The crane from the dry cargo ammunition ship USNS William McLean (T-AKE 12) lifts simulated ordnance off of the flight deck for delivery to the Arleigh Burke-class destroyer USS Porter (DDG 78) during a Vertical Launch System (VLS) re-arm demonstration held on Naval Station Norfolk, Aug. 3. (U.S. Navy photo by Bill Mesta)

The crews of the Arleigh Burke-class destroyer USS Porter (DDG 78) and Military Sealift Command’s (MSC) dry cargo ammunition ship USNS William McLean (T-AKE 12) performed a Vertical Launch System (VLS) re-arm, pier-side, at Naval Station Norfolk, Aug. 3.

The Navy conducted the demonstration to provide proof of concept that a dry cargo ammunition ship can reload the weapons system pier-side and while the ship is at sea, with a goal of expanding the capability of VLS reloading in expeditionary environments.

“The Navy has been considering alternative vessels to move ordnance into a theater without an on-shore infrastructure to support,” according to Jerit Vanauker, of MSC’s Taluga Group. “One of the situations considered was the ability to re-arm VLS for Navy combatant ships in a contested environment, and so we considered the idea to use an MSC dry cargo ammunition ship.”

In addition to the crews of Porter and William McLean, U.S. 2nd Fleet, Navy Expeditionary Combat Command’s (NECC) Navy Expeditionary Logistics Support Group (NAVELSG), the Carderock Division of the Naval Surface Warfare Center (NSWC) and NSWC Panama supported the VLS re-arming. NECC’s expeditionary reload team from NAVELSG are expertly trained in ordnance transfer and handling and can operate in remote, complex, and austere environments to ensure naval forces remain forward and mobile.

“MSC’s role in developing and executing VLS is vital,” Vanauker stated. “We will bring the ordnance, and platform to deliver ordnance, in support of VLS re-arming of our combatant ships, so they can get back in the fight without traveling long distances to be resupplied.”

During the demonstration, Porter pulled into the naval station and moored ‘skin-to-skin’ along-side William McLean, which was moored to the pier. The ships’ crews installed marine bumpers between the vessels to prevent damage to the ships during the VLS re-arm.

Once the ships were safely moored, the VLS team aboard William McLean prepared two simulated ordnance packages for delivery.

“VLS continued on page 8

Sailors assigned to the Arleigh Burke-class destroyer USS Porter (DDG 78) and Navy Expeditionary Logistics Support Group’s expeditionary reload team prepare to load simulated ordnance in the ship’s Vertical Launch System (VLS) during a VLS re-arm demonstration held pier-side at Naval Station Norfolk, Aug. 3. The VLS demonstration was part of U.S. Fleet Forces Command’s Large Scale Exercise 2023, which provided a venue to test and refine current and new technologies and performs a feedback on current position as a future maritime force and provide feedback used to inform future innovation. (U.S. Navy photo by Bill Mesta)
Secretary of the Navy (SECNAV) Carlos Del Toro announced that a future Navajo-class Towing, Salvage, and Rescue (T-ATS) ship will be named in honor of Solomon Atkinson, a pioneering Navy SEAL and an Alaskan Native of the Metlakatla Indian Community, Annette Islands Reserve.

Del Toro made the announcement on the Metlakatla’s Founders Day, Aug. 7.

The name selection of USNS Solomon Atkinson (T-ATS 12) follows the tradition of naming towing, salvage, and rescue ships after prominent Native Americans or Native American tribes.

“I am honored to name the next T-ATS after Solomon Atkinson, a man who achieved many firsts, even in the face of adversity, and continued to lead,” said Del Toro.

“Atkinson’s achievements as a SEAL have left behind an enduring legacy, not just in the Special Warfare Community, but with our nation’s astronauts as well. I am pleased to ensure that his name will extend globally to all who views this great ship.”

Born in 1930 in Metlakatla, Alaska, Solomon Atkinson was raised by his parents on the sole Indian Reserve in Alaska. Atkinson worked as a commercial fisherman before enlisting in the U.S. Navy in 1952. A year later, Atkinson volunteered for the underwater demolition teams and became a frogman, the precursor to present day SEALs. In 1962, Atkinson became one of the first Navy SEALs and was a plank owner for SEAL Team 1. As a SEAL, he deployed to Korea and completed three combat tours in Vietnam. His Vietnam service-related awards include a Bronze Star, a Navy Commendation Medal with Combat “V,” and a Purple Heart. Atkinson also had the distinction of training numerous astronauts, including Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin, in underwater weightless simulations at the Underwater Swimmers School in Key West, Florida. Atkinson retired from active naval service in 1973 as a Chief Warrant Officer 4 and returned to Metlakatla, where he continued to serve his people and state on the Indian Community Council and Board of Education, as founder and president of the first veterans’ organization on Annette Island, and as mayor of Metlakatla. Upon his passing in 2019, an honor guard from SEAL Team 1 served as pallbearers at his funeral.

“Chief Warrant Officer 4 Solomon “Sol” Atkinson embodied the spirit of dedication to family, community, and country,” said Rear Adm. Keith Davids, commander, Naval Special Warfare Command. “His pioneering role as one of the first U.S. Navy SEALs, and his unwavering commitment to service both in and out of uniform, serves as an inspiration for the entire Naval Special Warfare community. Naming the USNS Solomon Atkinson in his honor is a testament to his remarkable legacy and the enduring impact he has left on NSWC, the Navy, and the nation.”

Along with the ship’s name, Del Toro announced the sponsors for the future USNS Solomon Atkinson as his widow, Joann Atkinson and their two daughters, Michele Gunyah and Marta Hayward, who, in their role, will represent a lifelong relationship with the ship and crew.

“There exists a long-held Tsimshian tradition, ‘akadi lip a’algyaga sm’ooqgit’, loosely translated ‘a chief never speaks for himself,’” said sponsor, Marta Hayward. “Through all of his time as a U.S. Navy UDT and SEAL, as well as a leader of veterans and Native Alaskans, Sol lived this ethos. And, here today, in the shadow of Sol’s death, he holds to it still. Thank you to the U.S. Navy for speaking to Solomon’s honor and helping his family and fellow Frogmen shout his legacy to the seven seas!”

Navajo-class ships will provide ocean-going tug, salvage, and rescue capabilities to support Fleet operations. The current capabilities are provided by Powhatan-class T-ATF Fleet Tugs and Safeguard-class T-ARS Rescue and Salvage vessels, which began reaching the end of their expected service lives in 2020. Navajo-class ships will be capable of towing U.S. Navy ships and will have 6,000 square feet of deck space for embarked systems.

The keel for the future USNS Lucy Stone (T-AO 209), the Navy’s 5th John Lewis-class fleet replenishment oiler, was laid at General Dynamics National Steel and Shipbuilding Company’s (GD NASSCO) shipyard in San Diego, Aug. 8.

A keel laying is the recognition of the start of a ship’s construction. It is the union of a ship’s modular components and the authentication or etching of an honoree’s initials into a ceremonial keel plate. In recognition of their steadfast spirit and patriotic devotion over the past two decades to unite approximately 100 ships with ship sponsors, ship introduction specialists and ship sponsors Alicia Aarhus and Debbie Simmons etched their initials into the keel plate of the future USNS Lucy Stone (T-AO 209) (Naval Sea Systems Command photo).
By Hendrick Dickson, Military Sealift Command Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command recently held two outreach events hosting more than 50 Naval Sea Cadets, volunteers and instructors from around the world to tour training centers and ships in Hampton Roads.

U.S. Naval Sea Cadets, from various states on the East Coast (New York all the way to Florida), spent the week with Military Sealift Command July 24-28 visiting MSC Training Center Hampton Roads at Joint Base Langley-Fort Eustis, the MSC Underway Replenishment Training Center (MUTC) at Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story and touring fleet replenishment oiler USNS Laramie (T-AO 203) at Naval Station Norfolk.

During their week-long visit, the 18 Sea Cadets experienced what it’s like to drive an Expeditionary Fast Transport vessel in the EPF simulator. They learned how to combat flooding and fire aboard a ship in the Damage Control Wet Trainer. They also participated in other training evolutions, such as Search and Rescue Swimmer and Ship Reaction Force Training.

Aboard Laramie, the group conducted a familiarization tour learning about the Henry J. Kaiser-class oiler’s capabilities and how the vessel conducts replenishments-at-sea.

“We wanted to give them a little taste of everything we do,” said MSC Training Center Hampton Roads, Damage Control Leader, Patrick Mullaney. “It’s an abbreviated version of what we teach all our new hires who come to Military Sealift Command.”

Lt. JoAnn Taft, U.S. Naval Sea Cadets Corps Volunteer said their goal is to develop a relationship with the command that would help the cadets’ growth as future leaders.

“We want to have a hand-and-hand relationship that fosters good development for our cadets. We want our cadets to go out when they graduate and be successful,” she said.

Many of cadets had little knowledge of command and its mission. This outreach gives them a different look at how they can serve their country from the sea.

“The idea is to allow our younger generation, our youth, to see some insight on another career path. Rather they choose to join MSC one day is up to them, but I think it’s in our best interest to show them they can support their country in many different ways,” said Mullaney.

During the ceremony aboard the USS Midway Museum in San Diego, Murphy relieved Bridgewater, who since assuming command of MSCPAC, has overseen a wide range of operations and exercises, including the Operation Deep Freeze resupply mission to Antarctica and USNS’s Mercy’s support for Pacific Partnership.

By Sarah Cannon, Military Sealift Command Pacific Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command Pacific (MSCPAC) welcomes its new leader, Capt. Micah Murphy. Murphy assumed command from Capt. Kendall Bridgewater, who has served as commander of MSCPAC since 2020.

Murphy joins the MSC team following a position as the Strategy Implementation Branch Chief at U.S. European Command in Stuttgart, Germany.

A native of Wheaton, Illinois, Murphy served at-sea aboard USS Kinkade (DD 965) and USS Fletcher (DD 992) as part of the “Sea Swap” initiative, USS Bonhomme Richard (LHD 6), USS Momsen (DDG 92), and commanded Mine Countermeasures Crew Enlisted aboard USS Destroos (MCM 13) and USS Chief (MCM 14). He was also selected to Command and help rebuild the USS John S. McCain (DDG 56) following a deadly 2017 collision.

His shore and staff assignments include executive assistant to the Chief of Legislative Affairs, special assistant to the Chief of Naval Operations, legislative fellow to U.S. Senator John McCain, federal executive fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, adjutant fellow at the U.S. Naval Institute, and Commanding Officer of Afloat Training Group Western Pacific in Yokosuka, Japan.

“I’m looking forward to being a part of the MSC team,” said Murphy. “MSC has a great reputation of highly motivated and professional people supporting the Navy. I have a lot to learn, and I am ready for the challenge.”

During the ceremony aboard the USS Midway Museum in San Diego, Murphy relieved Bridgewater, who since assuming command of MSCPAC, has overseen a wide range of operations and exercises, including the Operation Deep Freeze resupply mission to Antarctica and USNS’s Mercy’s support for Pacific Partnership.
By Larry Gonzales, Military Sealift Command

FLEET REPLENISHMENT OILER RETURNS TO NORFOLK FROM U.S. 6TH FLEET

Military Sealift Command’s fleet replenishment oiler USNS Joshua Humphreys (T-AO 188) returned to Naval Station Norfolk, Aug. 10, following a four-month deployment to U.S. 6th Fleet’s area of responsibility (AOR).

Supporting the U.S. 6th Fleet’s full range of maritime operations and theater security missions, Joshua Humphreys had several noteworthy accomplishments, beginning with its participation in Gerald R. Ford (GRF) Carrier Strike Group’s (CSG-4) composite training unit exercise (COMPTUEX) in April. During this four-week evolution, Joshua Humphreys provided five at-sea replenishments to three Navy ships. Likewise, Joshua Humphreys provided underway replenishment services to USS McFarland (DDG 74), located off the coast of Portugal, during McFarland’s participation in Exercise Formidable Shield 2023 — a biennial integrated air and missile defense (IAMD) exercise, in May, that allowed McFarland to remain on station, projecting power, throughout the entire exercise.

During the exercise, Joshua Humphreys also conducted a “Proof-of-Concept” CONSOL (consolidated cargo replenishment at sea) with the American Flag Commercial Style Tanker Stena Polaris. This is a new water-space battle plan, within the MSC enterprise, which is to have a United States Naval Combat Logistics Force ship receive fuel offshore for transfer to customers at sea.

In June, Joshua Humphreys, once again, successfully executed the safe transfer of 538,334 gallons of jet fuel, 427,029 gallons of diesel fuel, and 16 pallets of general stores to GRFCSG. This evolution occurred within a 24-hour time span during Baltic Operations (BALTOPS) 2023, which provided a unique training exercise to strengthen the freedom of navigation and security in the Baltic Sea. In addition to supporting GRFCSG, Joshua Humphreys was also instrumental in providing on-time replenishment services to the USS Mount Whitney (LCC 20), RFA Mounts Bay (L3008), and USS Paul Ignatius (DDG 117).

While deployed, the Joshua Humphreys’ crew had the distinct pleasure of working with the crew of Frankfurt am Main (A1412), the second ship of the Berlin-class replenishment ships of the German Navy. Together, the two ship crews worked side-by-side to strengthen their interoperability.

Joshua Humphreys’ Ship Master Capt. David K. Murrin said he could not be prouder of his crew’s accomplishments. “I am incredibly proud of my crew and the excellence they achieved while conducting high-risk, high-visibility mission sets during this deployment. Our officers and crew advanced maritime services at sea.”

“Being a part of an international momentous day was an experience of a lifetime — one that I will never forget,” Fitzgerald stated.

Although the Joshua Humphreys’ crew had a busy logistical schedule throughout the 120-day deployment, they did have the opportunity to experience and appreciate the countries of Scotland, Estonia, Poland, Sweden, and Denmark.

While in Stockholm, Naval Attache Officer Capt. J.P. “Skull” Greene invited Capt. Murrin, Chief Mate Thomas C. Pace, Cargo Mate John T. Fitzgerald, and Public Affairs Officer Larry J. Gonzales to the Royal Palace for a meet and greet.

Fitzgerald said he felt honored when he received his invitation and was in awe of the size and grandeur of the Stockholm Palace, which is one of the oldest castles still serving as an official royal residence with more than 600 rooms spread across 11 floors.

“Considering the size and the venue was not chosen by happenstance. For today, on the 70th anniversary of the signing of Korean War Armistice agreement, we are gathered here to reflect on the legacy of our Sailors and Marines who served as part of the United Nations force that defended the citizens of South Korea from 1950 to 1953 under harsh combat conditions,” said Del Toro. “I would also like to thank the members of the Korean War Veterans Association, The Chosen Few Organization, the Korea Defense Veterans Association, and all of our Korean War Veterans who joined us for this event. Your sacrifices in defense of our Nation and the people of South Korea will never be forgotten.”

Cafferata was born on Nov. 4, 1929, in New York City. His father was a Peruvian immigrant who ran a paper mill. The family eventually moved to the Montville, New Jersey area, where his mother grew up. After graduating from Boonton High School, Cafferata played semi-pro football while also working at a manufacturing plant for the Sun Dial Corporation. He joined the Marine Corps Reserve in Feb. 15, 1948, and served with a local unit, until he was called to active duty on Sept. 6, 1950. Cafferata was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 7th Marines, 1st Marine Division.

By mid-October, he was on his way to Korea.

Secretary of the Navy (SECNAV) Carlos Del Toro announced, July 27, that the future expeditionary sea base ship ESB 8 will be named in honor of Medal of Honor recipient and Korean War veteran Hector A. Cafferata Jr.

The future USNS Hector A. Cafferata Jr. is the first ship to bear his name. Naming an expeditionary sea base is a tradition honoring Marines who served with distinction.

SECNAV Del Toro made the announcement during a ceremony at the National Museum of the Marine Corps on Korean War Armistice Day.

“This venue was not chosen by happenstance. For today, on the 70th anniversary of the signing of Korean War Armistice agreement, we are gathered here to reflect on the legacy of our Sailors and Marines who served as part of the United Nations force that defended the citizens of South Korea from 1950 to 1953 under harsh combat conditions,” said Del Toro. “I would also like to thank the members of the Korean War Veterans Association, The Chosen Few Organization, the Korea Defense Veterans Association, and all of our Korean War Veterans who joined us for this event. Your sacrifices in defense of our Nation and the people of South Korea will never be forgotten.”

Cafferata was born on Nov. 4, 1929, in New York City. His father was a Peruvian immigrant who ran a paper mill. The family eventually moved to the Montville, New Jersey area, where his mother grew up. After graduating from Boonton High School, Cafferata played semi-pro football while also working at a manufacturing plant for the Sun Dial Corporation. He joined the Marine Corps Reserve in Feb. 15, 1948, and served with a local unit, until he was called to active duty on Sept. 6, 1950. Cafferata was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 7th Marines, 1st Marine Division.

In the early hours of Nov. 28, 1950, Cafferata was serving as a rifleman with the 2nd Battalion, 7th Marines, in action against enemy forces. When all other members of his fire team became casualties, he waged a lone battle with grenades and rifle fire as an enemy attack gained momentum. Making a target of himself under devastating fire from automatic weapons, rifles, grenades, and mortars, Cafferata maneuvered up and down the line and delivered effective fire against the enemy force, killing 15, wounding many more, and forcing the others to withdraw so that reinforcements could move up and consolidate the position. As he fought against a renewed onslaught that same morning, a grenade landed in an entrenchment occupied by wounded Marines. Cafferata rushed into the gully under heavy fire, grabbed the grenade in his right hand, and hurled it free of his comrades before it detonated, severely wounding his right hand and arm. Despite intense pain, he fought on until he was struck by enemy fire and evacuated for medical treatment.

aviest consequences of a lifetime — one that I will never forget,” said Fitzgerald.

Joshua Humphreys’ Ship Master Capt. David K. Murrin said he could not be prouder of his crew’s accomplishments. “I am incredibly proud of my crew and the excellence they achieved while conducting high-risk, high-visibility mission sets during this deployment. Our officers and crew advanced maritime services at sea.”

“Being a part of an international momentous day was an experience of a lifetime — one that I will never forget,” Fitzgerald stated.

September 2023

MSC SEALIFT

From the Office of the Secretary of the Navy

While deployed, the Joshua Humphreys’ crew had the distinct pleasure of working with the crew of Frankfurt am Main (A1412), the second ship of the Berlin-class replenishment ships of the German Navy. Together, the two ship crews worked side-by-side to strengthen their interoperability.

Joshua Humphreys’ Ship Master Capt. David K. Murrin said he could not be prouder of his crew’s accomplishments. “I am incredibly proud of my crew and the excellence they achieved while conducting high-risk, high-visibility mission sets during this deployment. Our officers and crew advanced maritime services at sea.”

“Being a part of an international momentous day was an experience of a lifetime — one that I will never forget,” Fitzgerald stated.

Although the Joshua Humphreys’ crew had a busy logistical schedule throughout the 120-day deployment, they did have the opportunity to experience and appreciate the countries of Scotland, Estonia, Poland, Sweden, and Denmark.

While in Stockholm, Naval Attache Officer Capt. J.P. “Skull” Greene invited Capt. Murrin, Chief Mate Thomas C. Pace, Cargo Mate John T. Fitzgerald, and Public Affairs Officer Larry J. Gonzales to the Royal Palace for a meet and greet.

Fitzgerald said he felt honored when he received his invitation and was in awe of the size and grandeur of the Stockholm Palace, which is one of the oldest castles still serving as an official royal residence with more than 600 rooms spread across 11 floors.

“Being a part of an international momentous day was an experience of a lifetime — one that I will never forget,” Fitzgerald stated.

Joshua Humphreys’ Ship Master Capt. David K. Murrin said he could not be prouder of his crew’s accomplishments. “I am incredibly proud of my crew and the excellence they achieved while conducting high-risk, high-visibility mission sets during this deployment. Our officers and crew advanced maritime services at sea.”

“Being a part of an international momentous day was an experience of a lifetime — one that I will never forget,” Fitzgerald stated.
USNS SISLER SUPPORTS HELICOPTER TRAINING OFF THE COAST OF HONDURAS

By Bill Mesta, Military Sealift Command Public Affairs

The crew of Military Sealift Command’s large medium speed roll-on, roll-off ship USNS Sisler (T-AKR 311) supported helicopter landing deck qualifications (DLQ) for two UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters assigned to U.S. Southern Command’s (SOUTHCOM) 1-228th Aviation Regiment, off the coast of Honduras, July 27.

Sisler was transitioning through the region, to its lay berth in the U.S. Pacific Fleet area of responsibility, when SOUTHCOM leadership took advantage of the transit and used the ship to conduct DLQs as the ship traveled near the Honduran coastline. The DLQs were part of the aviation regiment’s training preparations for responding to potential regional humanitarian disasters.

“Sisler was a platform of opportunity,” according the USNS Sisler’s Master Capt. Wilbur J. Dahn III. “We had just transited the Panama Canal and were in transit to Maritime Prepositioning Squadron 3. The area used for the DLQs was basically on the way and thus made for an excellent training opportunity. Depending on the area and timing, the USNS Sisler is capable of supporting most training evolutions.”

Before the DLQs commenced on Sisler, aviators from the regiment embarked aboard the ship to wait their turn to perform DLQs. The two helicopters then performed 50 landings on Sisler’s flight deck; with six of the landings including a full chock and chain-down of the aircraft.

Sisler is crewed by approximately 30 contract mariners, employed by Patriot Shipping, who provide all operation services required to sail the ship including navigation, hotel services, propulsion, galley services and communications. All of Sisler’s mariners on duty supported the DLQs including the shipboard firefighting teams, the aviation support team and the bridge team.

“After every 10 ‘touch and go’ the helicopter crews would do a ‘hot swap’ and begin to train another set of pilots,” Dahn stated.

USNS HERSHEY “WOODY” WILLIAMS (ESB 4) COMPLETES FIRST MAJOR MAINTENANCE PERIOD IN EUROPE

By Ashleigh Whitney, Forward Deployed Regional Maintenance Center

The Lewis B. Puller-class expeditionary sea base USS Hershel “Woody” Williams (ESB 4) completed its first Regular Overhaul (ROH) in the European area of operations at Palumbo Shipyard, Malta, July 25.

ROHs are routine, planned maintenance periods providing necessary repairs, maintenance and modernization for the ship to operate at full technical capacity and mission capability for its entire designed service life.

Conducting significant depot-level maintenance in a forward-deployed environment requires robust partnerships with the host nation and maintenance providers. The technical expertise and large maintenance workforce on Malta provided a central location with significant capability including docking the 71,000-ton ship.

“Even though it was our first ROH in the European theater, our project team together with our industry partner deftly executed maintenance on critical areas of Hershel Woody Williams,” said Capt. Brian Karosich, Forward Deployed Regional Maintenance Center (FDRMC) commanding officer. “With the ship continually deployed, keeping areas such as its expansive flight deck and mission deck safe and fully functional is paramount to its diverse operations throughout Africa.”

Hershel “Woody” Williams is forward-deployed to Souda Bay, Greece, and serves as the first U.S. Navy ship assigned to the U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) area of responsibility. The ship is capable of conducting expeditionary missions, counter piracy, maritime security, and humanitarian and disaster relief operations. Hershel “Woody” Williams’ unique capabilities are part of the critical access infrastructure that supports the deployment of forces and supplies to support global missions. The ship operates with blue and gold crews, allowing it to remain continually deployed throughout AFRICOM.

Although a Military Sealift Command (MSC) ship, FDRMC maintains U.S. Navy structures and systems aboard Hershel “Woody” Williams. During the ROH, FDRMC’s project team oversaw work to replace coatings on the 52,000 square-foot flight deck and 25,000 square-foot mission deck. The team also preserved other critical areas of the ship, such as the mast and forward deck-house.
U.S. 4TH FLEET ANNOUNCES CONTINUING PROMISE 2023 DEPLOYMENT

From U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command / U.S. 4th Fleet Public Affairs

The U.S. Navy expeditionary fast transport USNS Burlington (T-EPF 10) will deploy to the U.S. Southern Command area of operations over the next two months as part of U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. 4th Fleet’s Continuing Promise 2023 mission.

Detailed planning has wrapped up for the Burlington to visit Panama, Colombia, Trinidad and Tobago, and Grenada. During these mission stops, Continuing Promise military teams will focus on working alongside partner nation medical personnel to provide care in community clinics to increase medical readiness, strengthen partnerships, and enhance the combined capabilities of the U.S. Navy and partner nations to respond to public health disasters and humanitarian crises.

“The Continuing Promise mission reflects our enduring commitment to the region as we work collaboratively with our friends to ensure a secure, free, and prosperous hemisphere,” said Rear Adm. Jim Aiken, commander of U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. 4th Fleet. “Continuing Promise 2023 allows us to work together with our friend in partner nations to improve lives.”

The Burlington will bring a medical engagement team to each mission stop to provide some direct patient care in community clinics and through host nation medical facilities. The team includes veterinarians who will work with animals in the host nation, biomedical technicians, Navy Seabees who will conduct small engineering projects, and the U.S. Fleet Forces Navy Band Detachment, which will entertain people through school visits and concerts.

Cmdr. Charles Castevees will serve as the Continuing Promise 2023 Mission Commander. “This is an ideal opportunity for us to make a difference in four partner nations,” said Castevees. “Continuing Promise 2023 will strengthen partnerships and positively impact the people we come into contact with,” he said.

Continuing Promise 2023 will also include training and subject matter expert exchanges on various medical and humanitarian assistance/disaster relief topics, and leading seminars on Women, Peace, and Security (WPS).

WPS is a United Nations initiative that started with UNSCR 1325 signed in 2000. It was a public acknowledgment that women are more adversely impacted by conflict and crisis, and that including women in security planning will lead to a more peaceful world. The Department of Defense (DoD) signed the WPS Implementation Plan in 2020.

“Continuing Promise 2023 marks the 13th mission to the region since 2007 and the first involving USNS Burlington. The mission will also foster goodwill, strengthen existing partnerships with partner nations, and encourage the establishment of new partnerships among countries, non-government organizations, and international organizations.

The U.S. Navy is an Expeditionary Fast Transport (EPF), a shallow draft, all-aluminum, commercial-based catamaran capable of regional transport of personnel and cargo lift, providing combatant commanders high-speed sealift mobility with inherent cargo handling capability and agility to achieve positional advantage over operational distances. The Burlington will bring the personnel, equipment and supplies necessary to conduct the Continuing Promise mission.

U.S. ARMY, NAVY, COAST GUARD UNITS CONDUCT LOGISTICS OPERATION AT TALISMAN SABRE 23

By Joseph Clark, U.S. Department of Defense News

Just after daybreak on July 31, Army Col. Samuel S. Miller, the commander of a joint task force comprised of U.S. Army, Navy and Coast Guard units escorted a large ferry that was shuttling heavy bulldozers and other equipment. The ferry carried equipment needed to make final preparations to the shoreline before the arrival of combat equipment and supplies.

As Miller stepped foot onto the sandy shore, the unit took a major step in a long process toward accomplishing its mission.

“Joint logistics over the shore is one of the most complex operations conducted as part of Exercise Talisman Sabre 23,” said Miller, who commands the Army’s 7th Transportation Brigade (Expeditionary) headquartered at Fort Eustis, Virginia. “The JLOTS operation was a great example of our U.S. and Australia partnership at work.”

Over the coming days, Soldiers and Sailors made final improvements to the shoreline before the arrival of combat equipment and supplies necessary to conduct the Continuing Promise mission.

“In this scenario, we didn’t have access to a port, and so, essentially, we’re creating one,” said Army Maj. Ryan Campbell, supporting operations officer for the 7th Transportation Brigade and joint operations officer for the exercise.

Over the course of 10 days, the units assigned to the mission built the causeway at sea from sections offloaded from the supply ships. They pieced together an 1,800-foot modular pier, known as a Trident Pier, to provide the final linkage to bring the equipment on shore.

Campbell said by demonstrating the capability, the task force echoed the strategic message that the U.S. and its allies are committed to a free and open Indo-Pacific.

“We can kind of go and provide this capability at a time and place of the Army commander’s choosing without the typical limitations,” he said. “We’re not constrained to already built, fixed ports if we have to get closer to where a logistics capability is needed.”

Demonstrating the capability as part of Talisman Sabre also provided service members with the critical experience of carrying out complex operations in a joint environment and alongside U.S. allies.

This year marked the 10th iteration of Talisman Sabre, a biennial exercise designed to advance a free and open Indo-Pacific by strengthening partnerships and interoperability among key allies. The spelling of the name — sabre vs. saber — reflects which country is leading the exercise: Talisman Sabre when Australia leads and Talisman Saber when the U.S. leads.

Nearly 30,000 troops from 13 different countries participated this year. Several Pacific Island partners, including Papua New Guinea, Fiji and Tonga, took part for the first time.

The 15-day exercise included a variety of large-scale logistics and amphibious assault training operations and multinational firepower demonstrations and field training exercises throughout Australia.

Several units from across the services formed the task force assigned with the JLOTS mission for the exercise.
Service members and civilian teammates assigned to Military Sealift Command gathered on Naval Station Norfolk for a special observance held in honor of Women's Equality Day, Aug. 24.

Women's Equality Day, Aug. 26, is a time to acknowledge the importance of the Women’s Suffrage Movement and its impact on the ratification of the 19th Amendment of the United States Constitution. It is also a time to raise awareness to challenges that may adversely affect the careers and advancement of women.

“The movement for women’s rights was launched on a national level in 1848, at what is now known as the Seneca Falls Convention, which was originally advertised as a ‘Women’s Rights Convention’,” Flores stated.

“Voting rights advocates Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott, also known as Suffragists, along with Susan B. Anthony and other activists formed organizations that raised public awareness and lobbied the government to grant voting rights to women; making the right to vote a centerpiece of the women’s rights movement,” Flores added.

At the turn of the century, suffragists fell into two groups: the club movement and the settlement house movement.

“It would take 72 years after the Suffrage movement began for these groups to emerge victorious with the ratification of the 19th amendment to the U.S. Constitution, on Aug. 18, 1920, which prohibited any U.S. citizen from being denied the right to vote based on sex,” Flores stated.

The theme for this year's Women's Equality Day Special Observance was 'Continuing to Make History.'

The special observance featured a panel of women assigned to MSC made up of Shary Grant, MSC Fleet Communication Director, Angela Waller MSC Project Officer, Cmdr. Terra Gray, Senior Human Resources Military Advisor, Cantria Wright, MSC Assistant Counsel, Juanita Bronnimann, MSC Prepositioning, Seabasing and Surge Sealift Program Manager, Angela Waller, MSC Project Manager, and Andrea Orlowski, MSC Engineering Deputy Director. (U.S. Navy photo by Bill Mesta)

MSC SEALIFT

The panel members for Military Sealift Command’s Women’s Equality Day Special Observance pose for a photo prior to the event, Aug. 24. Pictured from left to right: Shary Grant, MSC Fleet Communication Director, Cmdr. Terra Gray, MSC Assistant Human Resources Military Advisor, Cantria Wright, MSC Assistant Counsel, Juanita Bronnimann, MSC Prepositioning, Seabasing and Surge Sealift Program Manager, Angela Waller, MSC Project Manager, and Andrea Orlowski, MSC Engineering Deputy Director. (U.S. Navy photo by Bill Mesta)
The VLS re-arm demonstration was conducted as part of U.S. Fleet Forces’ Large Scale Exercise 2023 (LSE).

“Expeditionary logistics allow the Navy to quickly return to maintaining maritime dominance,” said Rear Adm. Brad Andros, commander, Navy Expeditionary Combat Command. “Operating in support of Military Sealift Command during Large Scale Exercise 2023 provides our expeditionary reload teams the opportunity to train to different platforms so that they can continue to sustain capacity and increase the persistent combat power of naval forces.”

Using the McLean’s crane, two simulated missiles were lifted from the ship’s flight deck and swung over to Porter’s forward weapons cells. Porter’s VLS team received the simulated ordnance and stowed the missiles aboard in the ship’s Vertical Launch System.

“The crane operator, with assistance from the Signalman, swung the simulated ordnance over to Porter, placing it over the open module cell hatch, and lowered into alignment with the available cell,” Vanauker continued. “In all, performing a VLS re-arm is a very simple evolution which requires patience and focus.”

The crane for the VLS re-arm demonstration was operated by Boatswain’s Mate Justin Bradley, one of William McLean’s Civil Service Mariners (CIVMARs).

“This was the first VLS re-arm to take place aboard William McLean,” according to Capt. John Stals, USNS William McLean’s Master. “Our CIVMARs secured the USS Porter alongside, operated the crane and provided support on deck for this evolution. Cargo and ordnance operations are a part of daily life for MSC ships.”

“The crew of the William McLean performed with precision and professionalism during this movement, just like our counterparts do every day around the globe,” Stals added.

Sea Cadets from page 1

“We need capable and energetic employees that can be good ship mates developed at MSC,” added MSC Total Force Management, Deputy Director Frank Cunningham. “Sea Cadets are employees of the future that we are planting the seed of career opportunities in the maritime industry.”

“Sea Cadets are employees of the future that we are planting the seed of career opportunities in the maritime industry.”

“Our organization is extremely grateful for the mentorship that MSC is providing,” said Tiff. “It helps build our cadets. And not only that, for the environment that we’re in for these cadets to want to travel so far you obviously have something to offer our program, and we hope we have something to offer back.”

MSC continued their outreach by hosting a separate tour for 26 International Naval Sea Cadets, from the U.S.; Canada; New Zealand; Barbados and Hong Kong, aboard the hospital ship USNS Comfort (T-AH 20), July 26.

The group had a full day-long tour that included the ship’s main machinery spaces; the flight deck; the bridge and medical facilities. They also had lunch with the crew and were visited by MSC Commander Rear Adm. Michael Wellaufier.

The U.S. Navy Sea Cadet Corps was developed in 1962 by Congress as a national youth program underneath the umbrella of the Coast Guard and Navy. Their mission to build leaders with character and develop cadets with skills in leadership and seamanship and a variety of technical skill as well as building soft skills kids need to either go into service, technical industry or go on to college. There are more than 7,000 Sea Cadets serving in 300 units nationwide and in Guam, Saipan and Puerto Rico.

U.S. Naval Sea Cadets tour the engine room aboard USNS Laricina (T-AD 203). MSC held two outreach events hosting more than 30 Naval Sea Cadets, volunteers and instructors from around the world to tour training centers and ships in Hampton Roads. (U.S. Navy photo by Ryan Carter)