

July 2007

S.E.A.L.I.F.T

THE U.S. NAVY'S MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND

Elite training

Grasp trains with Naval Special Warfare

U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Eddie D. Harrison

INSIDE — Comfort departs for humanitarian mission • Shasta rescues five from stranded ship

Fitness for life

Last November, I attended a conference where Adm. John Nathman, then commander of Fleet Forces Command, spoke strongly and unequivocally about a culture of fitness.

"The demands of our profession require that each of us be physically fit and mentally tough at all times," said the admiral. "This is a pure readiness issue, and it requires commitment at the com-

mand level to make fitness a priority, to provide healthy food choices and to make exercise time available. This is also a life-long investment each of us should make for our families and ourselves."

Adm. Gary Roughead assumed command of FFC in May and firmly believes in the culture of fitness, too.

So do I. And it is a matter of readiness, not only for our active duty personnel and our mariners aboard ship, but for each one of us ashore and, through us, for our families. The keys to maintaining a culture of fitness for ourselves and our families are a healthy diet and a regular fitness program.

It's up to all of us to educate and encourage ourselves and our families to make healthy food choices and to participate in regular exercise activities. I encourage everyone in the command, and in our extended families, to make healthy eating and a regular exercise program a routine part of our daily living.

The good news is that it's never too late to make changes in your eating and exercise habits if you want to control weight and maintain your cardiovascular fitness. And those changes don't have to be as big as you might think. Again, the key is to make what you do a routine – something that you practice regularly.

First, try to exercise every day. It doesn't have to be hard-core exercising, either. Walk, swim, stretch – they're all good ways to exercise. No time?

How about taking the stairs instead of the elevator whenever possible? Or parking farther away from the elevator (or stairwell if you're being really good) in the parking garage?

For the active duty military, we have processes in place to allow for involvement in a routine physical exercise program and to monitor weight and overall physical fitness. As an extra incentive on the most recent cycle of physical fitness testing, I have challenged all the military members of MSC to beat my record in the physical readiness test.

Those military members who exceed my score will get two days liberty (at the discretion of their unit commanders).

At this time, we do not have a formal physical readiness program for our civilian employees, but we're looking for incentives to encourage everyone to reach for and maintain a good personal fitness level. This can certainly be a challenge for our civilian service mariners at sea, but it is far from impractical – you just have to commit to do better by yourself.

In terms of nutrition, dieting over and over again to lose a few pounds is probably not worth the effort. Instead, try to make healthy choices every day. Cutting 100 calories a day from your diet (half of a candy bar) will help you lose ten pounds in a year. Delete the whole candy bar, and you're down 20 pounds in a year. That's a pretty painless way to lose weight, but you've got to be consistent. Cutting calories is just one element of a good diet. Eating the right foods is just as important. The experts say that means eating at least five servings of fruits and vegetables every day.

What's a serving?

- One medium-sized fruit
- 1/2 cup raw, cooked, frozen or canned fruits (in 100 percent juice) or vegetables
- 3/4 cup (6 oz.) 100 percent fruit or vegetable juice
- 1/2 cup cooked, canned or frozen legumes (beans and peas)
- 1 cup raw, leafy vegetables
- 1/4 cup dried fruit

You also need about five ounces of protein each day. That's not as much as you might think. Three ounces of meat is about 85 grams, or the size of a deck of playing cards. Here's how it looks in some familiar food items.

- 1 small steak = 3.5 to 4 ounces
- 1 small chicken breast = 3 ounces
- 1 small lean hamburger = 2 to 3 ounces
- 1 can tuna = 3 to 4 ounces
- 1 salmon steak = 4 to 6 ounces
- 1 cup split pea, lentil or bean soup = 2 ounces
- 1 soy burger = 2 ounces

I know that doesn't sound like much, especially if you've just worked a hard watch or are used to eating much larger portions. But, change starts with awareness. And you don't have to make changes all in one big jump. Start small and work your way to where you want to be. The key is being consistent and maintaining a routine. There are a lot of references out there that you can use to help you find the correct diet. I encourage each of you to find your favorite reference and use it as your guide to a healthy diet. Not sure what's a good reference since it seems that there are probably thousands of books, tapes, CDs and DVDs discussing health and personal physical fitness? Check with your local health care educator and find one that's right for you.

The shipboard environment offers some unique challenges as relates to diet and exercise. However, aboard our government-owned, government-operated ships, we're providing Healthy Heart choices at mealtime. We're training our stewards, cooks and galley crews how to make more nutritious, yet tasty, meals for hard-working MSC crews at sea. One of the deadliest traps is eating right after your watch and hitting the rack immediately. Try to be active for an hour

or so after meals. Even though facilities are limited, I encourage you always to take advantage of the opportunity to exercise routinely on your off hours.

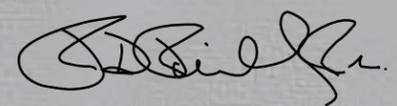
Keep working at it until eating right becomes a habit. Keep exercising until that becomes routine.

Let me close this article with a confession; namely, that I'm an individual who has always had to deal with the "battle of the bulge." From my high school days to my time on the college campus, I never let my personal health get in the way of a good meal or a good time.

As a high school football player and an active Navy ROTC midshipman in the '70s, I could walk that tightrope between good health and borderline obesity. Lucky for me, the Navy's physical readiness program kept me honest in the health and fitness department, although I never got any awards for having a "recruiting poster" appearance. I am now the proud owner of a quality treadmill with extra cushioning support (on account of my sore knees), and a slightly used, professional grade weight machine (thanks to eBay). I'm not setting any speed or lifting records these days but exercising to forestall the effects of aging. And, just as important, because I feel a whole heck of a lot better afterwards. My "vitals" are good, including low blood pressure and cholesterol, and I read a lot of food labels these days. And although the bones are tired, the back gets sore and my doc has introduced me to a new medical term "pre (exercise)-medicate," my goal is to exercise, eat better and continue to drive my family (including my three daughters) crazy for many years to come. It sure beats the alternative.

So, what's your plan?

Keep the faith!



Robert D. Reilly Jr.
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy
Commander, Military Sealift Command

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COMSC Rear Adm. Robert D. Reilly Jr., USN
Director, Public Affairs Timothy Boulay
Editor Rosemary Heiss
Writers Edward Baxter, Singapore
Bill Cook, Norfolk, Va.
Susan Melow, Norfolk, Va.
Laura Seal, Washington
Gillian Brigham, Naples
Dale Allen, Washington
Art Director Susan Thomas, Washington
Graphics

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USNS Comfort departs on humanitarian mission

By Laura M. Seal
MSC Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command hospital ship USNS Comfort departed Naval Station Norfolk June 15 for a four-month humanitarian assistance mission to Latin America and the Caribbean.

As the towering ship steamed away from the pier, the families of Comfort's civil service mariners, or CIVMARs, and military crew members were treated to a breathtaking sight as they waved farewell to their loved ones. Three times the size of most of the warships resting pierson in the foreground, Comfort dominated the view.

The ship will be a symbol of U.S. goodwill and generosity. Comfort rises about four stories above the waterline, stretches the length of three football fields and is adorned simply by 10 large, red crosses visible from shore.

"America is the most generous nation in the world, and this mission is our way of showing that," said Capt. Ed Nanartowich, the ship's civil service master. "This is a great opportunity for the Navy and our mariners to show the compassionate side of our workforce."

Comfort will visit Belize, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago.

At each stop U.S. military doctors and nurses from the ship's medical treatment facility will work with a variety of embarked governmental and non-governmental agencies as well as medical professionals from host nations to treat about 1,000 patients per day, providing immunizations, general and specialty surgeries, dental care and vision services.

An embarked Seabee detachment will join forces with Comfort's CIVMARs to provide engineering support including medical facility repairs and minor construction projects at each location.

Comfort's mission, part of U.S. Southern Command's Partnership for the Americas, is modeled in part on

the humanitarian assistance deployment that Comfort's sister ship USNS Mercy conducted last year to Southeast Asia and the Western Pacific. On that mission, Mercy's medical team treated more than 60,000 people.

This is Comfort's first deployment since returning from the U.S. Gulf Coast in October 2005, where the ship spent more than a month providing medical assistance in the wake of hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Comfort and Mercy originally entered Navy service to provide a platform on which to treat wounded U.S. war fighters during times of conflict. In recent years, however, the ships have been used primarily to respond to great humanitarian needs at home and abroad.

CIVMARs — up to the challenge

The focus of Comfort's deployment is to provide medical services; however, the work of MSC's 68 CIVMARs will be pivotal to the mission's success. Doctors can't treat patients they can't get to, and doctors can't operate in a hospital without water and electricity.

"The number one role of CIVMARs on this mission is the navigation and operation of the ship — running the engineering plant that supplies the hospital with water and electricity and making sure that we get from point A to point B safely," said Nanartowich.

These are not easy tasks. Many of the planned stops will require the crew to navigate Comfort through extensive reefs and complicated waterways that prove challenging even to more maneuverable vessels. For example, in Belize, Nanartowich and his deck crew will need to guide the massive floating hospital through the world's second largest barrier reef.

"To prepare for Belize, I transposed a channel with the same depths onto a chart of the Virginia Capes, and we took Comfort out there to do a practice run,"

USNS Comfort civil service master Capt. Ed Nanartowich



"This is a great opportunity for the Navy and our mariners to show the compassionate side of our workforce."



said Nanartowich. "The day we did that run, we had nasty conditions. Winds were up to 36 knots; the sea was up to eight feet. However, using electronic chart display information systems and GPS, we tracked through flawlessly."

In Belize and most other countries on the itinerary, Comfort will not be able to pull into port because their waters are not deep enough to accommodate the ship's draft.

In these instances, the ship will anchor offshore, and the CIVMARs will operate two 33-foot utility boats to transport patients between the shore and the ship. The utility boats, *Hospitality 1* and *Hospitality 2*, as they have been named by the CIVMAR crew, are painted white with red crosses. They will be able to move up to five times as many patients as the ship's two embarked helicopters.

Complicated navigation charts and demanding small-boat operations will dominate the workload of the deck department.

Below the waterline in Comfort's massive engineering plant, CIVMARs are not only keeping the engine running so that the ship can make its commitments on time, they are also powering an entire hospital.

"Without a functioning engineering plant, this mission couldn't happen," said Matt Clark, first engineer aboard Comfort. "We get the ship to its destination and provide the hospital with the electricity and fresh water it needs to operate."

On a mission like this, a loss of power doesn't simply shut out the lights but could mean the difference between life and death.

The humanitarian focus makes Comfort's current mission different from those that the CIVMARs are used to. "Most of the other ships my crew and I have sailed on have had a specific operational objective supporting the Navy," said Nanartowich. "This is a unique mission in that we are going out there to do humanitarian assistance."

"I had mariners coming out of the woodwork to participate in this mission," he added.

"I have been with MSC for 10 years, and of the many missions that I have been on, this is going to be one of the most challenging ones since it is a humanitarian mission," said Mario Geonzon, an able seaman aboard Comfort who has served on oilers, fleet ocean tugs and cable-laying ships in the past. "This is going to be a great run."

"I couldn't be happier to be aboard Comfort for this humanitarian mission," said Don Steele, also an able seaman aboard Comfort. "It's a good way of giving back." This is Steele's first mission with MSC, but he has extensive experience at sea prior to joining the organization.

"It is a privilege and an honor for Military Sealift Command to be part of such an important deployment," said Nanartowich. "The ship's crew and I are looking forward to being part of a productive and highly rewarding mission."

Shasta crew rescues five after fire disables cargo vessel

By Edward Baxter
SEALOGFE Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command ammunition ship USNS Shasta provided physical and monetary support for five mariners whose vessel caught fire and was rendered helpless by an engine fire in May near Saipan.

Just after sunset May 12, Shasta's civil service master Capt. Rollin Bellfi received a distress call from U.S. Navy's 7th Fleet Battle Watch Center. MV Haurosi, a commercial cargo ship registered in the Solomon Islands, had activated its distress beacon near the Pacific island of Saipan.

When Shasta's crew received the distress call, the ship changed course immediately and traveled at full speed, making the 90-mile voyage to Haurosi's last known location in about four hours.

Crew members used the transit time to prepare the flight deck for helicopter operations and make ready Shasta's towing and firefighting equipment for the work that was to come. "As we approached, we could see the crew on deck waving flashlights," said Bellfi.

Meanwhile, a U.S. Navy rescue helicopter, which had flown from Guam, hovered above the stricken Solomon Island-flagged vessel.

"We brought the helicopter aboard for a night landing so it could refuel and continue operations," said Bellfi.

Shasta's crew dispatched a boarding team in the ship's rigid-hull, inflatable boat. Once aboard the distressed vessel, Robert Foor, a civil service cargo officer, assessed the damage and condition of the cargo ship crew. A major engine-room fire had been extinguished, but the 90-foot Haurosi was drifting without propulsion or power.

"They were a bit exhausted but appeared to be in good shape," Foor said of the rescued crew. All five crew members from the Solomon Islands were then ferried to Shasta, where they received general medical services, hot meals, clean clothing and places to sleep.

Shasta remained close to the ship throughout the night, setting up temporary lighting. The following morning, challenged by rain showers and gusty winds, Shasta attached a towline to Haurosi and set course for Saipan, the nearest port.

"We had a lot of rigging to accomplish to get the towing bridle aboard and in its place," said Ronald Hanses, a civil service bosun mate and one of the key players in the boarding team. "Without mechanical power, it was a tough job pulling a towing rib from one ship to another. It helps to have that knack for improvising." Shasta's crew took up a collection and donated more than \$800 to Haurosi's crew members, and then delivered them safely to authorities in Saipan May 14.

"We were well equipped and had the seamanship experience to provide assistance for this rescue," Bellfi said. "There is a support network out there, always on watch, and we are part of it."



MSC ammunition ship USNS Shasta rescued five foreign mariners who were stranded when their ship's engine room caught fire. The vessel was stranded near Saipan, in the south Pacific Ocean.

Special operators benefit from ...Grasp

Article and photos by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Eddie D. Harrison
Joint Forces Maritime Component Command Europe Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command's rescue and salvage ship USNS Grasp and its crew worked with Naval Special Warfare personnel off the west coast of Africa to recover special operations gear May 14 during a joint exercise.

To some of Grasp's crew members, the scene was reminiscent of a James Bond movie — complete with a parachute-filled sky and small, fast boats racing around the operating area.

During this exercise, Flexible Leader 2007, Grasp's crew supported a special operations team after two C-130s dropped special operators and rigid-hull, inflatable boats during a maneuver called a maritime craft air delivery system drop.

What comes down must go up

For the air drop, C-130s used parachutes to drop boats and special ops crews into the exercise operating area. The parachutes and associated bundling equipment were left behind in the water when special operators sped toward their objective in their just-landed boats.

More than 20 special operations personnel — including divers, parachute riggers and hospital corpsmen — helped Grasp's civil service crew retrieve the parachutes and cradles for use during future special operations missions.

"There's stuff everywhere out there that we want

back," said Chief Navy Diver Scott Jarrard, Naval Special Warfare Unit 2. "It really takes an effort to get it all."

Grasp's civil service mariners showed their expertise by quickly recovering all the equipment, including smaller inflatable boats used by the special operations safety teams.

Those teams used the four-meter boats, called Zodiacs, to move around the exercise area and ensure the risky operations were executed without any mishaps.

The exercise included a variety of training scenarios to improve the response time and cohesiveness of a joint forces maritime component command, which provides direct support to Commander Naval Forces Europe/Commander U.S. 6th Fleet.

Although much of the exercise was computer based, Grasp participated in the live portion that honed Navy SEALs and Special Warfare Combatant-craft Crewmen skills and ensured a critical special operations capability: rapid insertion any-

where in a maritime environment.

Pride in a job well done

For some of Grasp's crew, this unique opportunity to work with elite naval special operations forces was a first.

"There is so much to learn here and so much to see," said ordinary seaman Andy Vogelheim. "Every job is a challenge, not just for the ship but the whole crew."

When involved in an exercise that takes a great deal of precision, the crew must be prepared. The mission benefitted from Grasp's flexibility. Because of the large deck and some of the on-board equipment, Grasp can be used for a variety of different missions.

"This is exactly what the Navy intended us for," said Capt. Jose Delfaus, Grasp's civil service master. "We are designed to use our heavy lift booms, to pick up gear, to put swimmers in the water and to put boats in the water. It's what we're about."

The crew was extremely proud to support CNE-

"This is exactly what the Navy intended us for. We are designed to use our heavy lift booms, to pick up gear, to put swimmers in the water and to put boats in the water. It's what we're about."

Capt. Jose Delfaus, master, USNS Grasp



Four Zodiacs — the small, inflatable boats used by the special operations safety teams — stand ready for launch on the deck of Grasp.

From civil service mariners to aids in Naval Special Warfare training

C6F and naval special operations forces and performed without incident.

“Everything went as planned, and everyone made it back safely, so there is a feeling of great achievement,” said Grasp’s civil service chief mate James Morrissey.

Grasp joined USS Mount Whitney

Grasp, delivered in 2006, is the first of three rescue and salvage ships to be transferred to MSC for civil service crewing. A fourth and final ship is scheduled to turn over to MSC in September. These ships render assistance to disabled ships, provide towing, salvage, diving, firefighting and heavy lift capabilities to the fleet.

Grasp was one of two MSC ships joining Special Operations Command Europe and guided missile frigate USS Kauffman in the live portion of the exercise.

U.S. 6th Fleet command ship USS Mount Whitney acted as the exercise’s command and control platform. The ship is a unique part of the MSC fleet. Mount Whitney has a hybrid crew that includes both military personnel and MSC civil service mariners. The ship is commanded by a U.S. Navy captain.

Mariners perform the ship’s day-to-day operations, including navigation, deck, engineering, laundry and galley services. Military personnel operate command, control, communication and intelligence equipment suites; helicopters; and weapon systems, among others.



Above: Naval Special Warfare boats are released from two C-130 aircraft into the Atlantic Ocean during a maritime craft air delivery system drop May 14. Rescue and salvage ship USNS Grasp served as a drop zone extraction surface support platform in the retrieval portion of the live exercise.



This page: Grasp hoists bundling equipment left behind by Naval Special Warfare boats that were air dropped into the Atlantic.

Cover: Personnel from Naval Special Warfare Unit 2 board Grasp from Zodiacs that were used during the exercise.

HQ • HIGHLIGHTS

Military Sealift Command acting Equal Employment Opportunity Officer **Patricia Paige** helped MSC headquarters mark Asian Pacific American Heritage month in May by coordinating a lunchtime festival, including hula dancers and food tasting from many Asian Pacific nations.

MSC's environmental program was recognized when fleet replenishment oiler USNS John Ericsson received the Navy's two top environmental awards in the small ship category at a ceremony in Washington, D.C., June 7. The ship's crew earned awards from the secretary of the Navy and the chief of Naval operations for their outstanding work. Civil service **Capt. John Pope**, Ericsson's master, and **Fred Woody**, Military Sealift Fleet Support Command's fleet oiler class manager, were there to accept the awards.

In May, six MSC employees received the Navy's 2006 Competition and Procurement Excellence Award for chartering three ships within 72 hours to rescue more than 6,700 Americans from Lebanon in July 2006. The award recipients were **Ken Allen**, **Lee Anderson**, **Olivia Bradley** and **Lance Lyman** from Contracts and Business Management; **Tim Pickering** from the Sealift Program; and **Dan Wentzell** from Counsel.

MSC welcomes **Joseph Cowen**, Command, Control, Communica-

tions and Computer Systems; **Jennie Kopelson**, Strategic Planning; **Fred Woody**, Engineering; and **Master Chief Kenneth Green**, force master chief.

MSC also welcomes the following summer interns: **TaQuasha Wallace** and **Nicole Young**, Maritime Forces and Manpower Management; **Markeisha Gould**, Command, Control, Communications and Computer Systems; **Christopher Adams**, **Jake Bauer**, **William Bertholf**, **Raymond Boehling**, **Andrej Cerni**, **Daniel Ross**, **Robert Sweeney** and **Justin Wesselhoft**, Engineering; **Robert McCabe**, Comptroller; **Breanne Mabe**, Contracts and Business Management; **Matthew Bialas** and **Eric Gardner**, Naval Fleet Auxiliary Force; and **John Pedro**, Public Affairs.

MSC bids farewell to **Chief Information Systems Technician Derek Jefferson**, Command, Control, Communications and Computer Systems; **Donald Jones** and **Mary Ellen Stone**, Maritime Forces and Manpower Management; **Karen Cherry** and **Avelino Gloria**, Comptroller; **Joyce Maynard**, Operations and Plans; **James Kent**, Engineering; **Teresa Smith**, Strategic Planning; **Lisa Turlington**, Contracts and Business Management; **Steven Coney**, Administrative Service Center; and **Kathleen Sarran**, Naval Fleet Auxiliary Force.

COMPASS • HEADING

Military Sealift Fleet Support Command's civil service mariners and those staff members ashore who maintain U.S. Coast Guard documents can access a new Web site where they can see the status of new or renewing U.S. Coast Guard document applications. Mariners can track documents throughout the verification and approval process by going to the Web site — <http://homeport.uscg.mil> — and clicking first on the Merchant Mariners tab and then the Merchant Mariner Application Status tab.

Civil service **Capt. Keith Walzak** and the crew of ammunition ship USNS Mount Baker supported 22 congressional staffers during their tour of the ship in Naval Weapons Station Earle, N.J., in May.

The visitors received a tour of the ship's main deck and bridge as well as a brief history of the ship and its mission. "We made a good impression," Walzak said.

Rear Adm. Robert D. Reilly Jr. visited MSFSC May 30. While there, he officiated at an all-hands call for the staff working in Hampton Roads, Va.

Navy **Capt. Alphonso Woods** relieved Navy **Capt. Fred McKenna** as acting deputy of MSFSC. A Virginia native and graduate of Prairie View A & M University, Woods earned a Master of Science Degree in computer science. His at-sea assignments include serving as commissioning operations officer on then fast combat support ship USS Supply, and he commanded transportable port security boat USS Guardian and amphibious forces ship USS Whidbey Island.

McKenna retired from MSFSC and the U.S. Navy at a ceremony in May.

MSFSC's **Acting Executive Director Jack Taylor** welcomes **Mike Ricci** as the new MSFSC T-AE/AOE class manager. Ricci, a graduate of Maine Maritime Academy, holds an unlimited horsepower chief engineer's license and has worked for MSC since 1987. As class manager, Ricci will be responsible for planning, directing, supervising and monitoring the daily readiness of ammunition ships and fast combat support ships. He will provide oversight for fiscal, operational, maintenance, senior ship leadership, logistics and contracting issues.

Chief Engineer James Shirley reported to MSFSC headquarters as the new Port Chief Engineer West. Shirley relieved **Port Chief Engineer Charles Smith** in late May.

Farewell to **Fred Woody**, class manager for the T-AO fleet. He departed MSFSC to take a position at Military Sealift Command headquarters.

Woody's new position focuses on the management and establishment of command policy for the safety management system.

MSFSC thanks the following civil service mariners as they retire: **Luis Berrios**, 3rd assistant engineer; **Barbara DeMarco**, purser; **Gary Pepper**, wiper; **Jorge Rodriguez**, utilityman; **Robert Roy Jr.**, 1st officer; **Pacifico Saria**, chief steward; and **James Ward**, 3rd assistant engineer. MSFSC extends condolences to the family and friends of **Electronics Technician Alexander Ragadio** who passed away in early May.

For more information about MSFSC and news from around the fleet, the MSFSC newsletter is online at www.msc.navy.mil/msfsc/newsletter.

PACIFIC • BRIEFS

Fleet replenishment oiler USNS Henry J. Kaiser spent early May in the Gulf of Alaska in support of Pacific Fleet ships participating in Exercise Northern Edge, a joint training evolution focusing on interoperability among units of U.S. forces at sea and ashore in the Alaskan operating area.

Fleet replenishment oiler USNS John Ericsson was under way off the Pacific Northwest coast while participating in Exercise Trident Fury in May.

This combined-forces exercise is designed to demonstrate and improve integration and operability between U.S. and Canadian naval forces in support of common maritime defense objectives.

Fleet ocean tug USNS Navajo towed the submarine ex-USS Sailfish from Bremerton, Wash., to the Exercise Trident Fury operating area to provide a weapons target for units participating in the exercise.

Military Sealift Command-chartered container and roll-on/roll-off ship MV Global Patriot arrived at Military Ocean Terminal in Concord, Calif., from U.S. Central Command in May to load ammunition in support of Operation Turbo Containerized Ammunition Distribution System 2007.

Tanker USNS Richard G. Matthiesen completed a refueling with fleet replenishment oiler USNS Yukon in the Southern California operating area in May.

Civil service **Capt. Robert Jaeger**

reported aboard dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Richard E. Byrd at the NASSCO shipyard in San Diego for duty as the ship's first master.

Civil service **Capt. John Pope** relieved civil service **Capt. Robert T. Wiley** on fleet replenishment oiler USNS John Ericsson. Civil service **Capt. Kerry Porterfield** resigned

from MSC to become a San Diego harbor pilot.

Navy **Information Systems Technician 1st Class Jeffrey Carlisle** reported aboard combat stores ship USNS San Jose and Navy **Electronics Technician 1st Class Christopher Conn** reported aboard fast combat support ship USNS Rainier.

Sealift Logistics Command Pacific says farewell to Navy **Chief Information Systems Technician Gene Detweiler** and Navy **Yeoman 1st Class Angela A. Quizhuiz** who returned to sea duty.

Navy **Information Systems Technician 1st Class Michael Stack** separated from the Navy.



Dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Richard E. Byrd is launched May 15 during an evening ceremony at the General Dynamics NASSCO shipyard in San Diego. Nearly 1,500 people attended.

FAR • EAST • HAILS

Capt. Thomas Tankersly, master of container and roll-on/roll-off ship MV 1st Lt. Alex Bonnyman, hosted Young Ryong Kim, Republic of Korea's vice minister of national defense, the equivalent of the U.S. deputy secretary of defense, on a tour of the ship near Guam. The minister received a mission brief from Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron Three by Navy **Cmdr. John Eckardt**, commanding officer of Ship Support Unit, Guam. The squadron's material officer, Navy **Lt. j.g. Elizabeth Harris**, assisted Eckardt.

Later, Bonnyman hosted distinguished visitors as Gen. Kwan Jin Kim, Republic of Korea's chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, and Air Force Maj. Gen. Stephen T. Sargeant, deputy chief of staff, United Nations Command/U.S. Forces, Korea, received a brief on the squadron's mission as well as a tour of the vessel.

Navy **Capt. Dennis O'Meara** and supply officer Navy **Ensign Ben Murphy** attended a ceremony on Saipan in honor of Memorial Day. O'Meara and Commonwealth of Northern Marianas acting Governor Timothy Villagomez participated in a wreath-laying ceremony honoring thousands of troops who perished on Saipan during World War II.

Members from MPS Squadron Three participated in the annual Top Gun marksmanship competition at the San Juan Target Range on Saipan.

Hosted by the Saipan Police Depart-

ment, the competition pitted members from various law enforcement agencies, the FBI and local military personnel in a competitive shoot-out to determine the most accurate shot on the island. MPS Squadron Three's team captain, Navy **Chief Gunner's Mate David Price**, served as the range safety officer.

Other squadron competitors included civilian mariners **Capt. Richard Smith**, **Chief Mate Shawn Kennedy** and **2nd Mate Andrew Doran** from container ship MV Maj. Bernard F. Fisher. The team battled both heat and fatigue to narrowly miss a top-three finish.

"We went against really good teams and barely missed a trophy," said Smith. "I can't wait to come out next year."

Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Alexander Soe** relieved Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Steve Speight** as commanding officer, Military Sealift Command Office, Okinawa, during a ceremony at Sealift Logistics Command Far East headquarters in Singapore. Soe most recently served as executive officer of MSCO, Korea.

At Diego Garcia's United Seamen's Service center, civilian **Capt. Deanna Dennis**, master of container and roll-on/roll-off ship MV Pfc. William B. Baugh, and civilian **Capt. Wilbur Dahn**, master of container and roll-on/roll-off ship SS Pfc. Eugene A. Obregon, both spoke at a ceremony attended by more than 85 guests from the local military community and British forces element.



U.S. Navy photo

U.S. Navy **Capt. Susan Dunlap**, commander, Sealift Logistics Command Far East, and **Capt. Robert Burke**, master of container and roll-on/roll-off ship SS Maj. Stephen W. Pless, observe Maritime Day during a May 18 ceremony in Busan, Korea. Mariners were honored by Military Sealift Command worldwide during ceremonies in Washington, D.C., Diego Garcia, Okinawa and Korea.

At Okinawa's Seamen's center, Navy **Capt. Samuel Howard**, chief of staff, Amphibious Force, U.S. 7th Fleet was the principal speaker. About 170 guests attended including Lt. Gen. Joseph F. Weber, commanding general, 3rd Marine Expeditionary Force and commander, Marine Corps Bases, Japan.

Navy **Capt. Susan Dunlap**, commander, Sealift Logistics Command Far East, visited missile range instrumentation ship USNS Observation Island at the nearby Sembawang Shipyard in Singapore. Ship's master civil-

ian **Capt. Gus Malihoutsakis** led Dunlap on a tour of the vessel.

Navy **Lt. Richard McVoy** reported to SEALOGFE as the command's Naval Fleet Auxiliary Force officer.

Navy **Capt. Ulysses Zalamea** relieved Navy **Capt. Dennis O'Meara** as MPS Squadron Three commander in a ceremony held aboard container and roll-on/roll-off ship USNS 1st Lt. Jack Lummus. MPS Squadron Three welcomed chief staff officer Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Pablo Mir**, who replaced Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Chris Davis**.

EUROPE • NEWS

U.S. Air Force Gen. Norton A. Schwartz, commander, U.S. Transportation Command, visited U.S. Naval Forces Europe and U.S. 6th Fleet headquarters in Naples, Italy, during a nine-day trip to the U.S. European Command area of operations.

While in Naples, Schwartz met with Sealift Logistics Command Europe commander Navy **Capt. Nick Holman** and greeted SEALOGEUR staffers during a tour of the office. The general also met with Navy Adm. Harry Ulrich, commander, U.S. Naval Forces Europe, and a number of other flag officers on the U.S. 6th Fleet staff.

Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron One bid farewell to its outgoing commodore Navy **Capt. Jim Driscoll**. His next tour is as Professor of Naval Science at the State University of New York Maritime College. The

squadron welcomed Navy **Capt. Clay Saunders**, from Joint Forces Command Brussum in The Netherlands.

SEALOGEUR bid farewell to long-time Command, Control, Communication and Computer Systems Director **John Toscano**, who left Naples after spending more than six years with the command. Toscano, who has worked with MSC for more than a decade, returned to his hometown of San Diego to work for Ship Support Unit, Pacific.

SEALOGEUR also said goodbye to the command's Naval Fleet Auxiliary Force and Special Mission Ships operations officer Navy **Lt. Leonardo Giovannelli** in May.

In May, the command's operations department welcomed aboard Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Ederlaida Ritter**, who reported from Amphibious Squadron 11 in Sasebo, Japan.

CENTRAL • CURRENTS

Military Sealift Command combat stores ship USNS Saturn departed the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations following a successful deployment in support of maritime security operations, operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom and the global war on terrorism. Saturn provided outstanding support to USS John C. Stennis and USS Dwight D. Eisenhower strike groups, as well as other U.S. and coalition

ships. Saturn safely and efficiently conducted 75 replenishment events, transferred more than 290,000 gallons of fuel and delivered more than 2,310 metric tons of cargo during the deployment.

Saturn's commercial helicopter detachment safely conducted more than 57 flight hours, moved 25 passengers and transferred more than 2,310 pallets of mission-essential food, cargo and supplies.

ATLANTIC • LINES

Container and roll-on/roll-off ship USNS 2nd Lt. John P. Bobo recently discharged cargo that began U.S. Marine Corps maintenance cycle nine. U.S. Navy lighterage, containers, rolling stock and 36,500 barrels of fuel were discharged.

Marine transportation specialists **Richard Bolduc** and **Charlie Leblanc** deployed to Nicaragua, and marine transportation specialist **Norbert Benitz** deployed to Honduras in conjunction with New Horizons missions.

Container ship MV A1C William H. Pitsenbarger, one of four prepositioning ships MSC manages for the U.S. Air Force, returned to Military Ocean Terminal Sunny Point in Southport, N.C., after shipyard maintenance. The vessel received an extensive ship overhaul, replacing much of the steel hull. The ship arrived at the terminal to upload Air Force prepositioning containers.

SEALOGLANT representative **Tom D'Agostino**, Charleston,

S.C., assisted with a joint training exercise for the local U.S. Coast Guard vessel boarding and security team in May. The training scenario took place on large, medium-speed, roll-on/roll-off ship USNS Dahl. The U.S. Coast Guard boarded Dahl via helicopter to take positive control of the vessel and begin the search for stowaways. Local law enforcement agencies, as well as several federal agencies, took part in the training.

Kudos to fleet replenishment oilers USNS Leroy Grumman and USNS Laramie from the May USS Kearsarge Expeditionary Strike Group Composite Training Unit exercise and USS Enterprise Carrier Strike Group sustainment exercise, respectively.

Grumman and Laramie were lauded by the strike groups' commanders for their interaction, flexibility and contributions to keeping the strike groups' ships, submarines and aircrews mission ready.

Combined Task Force 53 welcomed fast combat support ship USNS Rainier. The crew's performance in the high tempo U.S. Central Command operational environment will be instrumental to the success of coalition and maritime logistics operations.

The command welcomes require-

ments officer Navy **Cmdr. Michael Thomas** and air logistics officer Navy **Cmdr. Chuck Cleckler**.

The command bids farewell to operations Navy **Cmdr. Bert Yordy**, requirements officer Navy **Cmdr. Mike Hansen** and air logistics officer Navy **Cmdr. Kevin Carrier**.

Military Sealift Command ships deliver to Cobra Gold

By Edward Baxter
SEALOGFE Public Affairs

Two Military Sealift Command-chartered vessels teamed up to deliver hundreds of U.S. Marines, along with their equipment, to a major Southeast Asia exercise off the coast of Thailand in mid-May.

Cobra Gold 2007, the 26th annual exercise co-sponsored by the United States and Thailand, included computer-simulated and field training exercises, seminars for senior military leaders and humanitarian projects. The goal was to foster cooperation and regional security

as well as to strengthen Thailand's ability to respond to a regional crisis.

Forces from Indonesia, Japan and Singapore also participated in the exercise. Australia, Brunei, Republic of Korea, Canada, United Kingdom, India, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Mongolia sent people to observe the exercise.

MSC plays a key role in Cobra Gold every year by delivering cargo necessary to conduct the exercise. This year, the MSC-chartered ship ITB Strong American off-loaded more than 110 pieces of Marine Corps cargo at Thung Prong and Chuk Samet ports, April 22

and 23, respectively — to include Humvees, seven-ton trucks, aviation trailers, ammunition and other supplies to support the Marines' field training exercises with Thai forces.

Strong American is a combination tugboat and barge. The 'Strong' in the name refers to the tugboat while 'American' refers to the barge.

Combined, 'Strong American' has a shallow draft that enables it to enter ports where some heavier cargo vessels cannot go.

Strong American also has a unique network of bow and side ramps, as well as an onboard 60-ton crane.

Next, the 330-foot Westpac Express, one of two MSC-chartered high-speed vessels, brought more than 300 U.S. Marines to Thailand from Okinawa, Japan.

The ship, which arrived May 4, also carried 5,500 square feet of rolling stock and other supplies.

"We get warfighters on the ground, on time and ready to go," said Thad Reap, a marine transportation specialist with Sealift Logistics Command Far East in Singapore.

"We also ensure that the vessels have all the logistical support they require while in port."

Bridge provides critical support to Navy

By Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Joshua Cassatt

Fast combat support ship USNS Bridge conducted underway replenishments with nine U.S. ships June 1-3 in the Persian Gulf. Bridge transported more than 865,000 gallons of jet fuel, 2.3 million gallons of diesel fuel, and 560 pallets of food, ammunition and stores during the three-day period.

For Bridge's civil service crew, taking on the challenge of keeping the ships supplied is how they contribute to maritime operations in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations. The high demand for supplies didn't intimidate the crew of Bridge in the slightest.

"It really is commonplace for us to take on this kind of workload," said civil service Capt. Jeffrey Siepert, Bridge's master. "It's all a big choreographed dance. The crew has become so remarkably efficient, that if you walk out on deck during this event, you won't even see people speaking to each other. Instead, everyone knows what to do and how to do it right."

The crew of Bridge takes pride in being able to methodically carry out the challenge of supplying nine ships in three days. Efficiency is the name of the game for these merchant marines.

"Our role is to keep the ships doing business without having to pull into port," said Gary Schmidt, assistant cargo mate. "Bridge has been doing this for a long time, and it is nice doing business out here with the Navy."

Bridge's embarked helicopters from Helicopter Squadron Combatant 23 conducted a vertical replenishment with aircraft carrier USS John C. Stennis, transporting pallets of supplies between the ships.

Aircraft carrier USS Nimitz, guided missile frigate USS Hawes, cruisers USS Princeton and USS Antietam, destroyer USS O'Kane, amphibious assault ship USS Bonhomme Richard and amphibious transport dock ships USS Denver and USS Rushmore underwent line transfer replenishments, during which Bridge used tethered lines and mechanical pulleys between the ships to transfer the pallets. Fuel was transferred via extendable and retractable fuel lines.

For Schmidt, the momentum of the work takes on a life of its own, and the job gets done.



U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Apprentice Jon Dasbach

"Once we get going, it's really smooth," Schmidt said. "We really get rolling with the work. It's nice to be a part of this team and this ship."

"Supplying the warfighters in the shortest, safest and most efficient amount of time is the goal," said Siepert. "At the end of the day, carriers are able to fly their aircraft, and ships are able to continue their coalition duties. That gives us an immense

amount of satisfaction that we've done our part."

Bridge entered the 5th Fleet area of operation Feb. 19 in support of maritime operations.

Fast combat support ships are Military Sealift Command's largest combat logistics ships. They can keep up with carrier strike groups and can carry more than 177,000 barrels of oil, 2,150 tons of ammunition, 500 tons of dry

stores and 250 tons of refrigerated stores. They receive petroleum, ammunition and stores from shuttle ships and pass the items simultaneously to carrier strike group ships.



U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Paul J. Perkins



U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman John Wagner

Above: Fast combat support ship USNS Bridge awaits the approach of an aircraft carrier for an underway replenishment. Fast combat support ships are part of MSC's Naval Fleet Auxiliary Force.

Left: A Navy helicopter approaches Bridge during a vertical replenishment with Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS John C. Stennis.

Inset: Yeoman Seaman Recruit Robbi Montoya tracks supplies brought aboard Stennis during a replenishment at sea with Bridge.