event. There are so many moving parts trying to get all of these different ships on the same page of the plan. Despite the different forms of communication, it all worked out," Bosch added.

Keen Sword, conducted since 1986, provides the Japan Self-Defense Force and U.S. military opportunities to train together across a variety of mission areas in realistic scenarios, enhancing readiness, interoperability, and building credible deterrence.

In the Indo-Pacific Theater of operations, interoperability is a must. The global maritime environment is too large and too complex for any one nation to safeguard, according to exercise planners. International ships may be called on at any time to support one another in a real-world situation.

Japan and the United States have a long history of training together. Exercises like Keen Sword demonstrate the United States' and Japan's strong commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific. Including Canada in this bilateral exercise helps participants foster and sustain the cooperative relationships that are critical to ensuring security on the world's oceans.

"Keen Sword proves that the United States can work with the Canadians and Japanese as equals and don't have to solely rely on U.S. assets to get the mission done," Bosch said. "Teamwork always enables us to get the job done faster when working with our joint partners."

Bosch said the insight the Tippecanoe crew gained the last time it participated in Keen Sword, back in 2018, helped inform its approach to this year's exercise. Although Tippecanoe isn't new to Keen Sword, this year did mark the first time they'd participated in the exercise with the Canadians.

SECNAV Names Future Expeditionary Sea Base USS John L. Canley

From SECNAV Public Affairs

Secretary of the Navy Kenneth J. Braithwaite announced Nov. 10 that a future U.S. Navy expeditionary sea base (ESB) class ship will honor Medal of Honor Recipient Marine Corps Sergeant Major (Retired) John L. Canley.

Canley was awarded the nation's highest honor 50 years after his actions serving as Company Gunnery Sergeant, Company A, First Battalion, First Marines, First Marine Division in the Republic of Vietnam from January 31 to February 6, 1968 during the Battle of Hue City.

"To honor the remarkable Vietnam generation on this 245th birthday of the United States Marine Corps, ESB-6 will be named USS John L. Canley to honor a man who has exemplified all that has made our service strong, and our Nation thrive," said Braithwaite. "Then-Gunnery Sergeant Canley led his men through the Battle of Hue City, going above and beyond the call of duty as he carried wounded Marines to safety and drove the enemy from a fortified position. His courageous actions resulted in the award of the Medal of Honor, as well as the enduring gratitude of our Nation."

While serving as Company Gunnery Sergeant, Canley fought off multiple enemy attacks as his company moved along a highway toward Hue City to relieve friendly forces who were surrounded. On several occasions, despite his own wounds, he rushed across fire-swept terrain to carry wounded Marines to safety.

When his commanding officer was severely wounded, he took command and led his company into Hue City. While in command of the company for three days, he led attacks against multiple enemy-fortified positions while exposing himself to enemy fire to carry wounded Marines to safety. On Feb. 6, at a hospital compound, he twice scaled a wall in full view of the enemy to aid wounded Marines and carry them to safety. Canley's heroic actions saved the lives of his teammates.

"Sgt. Maj. Canley embodies the spirit of honor, courage and commitment," said Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen. David H. Berger. "Sgt. Maj. Canley represents a generation of Marines who have sacrificed and fought for our way of life. His actions in Vietnam forever changed the lives of so many Marines around him. His legacy will continue to live on."

Canley was originally awarded the Nation's second highest honor, the Navy Cross, for his action during the Battle of Hue City, but this was upgraded to the Medal of Honor, which was presented October 17, 2018 during a ceremony at the White House.

His personal awards include a Bronze Star with combat "V," Purple Heart, Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal with combat "V," and the Combat Action Ribbon. Additional awards and decorations include four Presidential Unit Citations, seven Marine Corps Good Conduct Medals, two Marine Corps Expeditionary Medals, two National Defense Service Medals, the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, nine Vietnam Service Medals, two Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Crosses, the Korean Defense Service Medal, three Sea Service Deployment Ribbons, the Republic of Vietnam Meritorious Unit Citation, the United Nations Service Medal, the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal with 1960 Device, the Rifle Expert Badge (11th Award), and the Pistol Expert Badge (16th Award).

Canley was born in Caledonia, Arkansas, and enlisted in the United States Marine Corps in Little Rock. He retired from the United States Marine Corps in 1981 and continues to serve his community and Marine Corps family today.

"ESB vessels will deploy Marines of the future carrying the name of Marines of the past," said Braithwaite. "They are leaders who truly embodies our core values of honor, courage and commitment, and the future crew of USS John L. Canley, both Sailors and Marines, will carry on his legacy, character and professionalism throughout the lifespan of this vessel."

The ESB ship class is highly flexible that may be used across a broad range of military operations

Retired U.S. Marine Corps Sgt.Maj John L. Canley, the 300th Marine Medal of Honor recipient (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Morgan Burgess)

supporting multiple operational phases, similar to the Expeditionary Transfer Dock (ESD) class. Acting as a mobile sea base, they are part of the critical access infrastructure that supports the deployment of forces and supplies to provide prepositioned equipment and sustainment with flexible distribution.

USS Lewis B. Puller (ESB 3), the first expeditionary sea base delivered, along with follow ships USS Hershel "Woody" Williams (ESB 4) and USS Miguel Keith (ESB 5), are being optimized to support a variety of maritime-based missions, including Special Operations Forces and Airborne Mine Counter Measures.

Prepare Now for Potential Future Supply Chain, Logistics Crisis

By Bill Mesta, Military Sealift Command Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command (MSC) hosted Rear Adm. John Polowczyk, Supply Chain Stabilization Task Force Lead for the Federal Government's efforts for procurement and distribution of critical medical equipment and supplies in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, as the guest speaker for its 'Waypoints' speaker series, Nov. 18.

The virtual speaking engagement was held to give the MSC team an opportunity to learn about the supply chain and logistics challenges faced by the task force during its response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The information was presented in hopes that MSC would gain situational insight so the community could be better prepared to respond to potential future logistic crisis within its fleet.

On March 13, 2020, President Donald J. Trump declared a national emergency for the first time in the United States' history. From islands across two oceans to the major metropolitan cities of America, the scale of this historic event has required the Federal Government to adapt its response practices and workforce posture in order to both respond to COVID-19 and simultaneously maintain mission readiness for future concerns, according to Polowczyk's July 2, 2020, statement to the U.S. House of Representatives.

"I was the Vice Director for Logistics on the Joint Staff," Polowczyk said. "I received a call Sunday, March 15, from the Director of the Joint Staff who relayed a request from the Director of Health and Human Services (HSS) who was requesting Department of Defense (DOD) assistance with logistics and supply chain planning. It became immediately clear that HSS had little expertise in executing a large scale large scale logistics event."

"By Wednesday, I was charged with standing up a supply chain task force," he added. "Also on Wednesday, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) was placed in charge of the COVID-19 response. So we shifted the response (lead) from HHS to FEMA. By Friday, I found myself in the Vice President of the United States' office explaining how we were going to stand up a supply chain task force, what we were going to require to stand up the task force and we were off and running. By Saturday, I found myself briefing the Nation about our supply chain response."

To address the imbalance between supply and demand for personal protective equipment and other medical supplies, the Supply Chain Stabilization Task Force was assembled on March 20, 2020. The Task Force consisted of a multi-faceted team across the U.S. government and liaisons from the private sector. This whole-of-government response included over a dozen agencies and departments, such as the DOD (including the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA), HHS, (including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)), the Department of Homeland Security, and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), embedded within the Supply Chain Task Force to coordinate response efforts, according to the U.S. House of Representatives report.

The task force used FEMA's National Response Framework (NRF) to address the nation's supply chain response to the pandemic. The NRF is a guide to how the nation responds to all types of disasters and emergencies. It is built on scalable, flexible, and adaptable concepts identified in the National Incident Management System to align key roles and responsibilities, according to FEMA.

"It is important to remember that our National Response Framework is locally executed, state managed, and supported by the Federal Government," Polowczyk added. "As such, all of the requests for support started at the local government level and are sent up through state governments and ultimately to FEMA."

"Keep in mind that our National Response Framework had never been activated for all 50 states and five territories (at the same time); so FEMA was faced with a significant task," according to Polowczyk.

As the supply chain response was being implemented by FEMA it became apparent that many of the states in need of support were not experienced in executing a large scale logistics crisis response plan designed to manage disasters, according to Polowczyk.

> **"Never forget that when faced with a supply chain crisis, it is really hard to surge zero and that time is of the essence."**

In addition to the state and local level inexperience in supply chain crisis response, the task force was faced with challenges posed by the status of the Strategic National Stockpile.

The Strategic National Stockpile's role is to supplement state and local medical supplies and equipment during public health emergencies. The supplies, medicines, and devices for lifesaving care contained in the stockpile can be used as a short-term, stopgap buffer when the immediate supply of these materials may not be available or sufficient, according to HSS.

"By the time our task force at FEMA had been stood up, the Strategic National Stockpile had been expended," according to Polowczyk. "Items such as personal protective equipment (PPE) and additional items needed for infectious disease control were not available."

"Prior to the pandemic, the nation's medical supply chain relied heavily on 'just in time' delivery methods to manage their supplies with very little inventory at hospitals, no inventory at the state level, and small amounts of medical supplies in the federal inventory," he added. "At the same time there was only a matter of weeks' worth of inventory available on the commercial market, as private suppliers had their supply chains designed to support 'just in time' sourcing."

The 'just in time' supply chain concept is a manufacturing workflow methodology aimed at reducing flow times and costs within production systems and the distribution of materials, according to the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply. The prime goal of 'just in time' is for zero inventories across the organization and its supply chain.

"So as the task force began to address the medical supply chain, we were faced with a demand for PPE and medical supplies at levels 300 to 400 times greater than pre-COVID-19," said Polowczyk. "For example, we were using about 1.5 billion Nitrile gloves in a week in the United States. So the task force was facing a very high hurdle as it moved to address the nation's medical supply needs for the pandemic response."

Building partnerships between medical experts, associations, government organizations and private industry were critical for the task force to address the nation's medical supply needs in the face of the pandemic.

Crisis continued on page 8

MSC Blast from the Past: Kilauea Class Ammunition Ships

By Shevonne Cleveland, MSC Public Affairs

The Kilauea class ammunition ships (T-AE) were a class of eight United States Navy cargo vessels designed for underway replenishment of naval warships. USNS Kilauea (T-AE 26), USNS Butte (T-AE 27), USNS Santa Barbara (T-AE 28), USNS Mount Hood (T-AE 29), USNS Flint (T-AE 32), USNS Shasta (T-AE 33), USNS Mount Baker (T-AE 34) and USNS Kiska (T-AE 35).

The ships were constructed 1968–1972 and were initially commissioned naval ships, carrying a crew of U.S. Navy personnel. Between 1980 and 1996 the ships were decommissioned, transferred to Military Sealift Command and manned by civil service mariners. The lead ship of the class, Kilauea, was commissioned on Aug. 10. 1968, and the last, USNS Kiska was commissioned Dec. 16, 1972. The Kilauea class was eventually replaced by the Lewis and Clark-class dry cargo ammunition ships.

(Pictured: USNS Shasta (T-AE 33), left, USNS Flint (T-AE 32), center, and USNS Kiska (T-AE 35) steam together in the Sea of Japan on Nov. 11, 2005, following a cross-deck evolution that moved approximately 1,500 pallets of ordnance between the ships.)

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We Are MSC: Assistant Yeoman Storekeeper Ulysses T. Toling

By Bill Mesta, Military Sealift Command Public Affairs

Assistant Yeoman Storekeeper Ulysses T. Toling, a Civil Service Mariner assigned to the dry cargo ammunition ship USNS Matthew Perry (T-AKE 9) poses for a photo (U.S. Navy courtesy photo)

I recently had the honor of conducting a virtual interview with Assistant Yeoman Storekeeper Ulysses T. Toling, a Civil Service Mariner currently sailing aboard Military Sealift Command's dry cargo ammunition ship USNS Matthew Perry (T-AKE 9). Here are the highlights from our conversation.

Would you please describe the roles and responsibilities of your position aboard your ship?

Toling- As the Assistant Yeoman Storekeeper for the Supply Department, my main duties and responsibilities include supplies procurement, receipt, storage, quality assurance. I also manage expenditure procedures for all types of materials which include proper material identification, handling, inventory management, warehousing, packaging and transportation. Our procurement of shipboard requirements is managed using both government and commercial sources. I also assist in handling of hazardous materials. When required, I assist in the ship's monthly Financial Improvement and Audit Readiness (FIAR) inventories, as well as the proper management of supply system automated programs. Additionally, I also perform other duties as assigned by the Supply Officer.

How long have you been a mariner and why did you choose a life at sea as a mariner?

Toling- I have been sailing since 1984. I was 23 years old at that time, and it was my greatest desire to travel around the world. My mother was apprehensive about me becoming a mariner and enrolling in the maritime academy. Her concerns were for sentimental reasons as she did not want me to be far away from home. However, I pursued my dream and my degree in economics and banking experience landed me a Purser's position with several commercial ships. I simply followed my heart's desire.

I understand you left the maritime community for a period of time and then returned. Why did you take time away and what brought you back?

Toling- From 1984 to 2005, I mainly worked on commercial vessels. After 2005, I decided to stay home with my family. It was time to help my wife with the struggles of the daily routine tending to my youngest son, who has special needs. Also, my eldest son was in the U.S. Army. I joined MSC in 2018 and once again began enjoying the life at sea.

Which MSC ships have you served aboard as a CIVMAR and which commercial or non-MSC ships have you sailed on?

Toling- I have served aboard the dry cargo ammunition ship USNS Medgar Evers (T-AKE 13), the submarine tender USS Frank Cable (AS 40) and presently am with USNS Matthew Perry (T-AKE 9). On the commercial side, I sailed aboard MV Ocean Pearl, MV Crown Dynasty, MV Islander, MV Sun Princess, SPV Star Clipper, MV Enchanted Sun, HSV Alakai. Most of the commercial ships I have worked on were cruise ships which traveled all over the world.

What advice do you have for other CIVMARS and prospective mariners?

Toling- If you love the sea and have the passion to travel all four corners of the world, then working as CIVMAR aboard MSC's fleet is the best place for you. You will have various opportunities for career advancement, saving money for the future, meeting people from all walks of life and most of all, you become a part of a strong organization as part of the Federal government. Follow what your heart's desires and love your work.

Is there anything else you would like to add about your journey as a mariner?

Toling- Life is not always easy but, I find myself happy and contented as mariner; living life on the high seas.

Fleet Thankful for Service of Civil Service Mariners

By Leslie Hull-Ryde, Military Sealift Command Far East

While Charlie Brown served his friends toast, popcorn, jelly beans, and pretzels for Thanksgiving, that menu might not fly aboard the U.S. Navy ships deployed in the Indo-Pacific Region for the annual holiday.

If culinary specialists tried serving those Peanuts staples, crews might roar, just as Peppermint Patty did in the 1973 classic cartoon, A Charlie Brown Thanksgiving by Charles M. Schulz.

"What kind of Thanksgiving dinner is this? Where's the turkey, Chuck? Don't you know anything about Thanksgiving dinners? Where's the mashed potatoes? Where's the cranberry sauce? Where's the pumpkin pie?"

That's just one reason Military Sealift Command ships have been crisscrossing the region, delivering the more traditional fare to U.S. Navy ships which prepared hundreds of turkeys for thousands of Sailors who spent the holiday away from family and friends.

"This is a special time of year for many of our afloat shipmates," said Lt. Cmdr. Tyheem Sweat combat logistics force officer with Military Sealift Command Far East.

"We have been filling holiday orders for some time to make sure crews enjoy a traditional holiday feast, just like they would have at home."

Turkeys and potatoes for mashing aren't the only items MSCFE delivers to the fleet. Whatever U.S. Navy ships need on any given day to accomplish their mission is delivered anywhere in the Indo-Pacific Region; that includes food, fuel, spare parts, and ordnance, among other essentials.

Assuring global maritime logistical services is the heart of the MSC mission. As part of the Navy's supply chain, Military Sealift Command exists to provide unfailing support to warfighters during peacetime and war and the holidays.

The fleet replenishment oiler USNS Tippecanoe (T-AO 199) conducts a replenishment at sea with USS Curtis Wilbur (DDG 54), an Arleigh Burke-class guided missile destroyer. (U.S. Navy photo by Christopher Bosch)

Military leaders at all levels believe logistics is a strategic necessity; one vital to mission accomplishment.

For the past several months, COVID-19 has complicated logistics and thrown some curve balls at MSCFE. Despite the challenges the pandemic has posed, Civil Service Mariners (CIVMARS) remain unwaveringly committed to their important mission of keeping the fleet afloat, even though they, too, are underway and sacrificing precious time away from family and friends.

Commanders and crews alike say they are thankful for MSCFE and the critical contributions its crews make - not just on morale during special occasions but on mission accomplishment, every day.

"You can always count on MSC to deliver," said Rear Adm. Joey Tynch, commander of Logistics Group Western Pacific and Task Force 73.

"It doesn't matter if it's a holiday or a regular weekday, the CIVMARS of our combat logistics force are on watch and doing great things."

Now that the Thanksgiving dishes are done, MSCFE will help Santa deliver hundreds of packages to service members in the Indo-Pacific Region. Even Santa appreciates the importance of military logistics, whether it's the essentials for mission accomplishments or the special surprises that help boost morale while on deployment.

MSC Celebrates National Native American Heritage Month

By Shevonne Cleveland, Military Sealift Command Public Affairs

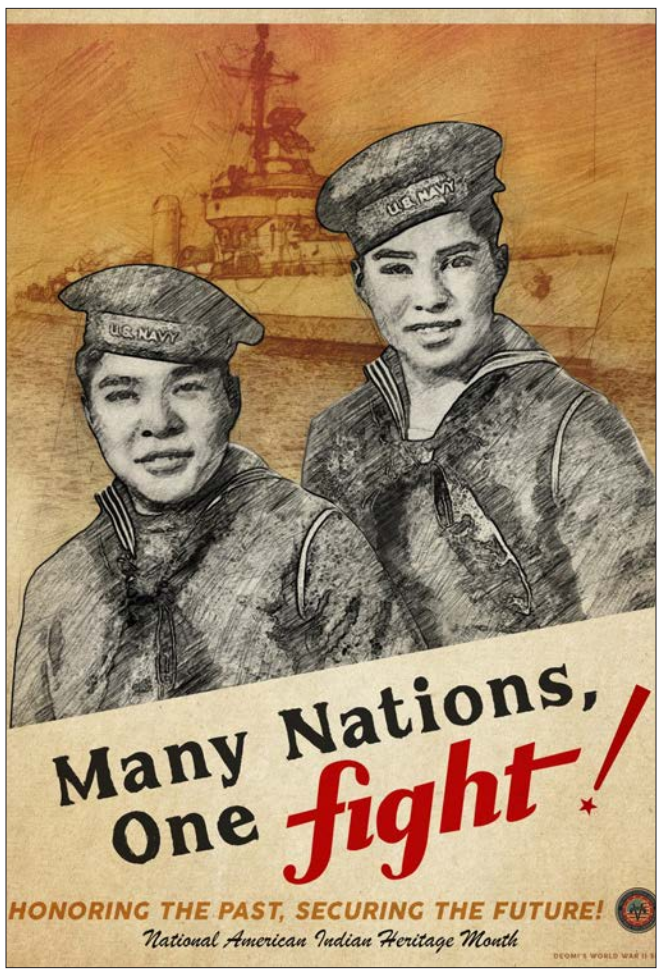
Military Sealift Command (MSC) military and civilian employees gathered for a virtual celebration of National Native American Heritage Month, Nov. 20. This year's theme was "Honoring the Past, Securing the Future."

President George H.W. Bush declared the month of November as National American Indian Heritage Month on Aug. 3, 1990, thereafter, commonly referred to as Native American Heritage Month. The bill read in part that "the President has authorized and requested to call upon federal, state and local governments, groups and organizations and the people of the United States to observe such month with appropriate programs, ceremonies and activities."

Each year, the Navy honors the contributions of Native Americans to the military and the nation, but with restrictions in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many commands opted for virtual presentations instead—including MSC.

"It's very important for our workforce to learn about the cultural roots, especially those in the local area, to help us develop not only as employees but members of the community," said Mary DeMayne, MSC Legal Counselor.

Native Americans have contributed significantly to the armed forces fighting in every major war since 1776. During the Civil War, 20,000 Native Americans served with Union forces both at sea and on the land and 15,000 during World War I. In World War II, 44,000 fought with distinction, including 1,910 in the Navy and 874 in the Marines. Rear Adm. Joseph J. "Jocko", an Oklahoman from the Cherokee nation, was the first Native American to graduate from the Naval Academy and commanded aircraft carriers during WWII. Another Cherokee native of Oklahoma, Cmdr. Ernest E. Evans, was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions during the Battle off Samar during WWII.



The Navy announced in 2019 a new class of MSC towing and salvage vessels to be named Navajo, in honor of major contributions the Navajo people have made to the armed forces.

"The Navajo people have fought and served our armed forces with honor and valor in nearly every major conflict since the birth of our nation, so it is fitting and right to name a new class of ship in their honor," said former Secretary of the Navy Richard V. Spencer.

Additional MSC ships bearing Native American names are; USNS Kanawha (T-AO 196), USNS Patuxent (T-AO 201), USNS Yukon (T-AO 202) USNS Rappahannock (T-AO 204), USNS Tippecanoe (T-AO 199), USNS Apache (T-ATF 12), USNS Catawba (T-ATF 168), USNS Sioux (T-ATF 171), USNS Red Cloud (T-AKR 313), USNS Sacagawea (T-AKE 2), and USNS Choctaw County (T-EPF 2).

Happy New Year!

From Leighanne Gerstbrein, Military Sealift Command Health Coordinator

Reset, it is a new day and a new year! Just as we exercise our bodies, it is equally as important we exercise our minds. Healthy thinking means observing the entire situation; the good, the bad, the neutral, and then arriving at a balanced conclusion.

Your thoughts have a significant impact on your mental health because what you tell yourself about a situation influences how you feel and what you do. Choosing a healthier way of thinking begins with knowing how your thoughts, both helpful and unhelpful, effect problems or feelings that trouble you. Every thought releases some type of chemical. As many psychologists like to say, "Neurons that fire together, wire together." This means that new thinking styles become more natural the more we practice them. Learning to become aware of your negative thoughts can lessen feelings of anxiety, depression, stress, interpersonal conflict, and dissatisfaction with life.

Practice becoming the observer of your life, as if you are watching your life on a movie screen. This helps you detach from the circumstances of your life that are out of your control. Observing and becoming aware of your thoughts and actions, through writing out the answers to the prompts below, is a great way to start:

1. Situation: What actually happened? Stick to facts only.
2. Thoughts: What are you telling yourself?
3. Emotions: How do you feel?
4. How are you reacting? What are you doing to cope?
5. Reasoning: Have I had any experience that shows this thought is not completely true all the time?

Now, having written out the information above, what do you conclude? Have you successfully challenged any thinking traps? Is there a more balanced way of looking at a particular situation? What are the opportunities for personal growth?

MSC has available resources for you. For more information on this or the Health & Wellness Program at MSC, contact your Health Promotion Coordinator:

CSU-East:
Email: Leighanne.gerstbrein.ctr@navy.mil

USNS Yuma Completes First-Ever Refueling by EPF in Gaeta, Italy

By Travis Weger, Military Sealift Command, Europe and Africa

In a partnership between U.S. and Italian navies, Military Sealift Command Spearhead-class expeditionary fast transport USNS Yuma (T-EPF 8) completed the first-ever refueling by an EPF at Naval Support Activity (NSA) Gaeta, Italy, Nov. 6.

NSA Gaeta, home of Blue Ridge-class command and control ship USS Mount Whitney (LCC 20), had been looking to expand the capabilities of the base and the team saw the opportunity to refuel Yuma while they were in port for a routine port visit.

"We would like to make Gaeta the greatest one-stop-shop for EPFs in this theater," said Master Logistics Support Representative Sebastian Guercia, Naval Supply Systems Command Fleet Logistics Center Gaeta. "It is safe and cost-effective. This is a tremendous opportunity for the EPFs."

It took several meetings and high-level coordination between both U.S. and Italian navies for the refueling to happen. Since this was the first time this had ever been completed with an EPF, safety was the top priority and all factors had to be taken into play.

"Today's mission was successful thanks to the teamwork displayed by both the Marina Militare Italiana and the United States Navy," said Comandante di Corvetta Francesco Brengola, Installation Base Commander. "Our goal now is to increase our capabilities here, not only for this class of vessel and the USS Mount Whitney, but other U.S. and NATO ships as well."

EPFs are aluminum-hulled ships and require special consideration and equipment for mooring to the pier. The refueling pier, having different configuration than typical piers, needed to be tested before the ship could berth alongside.

Guercia asked the Master of USNS Trenton (T-EPF 5), the last ship to stop in Gaeta, to slowly sail by the pier as an initial test to see if an EPF would fit. As the ship exited the harbor, Guercia confirmed it would based on an approximate measurement and began making arrangements with the Master of Yuma to refuel at the pier during the ship's next visit.

Discovering that mooring at the pier was a possibility, the team in Gaeta began working with the Italian Navy for the requirements for Yuma to refuel.

"I talked to Capt. Cook from USNS Yuma, and he was more than happy to try it out," said Guercia. "Long story short, the ship is here and berthed perfectly."

Local Sailors from the Italian Navy were on station to receive lines and tie up the ship. Once Yuma moored to the pier, MSC civil service mariners began working with the Italian team to deliver the fuel.

Crisis from page 3

"One of our take-aways was that there is an association for everything," Polowczyk said. "We worked very closely with the American Hospital Association to understand our hospitals' needs. We worked with nurses associations to determine the best way to support their needs. The task force also worked with the American Medical Association and the American Dental Society to determine their requirements."

"We worked very closely with the American Association of Manufactures who were instrumental in our understanding of who could produce what and how we could expand the U.S. industrial base to meet our supply chain needs," he added.

To execute a strategy maximizing the availability of critical protective and lifesaving resources, the task force applied a four-pronged approach of Preservation, Acceleration, Expansion and Allocation to rapidly increase supply and expand domestic production of critical resources to increase long-term supply requirements, according to the U.S. House of Representatives report.

• **The Preservation line of effort** focused on providing Federal guidance to responders and the non-medical sector, such as public service (police, fire, EMT), energy distribution and the food industry on how to preserve supplies when possible, or reduce impact on the medical supply chain.

• **The Acceleration line of effort** provided direct results to help meet the demand for PPE through the industry to allow responders to get supplies they need as fast as possible.

• **The Expansion line of effort** was charged with generating capacity with both traditional and non-traditional manufacturers, such as adding machinery or by re-tooling assembly lines to produce new products.

• **The Allocation line of effort** was the data-informed approach that facilitated the distribution of critically needed personal protective equipment to "hot spots" for immediate resupply.

"The four lines of effort were implemented to buy time to do the one thing that was going to save us; which was expand the U.S. industrial base (to meet the medical community's needs in addressing the pandemic)," said Polowczyk. "As a result of the task force's efforts, the nation's medical inventories for COVID-19 response related supplies have stabilized."

"What is different today than it was in March is that the states now have stock piles of COVID-19 response medical supplies," according to Polowczyk. "One hundred percent of the states now have a stockpile of supplies designed to last 60 days or more. Also, many of the large hospital systems now how enough supplies to last five or six months."

"As of now, we have approximately 153,000 ventilators in the Strategic National Stockpile," he added. "The Strategic National Stockpile contained approximately 18 million N-95 respirators back in March. We are on track to have approximately 300 million N-95 respirators in the stockpile by December."

Polowczyk indicated that the lessons learned by the Supply Chain Task Force could be beneficial for Military Sealift Command's future planning efforts.

"If you consider the current Great Power Competition and everything that MSC would have to undertake in a war time environment, some items this community should consider is how will you surge the critical supplies and equipment required to meet your mission? What does the supply chain for your critical supplies and equipment look like? How well is MSC set up to define and fund surge requirements and how well have MSC's needs been articulated to industry? Also how are these surge requirements going to be resourced? What will it take for MSC to be able to surge in a time of crisis?"

"Never forget that when faced with a supply chain crisis, it is really hard to surge zero and that time is of the essence," according to Polowczyk.

One of MSC's primary functions is to execute contracts with small business and industry partners to ensure its fleet of approximately 125 naval auxiliary ships are supplied and equipped to meet the nation's requirements.

"Learning organizations strive to learn, and I think we at MSC have exhibited this continued learning throughout the history of our community and most certainly in recent times as we have learned how to continue our operations throughout the COVID-19 pandemic," said Rear Adm. Michael Wettlaufer, Commander, Military Sealift Command.

"In order for MSC to be able to manage a supply chain crisis, you have to be able to surge contracts; and surging contracts is MSC's primary weapon system," added Wettlaufer. "We can surge contracts like nobody's business."

As a standard practice, MSC is always in search of new commercial partners to ensure its fleet is capable of meeting all of its 'no fail' missions.

We need to look at establishing relationships now with vendors who would provide the resources needed for us to support a rapid surge in a time of conflict or crisis added Steve Cade, Executive Director, Military Sealift Command.

MSC's workforce of approximately 7,600 people includes Civil Service Mariners (CIVMAR), active duty and reserve service members federal civil service employees and contractors. An additional 1,400 commercial mariners support MSC's prepositioning, sealift and special missions.

MSC's mission is to support the joint warfighter across the full spectrum of military operations including support for the current global environment, which has been described as the 'Great Power Competition,' and to respond to crisis and conflict if required. MSC provides agile logistics, strategic sealift, and specialized mission support anywhere in the world, twenty-four hours-a-day, 365 days a year.

MSC's 'Waypoints' is a quarterly speaker series which features subject matter experts including industry leaders, military leaders, academics and historians. The speaking engagements are designed to inform the MSC team about events outside of the organization which its members could benifit from.

Fallen MSC Teammate

The Lord is my Pilot;
I shall not drift.
He leadeth me across the dark waters
and steereth me in the deep channels.
He keepeth my Log
and guideth me by the star of holiness
for His Name's sake.
Yea, though I sail amid
the thunders and tempests of life,
I shall dread no danger,
For Thou art with me;
Thy love and Thy care, they shelter me.
Thou preparest a harbor before me
in the homeland of eternity;
Thou anointest the waves with oil,
and my ship rideth calmly,
Surely sunlight and starlight
shall favor me all the days of my voyaging,
and I will rest in the port of my Lord forever.

Captain J. Rogers
Source: The Mast, September 1948

3rd Officer
Andrew William Dahll
MSC Service:
2013-2020

SEALIFT

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Editor, Sealift, Military Sealift Command
471 East C Street
Norfolk, VA 23511-2419
Commercial: 757-443-2839
DSN: 646-2890
EMAIL: lewis.w.mesta@navy.mil

Commander.....Rear Adm. Mike Wettlaufer, USN
Director, Public Affairs.....Tom Van Leunen
Deputy Director, Public Affairs.....Jillian Morris
Editor..... Bill Mesta, Norfolk, VA
Visual Information.....Brian Suriani, Norfolk, VA
Visual Information.....Jennifer Hunt, Norfolk, VA
Writer.....David Griesmer, Norfolk, VA
Writer..... Wayne Perry, Norfolk, VA
Writer..... Shevonne Cleveland, Norfolk, VA
Writer.....Cathryn Lindsay, Norfolk, VA
Writer..... LaShawn Sykes, Norfolk, VA
Writer.....Sarah Burford, San Diego, CA
Writer.....Travis Weger, Naples, Italy
Writer.....Leslie Hull-Ryde, Singapore

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