

MAY 2021



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Military Sealift Command's fleet replenishment oiler USNS Laramie (T-AO 203) completes a refueling-at-sea with the French Navy amphibious assault ship LHD Dixmude (L9015) in the Atlantic Ocean, December 10. The refueling-at-sea with U.S. allies and partners not only fosters relations between the two nations, but also increases crew proficiencies on different setups, U.S. and France share strong relations and are active North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) partners and work together to support maritime security around the world. (U.S. Navy photo by Thomas Epps)

Military Sealift Command Replenishment Support

USNS LARAMIE REFUELS FRENCH NAVY SHIP IN NORTH ATLANTIC

By: Travis Weger, MSCEURAF Public Affairs, Sealift Magazine, February 2021

ATLANTIC OCEAN -- In a partnership between U.S. and France, Military Sealift Command Henry J. Kaiser-class USNS Laramie (T-AO 203) completed a refueling-at-sea with Mistral-class LHD Dixmude (L9015) in the Atlantic Ocean, Dec. 10. After returning from a deployment near West Africa, officials from the French Navy reached out to the U.S. Navy and asked if a vessel would be available and ready to respond to refuel Dixmude. Laramie was available and ready to respond. "It was a beautiful crisp sunny day for operations in the North Atlantic," said Second Officer Glen J. Weldon, Navigation and Operations Officer, USNS Laramie. "It is always a pleasure to have our French allies alongside!" Refueling-at-sea with U.S. allies and partners not only fosters relations between the two nations, but also increases crew proficiencies on different setups.

USNS Laramie cont. from page 1

Ships have different types of refueling stations, so performing international operations are mutually beneficial to training crews. "The refueling at sea carried out by the Laramie for the benefit of the Dixmude was a first", said French Navy ASP Céleste Guiho, Public Affairs Officer, LHD Dixmude.

"With methods that differed from those used by the Dixmude and delicate wind conditions, this refueling was an opportunity to train the crew in complex maneuvers." U.S. and France share strong relations and are active NATO partners and work together to support maritime security around the world. "France and the United States are strong allies and this demonstrates our commitment to our partnership and to the North Atlantic Treaty," said Captain Frank Okata, Commodore, Military Sealift Command Europe and Africa and Commander, Task Force 63. "To the crews of USNS Laramie and LHD Dixmude, thank you for your continued excellence. This is a job well done."

Laramie is a fleet replenishment oiler with a crew of around 75 civil-service mariners. It provides underway replenishment of fuel, fleet cargo and stores to customer ships at sea. MSC exists to support the joint warfighter across the full spectrum of military operations. Logistics-based operations like these, which is an example of the partnership between two NATO nations, demonstrates the value of MSC to U.S. Navy and allied partners.

A MERCHANT MARINE

Long ago, famed naval theorist, Admiral Alfred Mehan, advised that the key to National security was the "Sea Power Triad" consisting of naval firepower, naval bases and a merchant marine.

After World War II, the geopolitics of global cooperation, multi-nationality and containerized shipping ultimately led to significant changes. The U.S. could not be reliant on carriers whose National interests could be different from our own.

The National Defense Reserve Fleet (NDRF) was created after WWII as the Nation's reserve of sealift capacity and was employed many times in years up to 1976, when the Navy determined a

need to have a higher level of sealift readiness. The Ready Reserve Force (RRF) was created from the NDRF with planned ship readiness activation in five, 10, 20 and 30 day periods.

Today, the RRF provides vessels for surge and sustainment sealift capability to the DoD. The RRF maintains its ships in a reduced operating status, or ROS, available with five days of activation.

The RRF comprises 46 vessels lay berthed at commercial and government ports located throughout the continental United States, close to their designated load ports for faster cargo deployment.

The U.S. Navy has its own maritime cargo and logistics fleet, Military Sealift Command (MSC), ships owned by the U.S. but crewed by civil service mariners. MSC is headquartered in Norfolk, VA.

More than 125 ships were in daily operation for Military Sealift Command during fiscal 2020, delivering combat cargo and petroleum products to U.S. and coalition warfighters around the world. MSC kept the U.S. Navy's fleets supplied and underway; supported humanitarian assistance to those in need; shared expertise and techniques with maritime partners in Central America, South America and Africa; provided special mission ships for a variety of U.S. Department of Defense customers; and operated prepositioned ships to supply materials and equipment to the U.S. Army, Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps in contingency operations.

(Source: Several articles in the Navy League of the U.S. publication, Sea Power Magazine).

MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND – ATLANTIC CHANGE OF COMMAND

Military Sealift Command's leadership in the Atlantic changed hands when Navy Captain Janice G. Smith relieved Navy Captain Hans E. Lynch as Commander of Norfolk-based Military Sealift Command Atlantic during a change of command ceremony held at Naval Station Norfolk outside of MSC's headquarters on March 19, 2020. Smith is the first African-American woman to command MSCLANT.



MSC Atlantic Commander Captain Janice G. Smith, USN

Smith, a native of Jamaica West Indies, also made history in 2016 when she became the first immigrant of Jamaican descent to command a destroyer when she assumed command of the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS OSCAR AUSTIN (DDG-79). She is also one of only two active-duty African-American women within the U.S. Navy Surface Warfare Community that is screened for Major Command. Before assuming command of MSCLANT, Smith served on the staff of Carrier Strike Group Five, embarked on the forwarddeployed USS RONALD REGAN (CVN-76), conducting operations in the 7th Fleet Area of Responsibility including two deployments to the Western Pacific.

MSC is represented by five geographic area commands (Atlantic, Pacific, Europe, Middle East and Far East), which exercise tactical control of all assigned forces. The area command staffs are primarily responsible for the execution of strategic sealift missions. MSC area commanders are Navy captains who serve as the primary points of contact for MSC customers and numbered fleet commanders in their respective areas. These area commanders also serve as the MSC commander's direct link to MSC ships, providing maintenance oversight, logistics coordination, and other needed services.

(Adapted from MSCLANT press release)

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Adam J. "Jay" Fiedler, M.D.



AHOY EVERYONE

OPTIMISM! That is the word of the day. The governor is easing COVID restrictions. More members are fully vaccinated. The Victory Rover is functioning. Council's golf tournament is on and progressing well. Harbor Fest is on, but virtual (Tall Ships +/-), so a trip will not happen. James River Transportation is up and running. Perhaps a tour on Victory Rover to see Navy Base, luncheons, Mid Atlan-Maritime Academy, ship tic tours/rides, Dahlgren, Fort Lee and many other possibilities.

When trips and luncheons resume, we expect all attendees to have been vaccinated and mask wearing until further notice. Again, OPTIMISM.

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CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Chaplain John A. Harler, M.D.

When Lewis Brandt retired as Chaplain of the Richmond Navy League, he left me with a treasure chest of messages that I could use from time to time as needed. This one is a keeper, and I dedicate this month's message to Lewis Brandt.

Walter Lord wrote a book titled A Night To Remember. It was the story of the sinking of the Titanic. I remember a night aboard the USS CARTER HALL. It began with a ride in the LCAC off the beach in N.C. The hovercraft with all its occupants were swallowed into the well deck of the ship like Jonah and the great fish. Having been well received and treated to dinner, I turned in for the night. In the early hours of the morning darkness, CMC John Heistand invited me to the bridge. The officers and crew stood quietly illuminated only by the instruments. Then a command was given and we were underway. The turning of the screws could faintly be felt. We slowly began to leave a furrow in the sea as we headed for the morning. In the darkness of our lives when we ask Christ to come in, He forgives sin and gets us underway to His great morning.

DORIE MILLER: HIS BRAVERY HONORED WITH NEW SHIP



U.S. Navy Photo

U.S. Navy aircraft carriers have been formally reserved for presidents, 5-star admirals and pro-Navy politicians. Recently, Acting Secretary of the Navy, Thomas Modly parted with tradition by naming the next aircraft carrier after Dorie Miller, one of the bravest American Sailors in history. An official announcement was made on Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday to honor the young black sailor who

world War II and demonstrated immense courage in service to our country. He would become the first black American to be awarded the Navy Cross. Today, the Navy Cross is the United States military's secondhighest decoration awarded for valor in combat.

Dorie Miller, born in Waco, Texas, was the hardworking child of sharecroppers and the grandson of slaves. Purportedly, a midwife convinced Dorie's mother that she was carrying a baby girl, hence, she gave her son the birth name of Doris. He was the third of four sons and a helpful member of the household and filled his time working on his father's farm. He enlisted in the United States Navy on September 16, 1939, shortly before his 20th birthday. Dorie trained at Naval Station Norfolk in Virginia and was promoted to Mess Attendant Third Class, one of the few ratings that was open to black sailors during this time. After being assigned to the USS PYRO, an ammunition ship, he was transferred to the battleship, USS WEST VIRGINIA and became the ship's heavyweight boxing champion. He was promoted to Mess Attendant Second Class on February 16, 1941.

On December 7, 1941, after Miller served breakfast mess and collected laundry, torpedoes began hitting the WEST VIRGINIA, which was in port at Pearl Harbor. Miller reported for battle station duty, only to discover that the anti-aircraft battery magazine had been destroyed. Miller was sent to the bridge, where he assisted with moving injured sailors, including the ship's captain, out of harm's way. Miller was ordered to load the unmanned number 1 and 2 Browning .50 caliber anti-aircraft machine guns. Miller - without any formal training took control and began firing upon enemy aircraft and continued firing until he ran out of ammunition. Through numerous accounts, it is believed Miller shot down three to four enemy aircraft. When the order to abandon ship was given, he stayed behind to help carry injured sailors to safety. Through oil and water and flames, he evacuated many shipmates and finally abandoned ship before the WEST VIRGINIA sunk in the harbor.

DORIE MILLER cont. on page 4

DORIE MILLER cont. from page 3

Shortly after, Miller was transferred to the Portland-class heavy cruiser **USS INDIANAPOLIS**. At the time, he received only a single commendation for his actions as an "unnamed Negro". Miller's identity would later be revealed by the press. On May 11, President Franklin D. Roosevelt approved the Navy Cross for Miller, to be awarded for gallantry during combat.

Miller was personally recognized aboard the aircraft carrier ENTER-**PRISE** by Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet. Miller was ordered on a war bond tour while attachment to the INDIANAPO-LIS. His final assignment came aboard to the USS LISCOME BAY as Cook Third Class. Two years following Pearl Harbor, during the Battle of Markin, Miller's ship was struck by a torpedo from the Japanese submarine I-175. The LISCOME BAY sunk in less than 25 minutes, and of the 900 sailors aboard, only 272 survived. Miller was listed as "presumed dead". Though his service ended abruptly, Dorie Miller's legacy as a great American World War II hero lives on. He will forever be remembered for going "above and beyond the call of duty".

Additional interesting facts:

- In addition to the Navy Cross, Miller was awarded the Purple Heart Medal, the American Defense Service Medal, Fleet Clasp, The Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal and the World War II Victory Medal.
- The USS DORIE MILLER (CVN-81) is a future GERALD R. FORD-class aircraft carrier of the United States Navy. It is scheduled to be built in 2023 and launched in 2028.

(By: D.J. Wilson, AMAC Magazine, April 2020)

ADOPTED SHIPS UPDATE

(note: these reports may be edited to fit space available)



USS NORMANDY (CG-60)

CO: CAPT Charles Hampton
XO: CDR Theresa L. Kaylor
CMC: CMDCM Douglas Newman

Adam J. Fiedler, M.D., Liaison George L. Feitig, Jr., Ass't Liaison

NORMANDY still in the yard. No report at press time.



USS CARTER HALL (LSD-50)
CO: CDR LaDonna M. Simpson
XO: CDR Brad A. Fancher
CMC: CMDCM Adam Singleton

Pat Robson, Liaison

Greetings from the FIGHTIN 5-0!

Finally! After much build up, months of training, days upon days of maintenance, technical drills, simulations, exercises, short underways, long underways, well deck operations, flight deck operations, and so much more: the USS CARTER HALL is deployed! For many of our sailors, this is a first, and as such there has been anxiety, some worry, and even a little bit of panic. Thankfully however, we are equally as (if not even more) blessed to have seasoned leaders: tested men and women who have seized this time to mold, shape, and lead the hardworking Sailors and Marines aboard the finest vessel in Amphibious Squadron 4. Commander Brad A. Fancher, the ships Executive Officer recently stated, "We have a very resilient crew who is eager to learn and be the best on the waterfront. I am very confident that the CARTER HALL will meet every challenge and task that comes our way during deployment with the IWO ARG. We are excited and ready to go!"

As we push across the pond to carry out the nations bidding, we are encouraged to know that we are not going it alone. As members of the IWO JIMA Amphibious Ready Group (IWO ARG), we are supported by & supporting of other naval vessels loaded down with trained and ready men and women from the Navy and the Marine

Corps who are keen on overcoming the obstacles before us. Yet, the support for the Fightin' 5-0 does not stop there. Time and again the men and women of the Richmond Navy League have shown their support for our crew and mission by stepping in and stepping up in a multitude of ways. Though photos capturing this are sadly lacking, what is not lacking is the gratitude of our surprised Sailors at receiving the Deployment Dollars in recognition of their fine, necessary efforts. Thank you for building into our success through your kind gifts, wisdom, and timely words of encouragement. With your help...

We are: Working for Peace, Ready for War!

Very Respectfully, Chaplain Block LT, CHC, USN



USS GRAVELY (DDG-107)
CO: CDR Corey Odom
XO: CDR Hunter Washburn
CMC: CMDCM Dion C. Dupree

Patrick D. Harris, Liaison Alan Palmer, Consultant

Greetings from Team **GRAVELY!**We are underway to certify in engineering drills and conduct training for Anti-Submarine Warfare. Since our last underway, we have certified in multiple warfare areas to include seamanship, navigation, and visit, board, search and seizure (VBSS).

Congratulations to Team **GRAVELY** for earning the Battle E for efficiency award! Gravely was 1 of 32 ships selected from 312 total ships in the Fleet. We were also selected for 4 of 5 excellence awards: Command, Control, and Communications and Information Warfare; Logistics Management; Maritime Warfare; and 4th consecutive Ship Safety awards!

GRAVELY Sailors continue to learn and earn qualifications throughout the Basic Phase! Shout out to Weapons Department for a successful ammunition on load, planning and executing gunshoots, and training new

GRAVELY continued on page 5

GRAVELY continued from page 4

sailors in security reaction force (basic)! High praise to Deck Division as they helped rig the ship for a towing exercise in port, and lead the way in ship preservation with Navigation Division!

April was Women's History Month. We think of women, like Alma Gravely, who are strong and continue to inspire other women, young and old, to do great things!

Report for May

We are underway again. During our April underway we spent time training in Engineering, Anti-Submarine Warfare, Electronic Warfare, Cryptologic Warfare, and mooring to a buoy.

Happy 128th Birthday to the Chief Petty Officers of the Navy! Team **GRAVELY** celebrated with a ceremony and ice cream social on April 1st.

On April 13, Team Gravely took steps to #SinkCOVID by conducting a SHOTEX. We were able to get half of the crew their vaccinations for COVID-19! We are looking forward to round two!

Congratulations to Senior Chief Electronics Technician Barrett on his reenlistment after 22 years in the Navy! CDR Odom stated, "People are our legacy. I am lucky to have served with people as great as him".

Congratulations to EM3 Campbell for being selected as Destroyer Squadron 28's Blue Jacket of the Year! Also, congratulations to RS1 Nyarko for being selected as Destroyer Squadron 28's Sailor of the Year!

The following are our Hard Chargers for their efforts during our April underway: FCA3 Corley, OSSN Delatore, ET3 Bryant, GM2 Comfort, and LSSN Brooks. We also had the amazing opportunity to pin nine new Enlisted Surface Warefare Specialists!

Team **GRAVELY** continues to certify in our Basic Phase events. Our Naval Surface Fire Support team qualified with an outstanding score of 94 out of 100! Our Engineers have certified, thus completing our Tier 1 training events. Next up are Tier 2 Warfare Areas!

Very Respectfully, Christina Y. Jonas, LTJG, USN, PAO



USCGC NORTHLAND (WMEC-904)
CO: CDR Patricia M. Bennett
XO: LCDR Joshua DiPietro
COB: GMC Robert Boyer

Thomas T. Hassell, Jr., Liaison Vaughan F. Dize, Assistant Liaison

Greetings from USCGC NORTHLAND! With the arrival of spring brought the NORTHLAND to the end of her Gulf of Mexico fisheries patrol and back to home port in Virginia. The end of patrol was lively and exciting and included disembarking our Aviation Detachment, continued boarding's as NORTHLAND traversed from the Gulf of Mexico back to the Atlantic, one final port call in Miami, and conducting an ammunition offload at Naval Base Norfolk before arriving home.

The last few weeks of NORTH-LAND's patrol were filled with exciting events before we left the Gulf. After disembarking the helicopter crew and helicopter near the coast of Texas, NORTHLAND began making way toward Florida, conducting successful boarding's along the way to continue promoting and enforcing safe fishing and boating habits throughout the Gulf. One boarding of note involved a vessel that failed to respond to our hailing and signaling and failed heave to, instead it kept making way as if we were not just a few hundred yards away in broad daylight, sounding our whistle signal and sirens, flashing our lights and hailing them on the radio. Once onboard, our Boarding Team discovered the reason, the vessel's conning officer and the rest of the crew were fast asleep with all navigational equipment secured. The vessels conning officer woke-up quickly when a full boarding team made a tactical entry onto his bridge!

As we made our way back home, we made a brief stop off the Western Florida coast to give the crew a swim call at sea. It was a fun and relaxing time following a patrol that was filled with hard work. Our final port call was in Miami, this port call marked one year of COVID restrictions for the cutter, particularly, one year of only pier liberty at port calls. The crew partook in a special event, created by the most ex-

perienced sailors, to commemorate the past year. The "Order of the Pier Ceremony" borrowed heavily from a traditional line crossing ceremony, but with a special COVID theme. The event was a fun reminder of how far we've come as a crew during the pandemic, increasing camaraderie among the crew.

Upon returning to the home port, the crew was again given liberty, and was ecstatic to return to their homes, families, and loved ones. Following a much-deserved break, the crew looks forward to knocking out important projects ahead of our upcoming patrol.

As always, thank you for the support! Fair Winds and Following Seas!

Very Respectfully, XO LCDR Joshua DiPietro

AMERICA SEA CADETS - FIELD TRAINING

For more than a year, Sea Cadet training has been mostly virtual due to COVID restrictions. As the restrictions are beginning to ease, training is beginning to take to the field.



Cadet qualifying with .22 caliber pistol at Boondocks Gun Club, Montpelier, VA on April 3, 2021.

SAVE THE DATES

June 30 - Summer Luncheon September 22 - Annual Golf Outing

Details in next Lucky Bag issue

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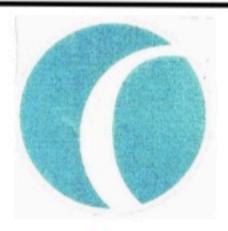




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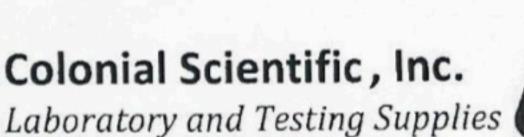
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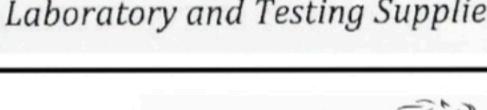
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