Military Sealift Command (MSC) personnel gathered at Naval Station Norfolk, April 17, to walk a lap around MSC headquarters in solidarity with survivors of sexual assault at the annual Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month ‘Walk a Lap in Their Shoes’ event.

Prior to the walk, the event featured speeches from Virginia Woodard, Chief Executive Officer of Fear 2 Freedom, and keynote speaker Vinson Miller.

“As long as there have been people who care about making the world a better place, there have been individuals advocating for sexual assault prevention,” said Woodard. “History has shown us that no matter what, those who want to end sexual assault and abuse will always find ways to advocate for awareness and prevention.”

Miller, a retired naval officer and sexual assault survivor, shared his personal story with the crowd and highlighted the importance of having victim advocates he could trust during his experience in making an unrestricted report.

“It’s really important to be comfortable with one’s victim advocate, given how deeply the sense of trust has already been violated by a perpetrator,” he said. “Recognize that military sexual trauma can create anxiety, depression and even suicidal ideation. Whatever course is chosen, my encouragement is to not go alone. You have [the MSC SAPR] team over here to support you, to walk with you, as we walk together today.”

“I’m here to say there is life beyond the terrible event. It starts with a conversation with those who have experienced sexual assault and how we cannot give shelter to perpetrators,” Miller added. “Today is about restoring dignity to any who have suffered.”

As the final speaker for the event, MSC Commander Rear Adm. Michael Wettlaufer reminded the audience the onus of the DOD community in spreading awareness about sexual assault.

“All of this today is about prevention and having a way to talk about sexual assault. If we don’t do this, we don’t provide a way for a potential victim to find where that advocacy can come from,” said Wettlaufer.

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MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND ATLANTIC CHANGES HANDS

By LaShawn Sykes, Military Sealift Command Atlantic Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command’s leadership in the Atlantic changed hands, when Navy Capt. James A. Murdock relieved Navy Capt. Daniel E. Broadhurst as commander of Norfolk-based Military Sealift Command Atlantic (MSC Atlantic) during a change of command ceremony held aboard Navy hospital ship USNS Comfort (T-AH 20) at Naval Station Norfolk, April 13.

The change of command ceremony is a time-honored tradition that formally restates to the officers, enlisted Sailors, and civilians of the command the continuity of the authority of command.

Rear Adm. Michael A. Wettlaufer, Commander, Military Sealift Command, was the keynote speaker who spoke about the accomplishments of both captains and the significance of being in command. “Command is the single most important element in our naval organization and the ultimate vote of confidence. Our Navy’s success is totally dependent upon the quality of those who have been entrusted with the absolute responsibility, authority, and accountability inherent in command.”

“To say Dan has been busy as Commander, Military Sealift Command Atlantic would be a substantial understatement,” Wettlaufer said. “He and his MSC Atlantic team make direct contributions to our Nation’s defense by providing ready logistics and special mission ships and crews to ensure we train and sustain carrier and expeditionary strike groups on deployment to Europe and the Middle East.

His work allows our Navy to play the game; to go forward with capabilities to uphold the rules-based international order that has underpinned global stability and prosperity since World War II. His work allows our Navy to fly and sail where international law allows, to defend our national interests forward, to reassure allies and partners in this era of strategic competition, and, if required, to win in conflict.”

Broadhurst was presented with the Legion of Merit for his outstanding efforts in directing extensive cargo operations that included 9.8 million square feet in strategic sealift and prepositioning ship cargo, 425 million pounds in ordnance, and 776 million gallons in fuel transfers across multiple port facilities, while, at the same time, supporting 15 major fleet exercises and deployments.

Broadhurst thanked his family for their continued support, his team, those serving at sea and ashore, for their continued sacrifice, and Rear Adm. Wettlaufer for his steady leadership.

The larger scope of work on ship reflects the United States Navy’s intention to work towards routinely accomplishing a broader scope of vessel repairs in Indian shipyards.

Perry’s visit demonstrates the commitment of the U.S. Navy and Department of Defense to utilize repair facilities in India, after U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin and Secretary of State Antony Blinken expressed intent at the U.S.-India 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue in Washington, D.C., in April of 2022.

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The procurement arm of Military Sealift Command (MSC) is vital to maintaining the fleet. It begins with soliciting the right contracts and contractors to help ensure MSC ships are mission ready. It ends with the contracting officer representatives (CORs) who oversee the execution of those contracts.

CORs assist contracting officers (COs) and program managers (PMs) in developing requirements, administering contracts and ensuring contractors, working for MSC and the various programs, meet their commitments, including the timeliness and delivery of quality goods and services. They are the subject matter experts who know what the work items are supposed to look like and how they should function.

“Their role is the surveying and monitoring of contract efforts, rather its boots on the grounds or communicating through various mediums,” said Policy and Compliance Director and COR Program Manager Sabeina Caldwell. “They are the accountability element of the contracts.”

There are 81 designated CORs at various sites at MSC. They oversee the hundreds and millions of dollars of contract obligations, from casualty repairs to long-term overhauls. Most of the CORs perform these responsibilities as collateral duties outside of their primary jobs.

“CORs are required for service acquisition at/or exceeding $250,000 when required,” said Caldwell. “They must be a government employee or military individual, and they are appointed by the KO. They have to be capable of taking on this additional task, completing the training requirements that comes with it and have the appropriate experience to be the COR.”

In addition to juggling their COR responsibilities along with their primary job, they also sometimes face the challenge of providing day-to-day oversight of contractors working aboard vessels that are forward deployed.

“It requires the coordination of an entire ‘village’ of contractors, government engineers, logistics, budget analysts, program analysts and contract specialist just to name a few,” said Prepositioning Program Analyst and COR Frank C. Ragsac. “We have to leverage the use of all the available technology such as email, Flank Speed, Teams, etc., in addition to in-person inspection.”

Ragsac expressed that contract execution is a total team effort. It takes open communication and flexibility between the mariners on the deckplates and the CORs working ashore.

“It is important that the COR can effectively communicate with all the stakeholders involved in the performance of the contract whether remotely or in-person,” said Ragsac. “Ship operation is the point of main effort in our contracts, but we need support from all the N-Codes. Short-fuse requests for support are inevitable when dealing with high-operational tempo. We ask all personnel supporting the program to be flexible and patient and to not lose focus on why the program is ‘asking’ for support.”

Caldwell said there many tools and platforms available for the CORs to do their jobs effectively, most notably the Defense Acquisition University (DAU) COR Website, which includes workshops, on-line lessons and other training tools.

“The DAU COR Community of Practice (CoP) helps CORs across Department of Defense (DOD) understand and get best practices so they can lean forward knowing what they need and must do,” Caldwell said. “DAU COR office hours meet every Tuesday for one hour, starting at 11:45 a.m. that includes facilitated lessons to assist them in doing their job. The intent is to give CORs an audience and support so they can be successful.

“Additionally, N10 (Contracts & Business Management), specifically N106 (Policy & Compliance Division) supports the CORs and contract specialist and officers during local COR hours every Tuesday from 9:10 a.m. on MST (Microsoft Teams). Unlike the DAU COR office hours which serves as a training evolution and think tank, the local COR office hours provide immediate assistance and support to ensure compliance to regulation,” she added.

MSC’s CORs take on these extra responsibilities and are without a doubt vital to keeping the command operational.

“We appreciate the additional diligence applied to toggling between their workload and managing contracts,” said Caldwell. “They are making sure we get what we need when we need it. It is our job to do everything we can support them in their tasks so MSC can continue to carry out its mission.”

### MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND PACIFIC CHALKS THE WALK IN SUPPORT OF SEXUAL ASSAULT VICTIMS

By Sarah Cannon, Military Sealift Command Pacific Public Affairs

The civilian and military staff of Military Sealift Command Pacific (MSCPAC) participated in the Navy’s Chalk the Walk, Sexual Assault Prevention, Response, (SAPR) event, in San Diego, April 13. The event was held in conjunction with the April Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month (SAAPM).

Members of the MSCPAC team drew messages of support for victims of sexual assault in colored chalk on the sidewalk in front of the MSCPAC building. Messages included ‘You Are Not Alone,’ ‘You Are Heard,’ and ‘Violence Does Not Equal Love.’

“The Navy’s SAPR program is so important in helping to keep our Sailors and civilians safe,” said Capt. Kendall Bridgewater, commander, MSCPAC. “Having an effective program that educates people on what sexual assault is and how to prevent it is very important; but also having a process for assisting our people and ensuring they are able to get help if something were to happen, is equally important. Programs like SAPR ensure that we are being proactive in our work to make our workplace safe for everyone, so that we can all focus on our missions. Everyone should have the opportunity to serve without fear.”

According to the Department of Defense, over a decade of research demonstrates that sexual assault occurs less often in units where members support and respect each other. Data further shows that sticking up for someone who is being hazed, bullied, and harassed or abused sends a strong message that helps improve climates.
The Civil Service Mariners who crew the dry cargo ammunition ship USNS Alan Shepard (T-AKE 3) completed Military Sealift Command’s (MSC) first ever Afloat Readiness Assessment (ARA), March 26-27, at the Port of Jebel Ali, Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

Performing an ARA serves as a checkpoint in the overall ship certification process. The goal is to assess the ship’s ability to maintain a continuous readiness posture throughout the operational cycle.

“The ARA serves two goals,” according to Supervisory Program Analyst Shannon Winfield, MSC’s Aviation and Surface Assessments Division Head. “First to provide MSC a holistic view of the fleet and its ships’ ability to respond to casualties in a contested environment and secondly to provide ships’ masters an objective review of how well their crew is performing in the assessed areas.”

An ARA focuses on a ships ability to respond to core damage control, safety of life at sea (SOLAS) and ship control casualties and emergencies. A minimum of four drills are executed during an ARA, to include two firefighting drills, one flood control drill, and one SOLAS or casualty control drill. In addition, a brief ship’s chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear defense (CBRN-D) program review is conducted.

“Provided a notional 60-month ship cycle, ARAs will be conducted 15 months after the beginning of the cycle, following major maintenance (ROD/DD), plus or minus six months to allow for scheduling flexibility,” according to Winfield. “An ARA takes approximately two days.”

With limited exceptions, ARAs are now conducted on MSC’s government owned and government operated ships.

“The ARA aboard USNS Alan Shepard was an opportunity for a fresh set of eyes, the Afloat Assessment Team, to critically evaluate the ship’s response to fire, collision and flooding, helicopter crash and salvage, and abandon ship scenarios,” said Capt. Adel Desouki, USNS Alan Shepard’s ship Master. “The assessment team provided comprehensive oversight during each drill by strategically placing its assessors at key damage control stations, and therefore was able to generate detailed lessons learned and identify areas where the crew required additional training.”

“Completing the ARA has already improved USNS Alan Shepard’s operational readiness,” Desouki stated. “Following the ARAs completion, the Ship Management Team conducted drills that specifically targeted the areas for improvement identified by the assessment team, improving the ship’s emergency response readiness.”

USNS Alan Shepard earned an overall ‘outstanding’ on the first ever ARA.

“The Damage Control Officer, Safety Officer, and Training Officer played important roles in preparing the ship for completion of the ARA,” Desouki said. “It validates that the ship is meeting MSC’s continuous readiness concept.”

“Preparing for an ARA is therefore a constant process that relies on the ship consistently completing regulatory body and type commander training, drill, and inspection requirements throughout its deployment cycle,” he added. “Furthermore, a whole-of-ship training plan that emphasizes different emergency stations each drill, neglecting none, is essential to ensuring the ship performs well during the ARA, and more importantly, is able to fight the ship effectively in a real-world emergency.”

“USNS Alan Shepard turned in a solid performance,” Winfield concluded. “I am proud of both the inspection team and the job the ship’s crew did. It was a pleasure to see how the crew managed to maintain high morale and enthusiastic attitude in their current Operational Tempo environment. It speaks highly of the ship’s leadership.”

USNS CARSON CITY CARGO MOVEMENT

By Chitrina Johnson, Military Sealift Command Europe and Africa Public Affairs

USNS Carson City (T-EPF 7), Military Sealift Command (MSC) expeditionary fast transport vessel, performed a cargo movement operation while in port Souda Bay, Greece, April 4. The cargo was loaded for delivery to the expeditionary sea base USNS Hershel “Woody” Williams (ESB 4).

Carson City is crewed by MSC Civil Service Mariners, who support the deployed service members who make up the ship’s military detachment. Carson City is currently deployed to the U.S. 6th Fleet area of operations.

USNS CARSON CITY VISITS BELLA NAPOLI

Prior to supporting the cargo movement operation, USNS Carson City pulled into the Port of Naples, Italy, March 22.

The high-speed ship is capable of rapid intra-theater military transport and is quickly adapted to whatever assigned mission to include transporting tanks and troops; carrying containerized portable hospital equipment; and providing support in the form of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

“I’m excited that the USNS Carson City is the first EPF to pull to the Port of Naples,” said Capt. Susan Orsini, Carson City’s Master. “Naples being home to U.S. 6th Fleet, and our direct Operational Commander, CTF 63 Commodore Pickard. It will be a privilege and a pleasure to meet the people who support USNS Carson City, and all of our ships. It’s a reminder and an opportunity to appreciate that all we do is through team effort.”

Carson City is the first MSC ship to go pier-side in Naples since USNS Yuma (T-EPF 8) hosted a Military Sealift Command Europe and Africa (MSCEURAF) Change of Command ceremony on board in April 2019. Capt. Kenneth Pickard is dual-batted as Task Force 63 commander (CTF 63), and MSCEURAF commodore. Carson City will be spending a week in Naples which will allow for some rest and relaxation for the crew.

“It is also exciting to be able to explore the amazing city of Naples,” added Orsini. “It will be an experience to explore the culture, appreciate the architecture and history - not to mention indulging in the culinary delights.

Desouki offered some insight for the crews of MSC’s ships who will be undertaking future ARAs.

“Unlike a fire and lifeboat drill evaluated by the U.S. Coast Guard for a Certificate of Inspection, or a main space fire drill required for completion of an Afloat Training Availability, where in both cases it behooves the crew to conduct walk-throughs and practice drills in advance, “The ARA is a pure assessment that incorporates unannounced drills with the drill scenarios known only by the assessors and key ship’s personnel,” Desouki said. “It validates that the ship is meeting MSC’s continuous readiness concept.”

A view of Military Sealift Command’s dry cargo ammunition ship USNS Alan Shepard (T-AKE 3) at sea. (U.S. Navy photo by Senior Technician 2nd Class Ashleigh Englehardt)
Recently, the expeditionary sea base USS Lewis B. Puller (ESB 3), along with the staff of Task Force 51/5th Marine Expeditionary Brigade (TF 51/5) and service members from six foreign militaries embarked on the Puller to participate in International Maritime Exercise 23, a multinational maritime training event involving more than 50 partner nations and international organizations.

“IMX 23 is an important way for us to practice command and control (C2) from the sea, as well as to help demonstrate our commitment to regional maritime security cooperation” said Brig. Gen. Matthew Reid, Task Force 51/5’s Commanding General. “Not only does this exercise give our staff a way to stay closely tied to our sea, as well as to help demonstrate our commitment to regional maritime security cooperation. We’ve fully invested in demonstrating what can be accomplished when we all work together towards the region's maritime security and stability.”

AFLOAT ARMY PREPOSITIONED STOCKS INCREASE POWER PROJECTION

The length of three football fields and seven decks high, the USNS Pomeroy (T-AKR 316) is no doubt a big ship – but it’s also a floating warehouse.

The massive roll-on/roll-off cargo vessel is one of several in the Military Sealift Command, or MSC, inventory that transports and stores military equipment and supplies as part of the Army Prepositioned Stocks, or APS, program. The ship's huge interior boasts more than 350,000 square feet of space, filled top to bottom with equipment and medical supplies. It's everything troops would need to respond to a contingency – earning its reputation as a pivotal piece of the Army’s power projection.

“APS, afloat and overseas, is essential to Army readiness,” said Col. Gary Cooper, commander of Army Medical Logistics Command. “By storing equipment and supplies in forward environments and at sea, we can deploy troops faster and improve sustainment capability worldwide.”

The equipment aboard the APS-3 vessels is maintained by the Army Field Support Battalion-Charleston, located at Joint Base Charleston, South Carolina. Following their maintenance cycle, the equipment is loaded onto MSC vessels to ensure readiness for rapid deployment in support of combatant commanders’ requirements during competition, crisis or conflict.

“APS-3 is the Army’s only prepositioned equipment set afloat which provides the warfighter flexibility and agility,” said Lt. Col. Christopher Manganaro, commander of AFSSBn-Charleston. “Our battalion is responsible for the readiness and accountability of the Army Prepositioned Stocks aboard.”

“It’s an intricate ballet of moving material from one ship to the next, while completing the maintenance and rotating out stocks that are close to expiration,” explained James Gerrard, APS-3 (medical) site manager.

Embarked on the Puller were representatives from six other partner nations: Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Jordan, Kazakhstan, the United Kingdom, and Yemen went underway to participate in IMX 23. In addition to allowing Task Force 51/5 to practice command and control from the sea, the Puller enabled these partners to practice Visit, Board, Search and Seizure (VBSS) procedures in a multi-lateral setting. The training also enabled embarked medical teams, such as TF 51/5 Expeditionary Resuscitative Surgical System (ERSS) to practice operating in a simulated mass casualty scenario.

“We're really excited to be underway with both the 51/5 staff and our mix of international partners” said Capt. Jon Bradford, Commanding Officer of the USS Lewis B. Puller. “It’s a huge training opportunity for us, and a great chance to show how we support the overall picture here in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations.”

Those embarked on Puller who participated in VBSS training did so with the aim of refining shipboard close-quarters combat and counter-drug interdiction operations; missions the Puller has previously led within the region. A team of U.S. Sailors, Marines and Coastguardsmen led this week’s training efforts, which culminated in search-and-seizure exercises aboard the USCGC Robert Goldman (WPC 1142).

USS Lewis B. Puller is the first U.S. ship to be commissioned outside of the United States and is currently forward deployed to the U.S. 5th Fleet (C5F) area of operations to extend U.S. Naval Forces Central Command’s maritime reach. The Puller supports counter-piracy operations, maritime security operations, humanitarian aid, disaster relief and crisis response operations. During steady-state operations, the Puller falls under tactical command of TF 51/5.

TF 51/5 is a Joint Task Force-Capable (JTF-C) Headquarters, responds to crises and contingencies; coordinates, plans, and executes operations; conducts theater security cooperation; and advances emerging naval concepts at sea, from the sea, and ashore in support of U.S. Central Command, Fifth Fleet and Marine Forces Central Command theater objectives.

The teams collected more than 50 containers, each 20 feet long and called ‘militans,’ filled with medical devices and supplies from the returning APS ship and completed required maintenance, as well as refreshing shelf-life items.

The task is required to complete a maintenance cycle ahead of the next vessel arrival in Charleston adding a time element and urgency to do inventory, inspect and upgrade equipment, and restock any expired materiel before the next vessel departs.

“When a ship docks, it is imperative that our team gets their hands on that medical equipment so we can perform maintenance within the given time-frame before the next ship departs,” said Maj. Janessa Moyer, director of USAMMA’s Force Projection Directorate. “Everyone understands that we must stay on schedule and make it on the ship for maximum capability forward.”

Moyer added that the mission was a success and a great experience for those involved, providing the team with an opportunity to see first-hand how medical material is part of battlefield readiness.
MSC SEALIFT

USNS CITY OF BISMARCK HONORED WITH SCALE MODEL DEDICATION CEREMONY IN NAMESAKE CITY

By Bil Mesta, Military Sealift Command Public Affairs

The Bismarck, North Dakota City Commission hosted a dedication ceremony for a scale model of Military Sealift Command’s expeditionary fast transport ship USNS City of Bismarck (T-EPF 9), April 25.

The celebration, organized by the USNS City of Bismarck Committee, was held at the Bismarck Veterans Memorial Public Library, where the ship model is on display. The event was held to honor the efforts of MSC Civil Service Mariners (CIVMAR) who crew USNS City of Bismarck.

“Like her thirteen sister ships operating around the globe, City of Bismarck gives our naval force a competitive edge against potential adversaries through a unique combination of speed, capacity, flexibility, and a well-trained crew,” stated Rear Adm. Michael Wettlaufer, Commander, Military Sealift Command.

USNS City of Bismarck is crewed by 26 CIVMAR who are responsible for operating the ship. Their responsibilities include, navigation, propulsion, communications, galley services and hotel services.

“Thank you for sailing our ship,” Wettlaufer stated to the crew of USNS City of Bismarck. “Best wishes for fair winds and following seas.”

“Thank you for sailing our ship,” Wettlaufer stated to the crew of USNS City of Bismarck. “Best wishes for fair winds and following seas.”

WE ARE MSC: PROCUREMENT ANALYST BRINGING MSC NEW ‘INSIGHTS’ ON INDUSTRY

By Hendrick Dickson, Military Sealift Command Public Affairs

A Military Sealift Command (MSC) procurement analyst graduated from the University of Virginia Darden School of Business Navy Insights into Industry Management (3IMC) course, Feb. 17, and is ready to use the lessons to help MSC.

William Lucenta, a native of Yorktown, Virginia, has been with MSC since 2020 and is the eBusiness Branch Chief within the Business Operations Division/Contracts and Business Management Department. He was one of 48 graduates, many from various other Navy commands, to complete the two-week graduate level course.

The 3IMC course educates and trains students on current and cutting-edge business practices sufficient to allow them to recognize business risks and opportunities and to anticipate potential changes in the business world. It equips students with the broad assessment, evaluation and decision-making skills required in American business.

“The course delivers graduate-level business curriculum and focuses on industry structure and strategy, financial metrics, corporate culture, decision making drivers/processes, risk management and business management techniques,” said Lucenta.

As a procurement analyst, Lucenta works hand-in-hand with the service components to ensure functional process, policy, and data requirements are incorporated in Department of Defense-wide, procurement-related business initiatives and systems. In short, eBusiness facilitates and maintains the functional use of systems and acts as the bridge between contract execution and policy. Lucenta says he is looking forward to putting that curriculum to work for MSC.

“On top of learning about industry and financial metrics, I learned about different types of leadership. As a new branch chief and supervisor in N101A, I plan to implement a few elements of tipping point leadership,” he said.

After submitting several applications, Lucenta was initially selected to attend 3IMC last summer, but he was unable to due to personal reasons. However, his leaders were very supportive and allowed him to take the course this year. He praises those around him and the MSC culture for fostering growth among its employees.

“I am thankful for my leadership for investing in me and I encourage anyone interested in the 3IMC program to apply,” he said. “MSC has plenty of opportunity for those who want to make a difference. I would like to continue to grow as a leader and foster an environment where everyone is creating positive change and providing support for the warfighter.”

USNS MONTFORD POINT PAYS HOMAGE TO MONTFORD POINT VETERANS

By Brendan Pigott, Military Sealift Command Prepositioning and Seabasing

Members of the Montford Point Marine Association were honored aboard the large medium speed roll-on, roll-off ship USNS Pillaua (T-AXK 304) and the expeditionary transfer dock USNS Montford Point (T-ESD 1) at Blount Island Command in Jacksonville, Florida, March 10.

Normally berthed in Norfolk, Virginia, Montford Point was at Blount Island Command to drop off its portable vehicle ramp prior to departing for its long transit to the West Coast for future maintenance.

Holding a brief, but powerful, ceremony aboard Pillaua due to cargo operations on Montford Point, members of the Montford Point Marine Association were addressed by Company Commander Maj. Melvin Taylor about the importance of tradition and history in the U.S. Marine Corps. Master Sgt. William Weaver, Port Operations Chief at Blount Island Command, also spoke about the mission and capabilities of Montford Point.

Since the delivery of USNS City of Bismarck in December 2017, this ship has been providing assured logistics and specialized support to the joint warfighter. Hubbed out of Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, the ship has operated throughout the Pacific Theater, participating in activities such as the Pacific Partnership medical support mission, Koa Moana exercises in the Republic of Palau, and transporting Marine Corps and Army equipment and personnel throughout the region.

“The citizens of Bismarck are honored to have a U.S. Navy ship named after our city as many of our sons and daughters have served and are who are serving in the world’s greatest Navy,” according to Capt. Bob Wefald, Chairman, USNS City of Bismarck Committee. “We built and informed people, as well as curious children, patronize our library, and they will understand and appreciate the wonderful connection between our city and the USNS City of Bismarck.”

Bismarck Mayor Mike Schmitz, former City Commissioner Nancy Guy and members of the City Commission were in attendance at the ceremony.

“As this model will serve to educate future generations about the value and purpose of our U.S. Navy, please continue to highlight and remember the brave and dedicated Merchant Mariners who sail and operate this ship,” Wettlaufer charged. “May God continue to bless USNS City of Bismarck, the men and women who sail aboard her, and the citizens of Bismarck whose spirit lives within her.”

The scale model of USNS City of Bismarck was produced by SD Model Makers. USNS City of Bismarck is crewed by 26 CIVMARs who are responsible for operating the ship. Their responsibilities include, navigation, propulsion, communications, galley services and hotel services.

“Thank you for sailing our ship,” Wefald stated to the crew of USNS City of Bismarck. “Best wishes for fair winds and following seas.”

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May 2023
**SPECIAL OBSERVANCE: MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND HOLDS HOLOCAUST DAYS OF REMEMBRANCE OBSERVANCE**

**By Hendrick Dickson, Military Sealift Command Public Affairs**

Military members and staff at Military Sealift Command (MSC) held a Holocaust Days of Remembrance Observance at the Vista Point Event Center at Naval Station Norfolk, Virginia, April 27, to honor and remember the victims and survivors of the Holocaust.

Days of Remembrance is an annual week-long commemoration of the Holocaust observed, April 16-23, to memorialize the six million Jews murdered by the Adolf Hitler-led Nazi party and their collaborators. Between 1933 and 1945, millions of victims were targeted for racial, political and ideological reasons.

The theme for this year’s observance, “Behind Every Name a Story: The Women,” highlighted the heroism and explored the horrors confronted by women during the Holocaust. MSC welcomed the Director of the Holocaust Commission, United Jewish Foundation of Tidewater, Elka Mednick, to deliver the keynote address.

“The purpose of the Holocaust Commission is to help people understand the consequences that come from hatred, prejudice and discrimination,” Mednick said. “What begins as propaganda could quickly morph into ugly actions, and terrible tragedies like the Holocaust. We hope that after you hear this story, you will speak out, even if others do not.”

Mednick shared the story of Holocaust survivor Dana Cohen, which was documented in the film series, “What We Carry.” Cohen spent her early childhood in Lvov, Poland. The daughter of a sawmill owner, she and her mother, were forced to flee their home, April 13, 1940, when Russian soldiers confiscated their apartment and belongings. She and her mother then embarked on a long and harrowing journey to evade persecution.

“Like all European Jews, Dana’s life was completely changed by those unfolding events,” said Mednick. “Firsthand accounts of this time period are key to understanding the tragedy of genocide. While many people think of the Holocaust as something that happened in concentration camps in Europe, Dana’s story doesn’t show that. Her wartime story took her from Poland to Siberia to Africa, and her survival, as her mother wrote, could only be described as a ‘long chain of miracles.’”

Because their courage and bravery, Cohen and her mother survived. Cohen moved to Washington, D.C., in 1958, and meet her future husband, William Cohen, before eventually residing in Norfolk. Dana’s mother joined them in Norfolk in 1965 where Dana and her son, Michael, still reside.

“What does it mean to be a survivor?” Cohen asked in the film. “I never submitted to being a sacrificial lamb. To survive, I think you use your wits, you use your guts, to come through it all and still be a decent human being.”

Mednick concluded the event inviting attendees to view a display which featured a suitcase that showcased some of the items Cohen and her mother carried with them that helped them along their journey.

In a White House Days of Remembrance Proclamation, President Joe Biden reaffirmed America’s commitment to ensure the atrocities of the Holocaust never happens again, “Hate must have no safe harbor in America or anywhere else. Today and always, we make our message clear: Evil will not win. Hate will not prevail. And the violence of antisemitism will not be the story of our time. Together, we can ensure that ‘never again’ is a promise we keep.”

**MAY IS PHYSICAL FITNESS AND SPORTS MONTH**

**By Leighanne Gernthein, Military Sealift Command Health Promotion Program**

“Exercise not only changes your body, it changes your mind, your attitude, and your mood.”

This month, we celebrate National Physical Fitness and Sports Month by discussing physical activity and the role it plays in a happy, healthy life.

Physical activity is one of the best things we can do for both our physical and mental health, and plays an instrumental role in maintaining health and well-being. Most of us know the benefits it has on our physical health, such as lowering our risk for chronic diseases, helping us manage and/or lose weight, helping us sleep better, strengthening our muscles and bones, and enhancing both quantity and quality of life.

However, did you know that for as many benefits that physical activity has on our physical body, it has just as many benefits on our mental health? Exercise has been shown to decrease depression, anxiety, and stress, improve memory, and increase self-esteem and confidence. It also reduces our risk of cognitive decline, including dementia.

Even five minutes of physical activity can boost your mood. However, according to the American College of Sports Medicine, to obtain all of these benefits listed above, to decrease depression, anxiety, and stress, improve memory, and increase self-esteem and confidence. It also reduces our risk of cognitive decline, including dementia.

For more information you can also check out https://www.niaaa.nih.gov/alcohols-effects-health
Montford Point from page 6

Following the ceremony aboard Pililaau, the Montford Point Marine Association members were treated to a tour of Montford Point, the ship that honors the legacy of every Montford Point Marine in American history.

Founded in 1942, Camp Montford Point in Jacksonville, North Carolina, was the initial training ground for African American Marines following the signing of an executive order that established the Fair Employment Practices Commission in June 1941. Camp Montford Point remained in operation until Sept. 9, 1949.

The guest of honor for the event was Cpl. George McIvory, a World War II veteran and original Montford Point Marine. Also in attendance was Alpha G. Hay, daughter of the late Sgt. Alpha P. Gainous, a World War II veteran and original Montford Point Marine. Accompanying the Montford Point Marines was former U.S. House of Representatives member Corrine Brown and former Florida State Senator Anthony Hill.

The fighting spirit of the Montford Point Marines embodies the resilient attitude of Blount Island Command and the crew of Montford Point. Although usually held in reduced operating status, Montford Point, one of only two Expeditionary Transfer Dock vessels in the U.S. Navy, stands ready to support the Department of Defense in a time of war. Blount Island Command and Montford Point look forward to having Montford Point Marines aboard again in the future.

Chalk the Walk from page 3

“I’m happy to be out here and supporting the command and the Navy’s SAPR program,” said Lt. Cmdr. Trisha Kelly, MSCPAC Reserve Program Director. “It is so important to give sexual assault victims a voice. I’m hopeful that the more we hold awareness events now, the less we will need them later.”

If you or someone you know in the DoD community has experienced sexual assault, please consider reaching out to DoD Safe Helpline for 24/7, anonymous, one-on-one support at 877-995-5247 or SafeHelpline.org/live-chat.

MSC everyday

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“‘To hear from somebody who has worn [a military uniform], was really powerful. We are grateful for his discussion with us today and continued life of service,’” he added.

Once the speeches concluded, MSC sailors and civilians, speakers and their guests, walked a lap around MSC headquarters while carrying two banners inscribed with “Walk a Lap for Survivors!” and “Wipe Out Sexual Assault.”

This year’s theme for Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month is “STEP FORWARD. Prevent. Report. Advocate.” According to the DOD’s Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office, the theme is a “call to action for individuals at all levels of the Department to use their personal strength to advance positive change in preventing sexual violence.”