

June 2007

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

THE U.S. NAVY'S MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND



## Rescue at sea

*Stockham crew rescues grounded sailors while providing humanitarian support in Solomon Islands*



**INSIDE — MSC "Fire Schools" not just that • Patuxent crew shines during Phoenix Express**

# Honoring our shipmates worldwide

*Heave Ho! My Lads, Heave Ho!  
It's a long, long way to go.  
It's a long, long pull with our  
hatches full,  
Braving the wind, braving the sea,  
Fighting the treacherous foe . . .*

If you don't recognize those lines as the opening chorus of the Merchant Mariners Hymn, listen up — I've got a story to tell you.

In April 1775, news of the battles at Concord and Lexington reached Machias, Maine, just as citizens were anxiously awaiting long-needed supplies from Boston.

When the sloops Unity and Polly arrived carrying these supplies, they were escorted by the British armed schooner Margareta.

The escort's job was to see that, in exchange for the supplies, lumber was taken back to Boston to build barracks for British soldiers.

The British demanded all citizens sign a petition promising to protect British property at all times in exchange for the right to buy supplies. This did not sit well with the many citizens who were opposed to aiding the British war effort.

The rebels decided to strip the two sloops of the supplies and at the same time to capture British Capt. Ichabod Jones and his officers after they attended church services. The British fled on the Margareta as patriots lined the shore demanding it "Surrender to America!" The reply they heard was, "Fire and be damned!"

Dawn was just breaking over Machias Bay a few days later as 40 seafarers armed with guns, swords, axes and pitchforks sailed with revolutionary firebrand Jeremiah O'Brien on the commandeered sloop, Unity. As they quietly passed the lee side of Round Island, the Margareta attempted to fire on the unarmed Unity, but Unity was too close.

O'Brien commanded his crew to ram the British ship, then board and engage in hand-to-hand combat. By the end of an hour, the British captain was mortally wounded, and the British ship had surrendered.

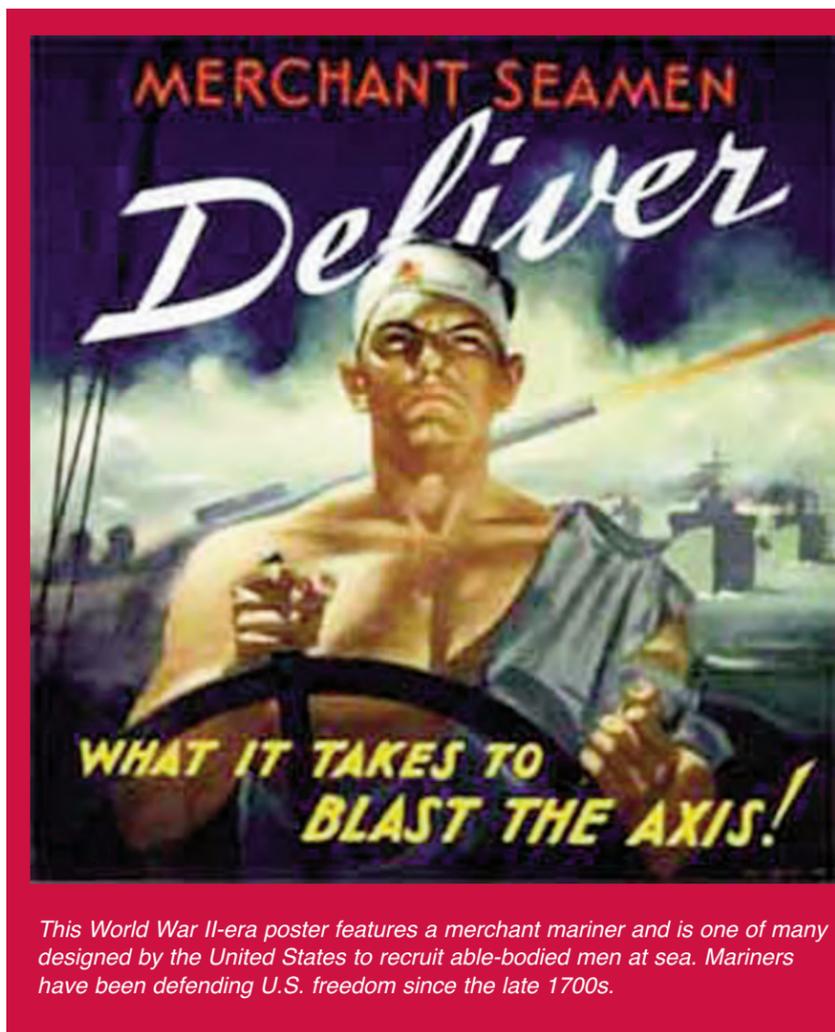
O'Brien and Unity's crew of Maine seafarers claimed four double fortified three-pounders [cannon], 14 swivel guns and several smaller guns. Unity had become a warship for the soon-to-be proclaimed United States of America in this, considered to be the first, sea engagement of the Revolutionary War.

It was the beginning of the American merchant mariners' service to our nation, but not the last time they would venture in harm's way for the ideals of freedom and democracy.

Now, I know heroes are usually associated with men in uniform, carrying weapons and marching off to war.

But you and I know that there are, and always have been, heroes who don't wear a uniform, or even work directly for the government — America's unsung heroes — America's merchant mariners.

Last month, we honored our merchant mariner shipmates for the sacri-



*This World War II-era poster features a merchant mariner and is one of many designed by the United States to recruit able-bodied men at sea. Mariners have been defending U.S. freedom since the late 1700s.*

fices they have made throughout our nation's history. National Maritime Day is set aside each year on May 22 to highlight the spirit and unique strength that merchant mariners bring to the fight for freedom and democracy around the globe.

Many of our merchant mariner shipmates have paid the ultimate price over the past 232 years. They have willingly gone in harm's way to preserve our rights as a freedom-loving people. They have never shied away from the call of honor, courage and commitment, serving in every U.S. war since our country began.

After Unity, it was civilian mariner-crewed Hannah, the first ship commissioned by the Continental Congress to go up against the might of the British navy in 1775. And they prevailed, capturing an armed British ship in short order.

Since then, America's merchant mariners have been the backbone of our nation's maritime service, especially in war.

During the long years of the Revolutionary War, more than 11,000 mariners died in service to our fledgling nation. They were the first, but they would not be the last.

The War of 1812 was fought because of the merchant marine. British warships were seizing American vessels on the high seas and forcing seamen to join the British navy or British merchant fleet. Because the United States had few Navy vessels, the war was fought with merchant ships. American privateers captured nearly \$40 million worth of enemy shipping.

In 1847, during the Mexican-American War, America's merchant mariners participated in the first U.S. Army invasion of a foreign territory by sea.

Both sides in the Civil War used merchant mariners and privateers, hav-

ing almost no navies of their own. Even the Spanish-American War in the late 1800s required the use of merchant ships, not only for troop transport, but for collier duty as the Navy fleet transitioned to steam power and the use of coal to fire the boilers.

From 1915 to 1918, more than 700 merchant ships were damaged or sunk by enemy surface raiders and U-boats as we fought the first great world war. In the dark of night on Aug. 13, 1918, aboard steamship Frederick B. Kellogg, a 7,127-ton tanker carrying much needed fuel to American forces in Europe, the watch gave the dreaded cry, "Torpedo!"

The helmsman threw the rudder hard over, but the speed of the lumbering ship was no match for the speeding torpedo. Twelve miles north of the Barnegat Light off the New Jersey coast, seven mariners were killed and one was wounded as a German submarine claimed another U.S. ship.

In World War II, merchant mariners faced untold dangers from submarines, mines, armed raiders, enemy destroyers and aircraft, and the forbidding weather of the North Atlantic.

More than 9,500 were lost in that great conflict — almost four percent of the 243,000 who served. Only the U.S. Marine Corps had a higher casualty rate.

Of all who went to sea in the defense of America — who rode the "floating bombs" that carried 100-octane aviation gas and other fuels, who stood the watch in Torpedo Alley, who stared helplessly over the rail as other ships in the convoy went up in flames and down with all aboard — of all those who went to sea to defend this great nation, one in 26 did not come home.

Yet, through it all, America's mariners stayed on course, carrying

the desperately needed supplies and equipment meant for our forces in Europe, Asia and the Pacific. And, through it all, the mariners held true to the motto: We deliver!

It's been the same ever since, from Korea to Vietnam, from Haiti to Kosovo, and from Afghanistan to Iraq.

Today, Military Sealift Command is the world's largest employer of U.S. merchant mariners. The men and women who have taken up this legacy serve aboard our ships on every ocean.

I had the privilege and pleasure of meeting USNS Bridge's bosun recently, who served in the Navy from 1950 to 1959, seeing action in Korea. When he left the Navy, he went to work for UPS, where he broke the color barrier, becoming the first African American to drive a truck for them. Then, in 1979, he came to work for MSC. He's been with us ever since, and he's proud of that. I'm proud of him and the youthful spirit he brings to MSC — and he is celebrating his 70th birthday this year!

We are engaged in the ongoing global war on terrorism, fighting a sometimes unseen enemy on a battlefield that is everywhere. And we'll win this fight, as we have before, with the help of our merchant mariners.

They'll hold high the torch of freedom around the world because they're U.S. merchant mariners. And because they're U.S. merchant mariners, they'll deliver. Period.

Keep the faith!

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

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# MSC training centers more than just fire schools

By Rosemary Heiss  
MSC Public Affairs

The acrid smell and dark clouds of smoke precede the imminent danger of fire. Such flames are threatening on land but almost certainly perilous at sea.

As a result, seafarers have been trained to fight fires for years. Military Sealift Command — and its predecessor Military Sea Transportation Service — has operated fire schools for its mariners since the early 1950s.

The first school, established in San Francisco, moved to San Diego in 1996, while the second school was launched in Earle, N.J., in 1975.

Since then, the schools have taken on a much broader mission and have aptly been renamed ‘training centers.’

The centers are responsible for all safety training for MSC civil service and civilian mariners.

Though the centers’ missions expanded long ago, they are still most commonly known as fire schools. In fact, Dan Hawley, director of the West Coast Training Center in San Diego, said that’s all most people recognize.

“If I answer my phone ‘training center,’ people hang up because they think they have the wrong number,” he said. Less than 25 percent of the courses offered now are for shipboard firefighting. The remaining courses include training in small arms, anti-terrorism, marine environmental programs, first aid, water survival, able seaman upgrade and more than 10 other courses.

The centers, which have students from all experience levels and walks of maritime life, train their students to International Maritime Organization standards — a level of proficiency required by the U.S. Coast Guard, said Bob Farmer, director of MSC’s East Coast Training Center.

The standards are higher than the ones set for the combatant Navy and take about twice as long to complete, according to Farmer, because of MSC’s unique missions.

“The additional training is deemed critical for the safe operation of all MSC ships worldwide,” said Hawley.

More than 7,000 students graduate from the centers’ courses each year.

With 19 instructors, the East Coast Training Center is almost twice the size of the nine-instructor West Coast center. The size difference is intentional, said Farmer, whose East Coast center has the responsibility of training every new MSC mariner.

After new mariners attend a one-week MSC orientation at Military Sealift Fleet Support Command in Norfolk, Va., they head to New Jersey for two to eight weeks of training, Farmer said. New students who cannot be accommodated by the East Coast center go to the West Coast center.

The San Diego-based center provides coursework not only for MSC mariners but also for uniformed Navy sailors from the U.S. Navy fire school next door. Courses there provide extensive refresher and upgrade training.

Three to four weeks is the average length of training for MSC mariners, but those who will go to the deck de-

partment — able seamen and ordinary seamen — usually stay for six to eight weeks to complete additional training requirements, including two weeks of ordnance-handling instruction.

Students, like Navy Senior Chief Hull Maintenance Technician David Bryhan, benefit from the center’s education because it prepares him to go wherever MSC needs him, worldwide — unrestricted by a lack of Navy or Coast Guard qualifications.

After 25 years of uniformed Navy service, Bryhan is joining the MSC civil service mariners’ ranks and is completing the command’s training requirements at the West Coast Training Center while still on active duty.

He took many of the required courses earlier in his Navy career, and the training center provided the required refresher training that will allow him to continue life at sea after his retirement, which he scheduled around the center’s training, he said.

“I’ve always enjoyed sea duty, and joining MSC will allow me to continue to do what I love,” he said. “I’m not sure where my first assignment will be, but I’m looking forward to joining the MSC team.”

Staff writer James Jackson, SEALOGPAC  
Public Affairs contributed to this article.



Top right: The West Coast Training Center teaches students how to survive in the water during Proficiency in Survival Craft training.

Bottom right: The best-known portion of the centers’ mission requires students to face the flames.

Above: Students work together to repair a hole in the bulkhead of this mock ship. During Damage Control class, center staff members open various holes in the wet trainer’s space, and students are challenged to repair the leaks and stop the water before the ship sinks.

Joe Cobb, photos

# Stockham rescues 20

By MSC Public Affairs

A helicopter from Military Sealift Command afloat prepositioning ship USNS GYSGT Fred W. Stockham rescued 20 people from a Taiwanese-flagged freighter that ran aground on a coral reef near the Gizo harbor in the Solomon Islands in the late hours of April 12. Most of those rescued were New Zealand Red Cross and aid workers who were in the area to provide as-



U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Andrew Meyers

*Yun Fa Zoi, a 200-foot freighter, is stuck on a reef created by the damaging earthquake that preceded the April 2 tsunami. Before the vessel ran aground, it was used to ferry tsunami aid workers.*

sistance to victims of the tsunami that struck the region.

Earlier in the week, Stockham was directed to the Solomon Islands to be ready to conduct operations to support and assist relief efforts on the ground. The crew received a distress call from the Gizo port authority requesting they provide assistance to a 200-foot freighter named Yun Fa Zoi. After running aground, the vessel was foundering in nearly 12-foot waves and had become unseaworthy. The Gizo port authority requested that Stockham provide helicopter assistance to rescue the aid workers and one severely injured crew member. "When the distress call was made, the ship's crew and military detachment were quick to respond and well prepared to handle the crisis," said Stockham's civilian master, Capt. Perry Seyler. "I'm very proud of the ship's surgeon and the members of the helicopter detachment, who put themselves in harm's way to rescue the aid workers and the crew member."

Stockham's surgeon left on the ship's seven-passenger HH-60 helicopter within an hour of the distress call and minutes later arrived in the vicinity of Yun Fa Zoi. He treated injuries, and the 20 people were brought aboard the helicopter using the helicopter's external hoist. The helicopter then flew to Gizo, where the passengers were met by local police and medical personnel to receive further assistance.

Stockham is a U.S. government-owned, roll-on/roll-off and container ship operated by a crew of 38 civilian mariners and has 102 military personnel embarked. The ship is one of 35 ships that preposition military cargo in strategic locations around the world, which enables the equipment and supplies to be delivered ashore quickly in the event of conflict.

U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Andrew Meyers



*Top right: An HH-60H Seahawk helicopter prepares to rescue the stranded Taiwanese-flagged vessel, Yun Fa Zoi, that ran aground on a reef near the Solomon Islands.*

*Spread: An entire village is wiped out by the devastating waves that followed the April 2 tsunami. Little is left for residents to salvage.*

*Map: The Solomon Islands, which are about the size of Maryland, are in the southern Pacific Ocean. The coastline spans more than 3,000 miles.*

*Cover: Gizo island children cheer as helicopters deliver bags of rice from USNS Stockham.*

# off Solomon Islands

## Stockham aids storm-ravaged Pacific islanders

By Edward Baxter  
SEALOGFE Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command merchant mariners, U.S. Navy seamen and Marine Corps personnel aboard prepositioning ship USNS GYSGT Fred W. Stockham – a 900-foot, MSC roll-on/roll-off and container ship – came to the aid of the Solomon Islands off the coast of Papua, New Guinea, after a deadly tsunami devastated the Pacific island nation April 2. Stockham broke from normal operations April 6 and headed for the area where 15-foot waves from the magnitude 8.1 quake wiped out entire villages. Five days later, approaching the vast archipelago that stretches thousands of miles and

includes some 900 islands, the ship's civilian master Capt. Perry Seyler jumped aboard one of Stockham's two HH-60H Seahawk helicopters to survey damage from the air and figure out where to best position Stockham to begin recovery after the tsunami that killed 52 people and destroyed more than 900 homes.

Stockham's chief mate Frank Leo, along with U.S. Navy crew members, flew ashore near one of the islands' main towns to gain a first-hand account of the damage caused by the deadly waves.

"The entire town was leveled by the tsunami, and tents were set up on the side of a mountain for displaced

people," said Leo of the Gizo island town.

Seyler decided to position the ship near the island of Vella Lavella – within reach of some of the hardest hit islands. "Reports that some coral reefs and islands had shifted position due to the power of the quake were indeed true," Seyler said.

Stockham's embarked Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron 10 flew multiple sorties daily to 11 islands including Vella Lavella, Choiseul, Rendova, Kolombangara, Shortlands, Treasury, Simbo, New Georgia, Ranongga, Gizo and Guadalcanal.

"The ship and her crew put in long hours to support helicopter operations," Seyler said.

Stockham's embarked medical detachment from the Balboa Naval Hospital in San Diego went ashore on three occasions, working with an Australian military medical team and other non-governmental organizations. The medical team treated numerous patients with minor injuries and distributed medicine to prevent outbreaks of diseases due to poor sanitary conditions and high water levels.

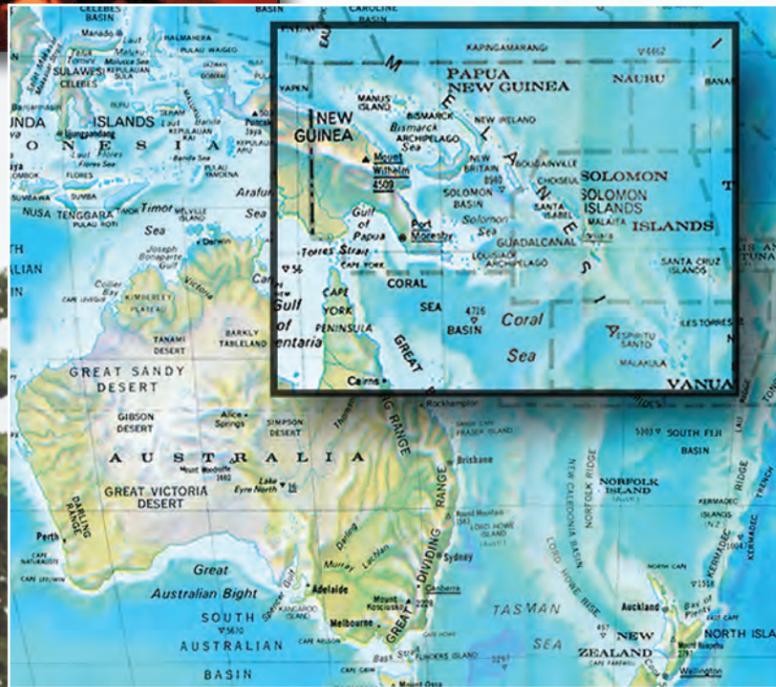
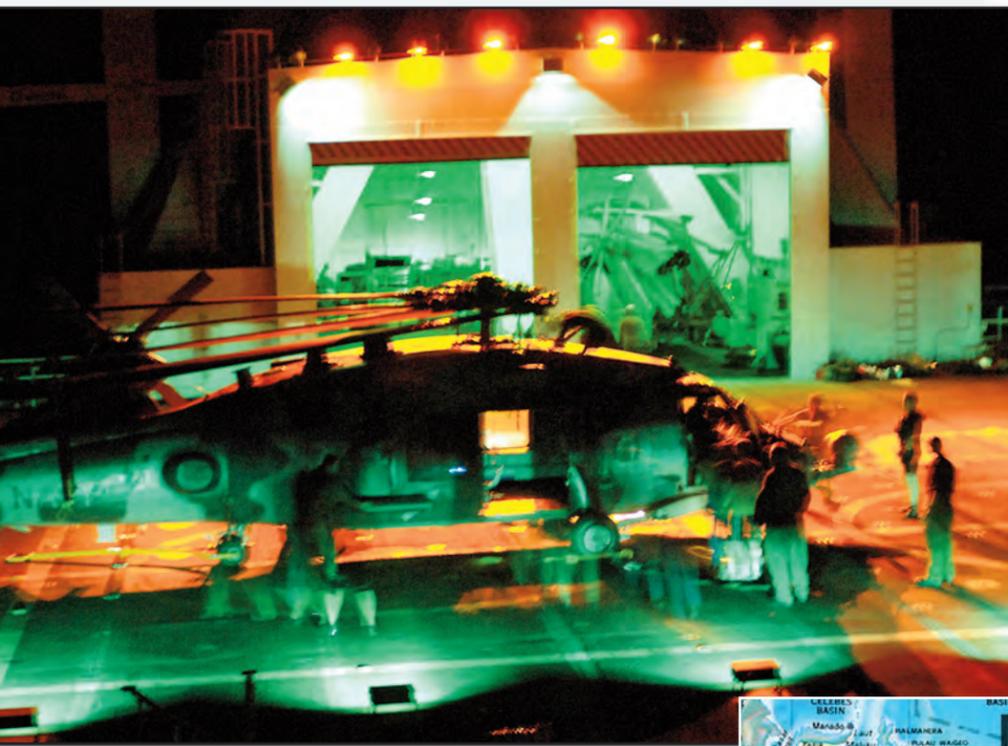
More than 28,000 pounds of cargo – including rice and other food, medical supplies, tools for repair and maintenance, tarps for shelter and mosquito nets – were brought ashore.

According to Seyler, the helicopters flew more than 80 hours in support of relief operations.

Nearly 250 people including medical relief agencies' members, geologists, other aid workers and volunteers were also transported aboard Stockham's helicopters to ensure that all types of aid could reach the hardest-hit victims quickly.

"The ship's professionalism and can-do attitude are testimonies to the powerful work ethic that allows us the flexibility to complete a challenging mission like this," Seyler said.

Fourteen days after Stockham diverted from its normal operations and with its mission complete, the ship departed the waters on April 20 to resume its mission – leaving grateful islanders behind.



## HQ • HIGHLIGHTS

On April 18, Military Sealift Command headquarters honored many of its uniformed and civilian employees at the command's quarterly awards ceremony. The event started with the presentation of Civilian Length of Service Awards.

**Dorothy Caldwell**, Reserve Affairs; **Denis Rumbaugh**, Sealift Program; and **Carole H. Wieszek**, Contracts and Business Management Directorate were recognized for 35 years of service. **Vanessa Brown**, Contracts and Busi-

ness Management Directorate; **Kevin Ryan**, Prepositioning Program; **Patricia D. Paige**, Equal Employment Office; and **Joan Galleher**, Prepositioning Program were recognized for 30 years.

**Donald Shelton**, Special Mission Program; **David Clark**, Logistics Directorate; and **Keith Bauer**, Prepositioning Program were recognized for 25 years of service. **James Hayes**, Engineering Directorate; and **Susan Thomas**, Public Affairs were each rec-

ognized for two decades of service. **Rene Fry**, Engineering Directorate; and **Shelley L. Croyle**, Medical; were recognized for 15 and 10 years, respectively. **Thyra Jones**, Administrative Support Center, received the Civilian of the Quarter award and Navy **Information Systems Technician 2nd Class Ray C. Ellison**, Command, Control, Communications and Computer Systems Directorate, was named MSC Sailor of the Quarter.

Navy **Senior Chief Hospital Corpsman Gregory Peck** and Navy **Chief Information Systems Technician Derek Jefferson**, Command, Control, Communications and Computer Sys-

tems Directorate; each received a Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal April 18 for distinctive accomplishments, unrelenting perseverance and steadfast devotion to duty.

Navy **Storekeeper 2nd Class Calvin Lewis**, Logistics Directorate received the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal for his exceptional professional ability.

MSC welcomes **Nicholas DeAngelis**, Engineering Directorate.

MSC bids farewell to **David Julian**, Contracts and Business Management Directorate; **Carolyn King**, Strategic Planning Directorate; and **Carolyn Merritt**, Comptroller Directorate.

## PACIFIC • BRIEFS

Ammunition ship USNS Flint conducted an ammunition download from aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan in early April.

Dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Sacagawea completed its initial sea trials off the Southern California coast and left for Sealift Logistics Command Atlantic April 28. The ship arrived in Norfolk, Va., May 3.

Fleet ocean tug USNS Navajo picked up the ex-USS Salt Lake City in Panama and towed the decommissioned nuclear submarine to Bremerton, Wash.

Fleet replenishment oiler USNS Henry J. Kaiser left the benign weather of Southern California behind and headed to the Gulf of Alaska to support Operation Northern Edge, while fleet replenishment oiler USNS John Ericsson packed away its MidPac oiler aloha shirts to visit Esquimalt, British Columbia, prior to supporting the bi-lateral Exercise Trident Fury with the Canadian Navy.

Hospital ship USNS Mercy completed its Ships Material Assessment of Readiness and Training examination with flying colors in late April.

While underway for SMART, Mercy's Medical Treatment Facility hosted a group of Los Angeles-area disaster response leaders for discussions on potential military assistance to civilian authorities in the event of natural or man-made disasters.

Ships master **Capt. Mike Grogan** was relieved by **Capt. Bob Holley** on USNS Flint. Ships master **Capt. Mark Wilson** was relieved by **Capt. Mike Leahy** on fleet replenishment oiler USNS Yukon.

SEALOGPAC welcomes Navy **Operations Specialist 2nd Class Victor Holland** to USNS Yukon, Navy **Electronics Technician 1st**

**Class Matthew Abbot** to combat stores ship USNS Niagara Falls, Navy **Operations Specialist 2nd class Richard Gross** to fleet replenishment oiler USNS Guadalupe, Navy **Operations Specialist 2nd class Monique Hudson** to USNS Ericsson and Navy **Operations Specialist Chief Anthony Hutchinson** to USNS Yukon. **Capt. Kurt Storey**, a Navy Reservist from MSC's Expeditionary Port Unit 116 in Seattle, reported aboard SEALOGPAC to serve as operations officer in May pending assignment of a permanent relief for Navy **Cmdr. Gene Romig**.

Navy **Information Systems Technician Chief Petty Officer Gene Detweiler** returned from his year as an individual augmentee in Iraq. Detweiler served as the information warfare watch officer, assisting in the detection and disabling of improvised explosive devices.

Navy **Information Systems Technician Chief Petty Officer James Seay** earned a Baccalaureate Degree in Information Technology.

SEALOGPAC bids farewell to Navy **Cmdr. Gene Romig**, Sealift Logistics Command Pacific's Operations Officer since April 2004, retired after 26 years of distinguished naval service; Navy **Cmdr. Doug Glessner**, senior officer of MSC's SMART Inspection Team, transferred to amphibious assault ship USS Peleliu as chief engineer, just in time to make the big amphibious ship's 2006 humanitarian assistance cruise; Navy **Storekeeper Chief Petty Officer Francisco Garcia** transferred from SEALOGPAC back to sea in the Navy's littoral combat community; and Navy **Operations Specialist 2nd Class Melvin Clay** returned to sea duty onboard cruiser USS Chancellorsville.

## COMPASS • HEADING

Customer Support Unit-East has relocated. Formally situated in Naval Station Norfolk's building SP-312, the unit is now in SP-257. As the new telephone lines are established within the facility, people who need to contact the staff at CSU-East are asked to call the civil service mariner's support center (1-877-JOBS-MSC) or e-mail [civ-mar@marinersupport.com](mailto:civ-mar@marinersupport.com).

Happy first birthday to Military Sealift Fleet Support Command's ship support units. Located in Naples, Bahrain, Singapore, Guam, Japan and San Diego, the units serve as MSFSC representatives in their respective geographic areas for the specific purpose of ensuring the execution of MSFSC maintenance and repair functions.

**Rear Adm. Robert Reilly Jr.**, commander, Military Sealift Command, hosted an all-hands call for MSFSC personnel in Tidewater, Va., April 20. A representative cross section of the shoreside staff was on hand for Reilly's remarks and to be gifted with trademark marbles.

Work is well underway on MSFSC's new headquarters at Breezy Point on Naval Station Norfolk, Va.

As the contractor responsible for the building renovation project removes asbestos from the three buildings which will be the basis for the headquarters complex, work is in progress to establish an employees' parking lot. MSFSC **Executive Director Jack Taylor** welcomed ashore civil service **Capt. Chuck Becker** in April. Becker will temporarily work at MSFSC headquarters as special assistant to the executive director and will continue **Capt. Ed Nanartowich's** work on the CIVMAR sea service letter application process. In addition, Becker will work with personnel on an automated mariner evaluation system.

He will also get the ball rolling for a civilian mariner council meeting planned for sometime this summer and

provide subject matter expertise to communications afloat information technology initiatives. Nanartowich returned to the fleet to serve as hospital ship USNS Comfort's master during its upcoming deployment.

Fast Combat Support ship USNS Bridge and combat stores ship USNS Concord recently came together to provide a training opportunity for civil service mariners. Twenty-seven deck department crew members, along with three machinists from Bridge's engine department, took a turn handling winches at Bridge's freight rigs.

Having had this training experience, more personnel possess the skills to provide hands-on support during underway replenishments. Commander, Task Force 53, Navy **Capt. Glen Sears II**, acknowledged this effort. "BZ to Bridge and Concord for conducting winch and UNREP training. It has proven that commands that have applied Operation Risk Management while developing mariner skills and allowing personnel to work in new positions add depth to the team and are better able to meet future challenges. The exercise conducted today is an excellent example of initiative and teamwork."

Congratulations to Navy **Cmdrs. Roderick Hubbard, Tracy Larcher, and William Power** on their selection for promotion to captain within the active duty staff corps.

"Fair winds and following seas" to the following civil service mariners as they enter onto the retirement rolls: **Capt. Edward J. Burns**, **Assistant Storekeeper Bernard Brown**, **2nd Cook Rosita Casanova**, **3rd Officer Dan Kirby**, **Engine Utilityman Joseph Cappiello**, **Yeoman Storekeeper Roy Eata**, **Utilityman Sylvester Campbell**, **Able Seaman James Casey** and **Engine Utilityman Zachary Webb**. Thanks to each of you for your service.

## EUROPE • NEWS

On April 6, Military Sealift Command-chartered sealift ship MV Advantage arrived in Rotterdam, The Netherlands, carrying redeployed combat cargo from the Middle East.

While in port, Advantage discharged 18,000 square feet of con-

tainers and vehicles belonging to the U.S. Army's 1st Battalion, 1st Armored Division. MSC fleet replenishment oiler USNS Patuxent arrived in Sealift Logistics Command Europe's area of operations March 21 as the U.S. 6th Fleet duty oiler.

The ship kicked off its deployment to the European theater by sailing to Africa's Gulf of Guinea to refuel USS Kauffman and USCGC Legare. Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron One flagship container, roll-on roll-off ship MV 2nd Lt. John P. Bobo departed the 6th Fleet operating area April 18, bound for the shipyard at Blount Island Command in Jacksonville, Fla., where the ship will undergo a routine maintenance period.

The MPS Squadron One staff, normally embarked aboard Bobo, has moved its offices ashore to Naval Support Activity Rota in Rota, Spain, until Bobo returns to Europe in the fall. SEALOGEUR Commander Navy **Capt. Nick Holman** and SEALOGEUR Reserve Affairs liaison Navy Reserve **Lt. Cmdr. Todd Cheek** traveled to Baltimore, Md., for the annual SEALOGEUR Reserve Commanding Officer/Executive Officer Conference.



Bill Cook, photo

## Congratulations on 45 years of service

Civil service mariner George Trawick, a 74-year-old supply utilityman, celebrates 43 years with Military Sealift Command as he receives a career service award for 45 years of service. Civil service Capt. L.D. Carley, master of fleet replenishment oiler USNS Walter S. Diehl, presented the award. Trawick joined MSC in 1964, when Military Sealift Transportation Service was located at Fort Mason in San Francisco. He also served with the U.S. Army from 1949-1952. Trawick was employed by the County of Los Angeles when friends employed by MSTs regaled him with their many stories of travel overseas. He decided that a job at sea that included a lot of travel would suit him. He obtained his Z-card and signed on to USNS Eltanin, bound for an Antarctic research run. He stayed on Eltanin for three years in order to get permanent status. Trawick remembers that tours were one year then. His favorite ships were the cable ships, but he has no favorite port. Diehl will be his last ship as Trawick plans to retire in August 2007.

## FAR • EAST • HAILS

Army Gen. B.B. Bell, commander of United Nations Command, Combined Forces Command and U.S. Forces, Korea, along with Gen. Kwan Jin Kim, Republic of Korea's Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, visited container/roll-on roll-off ship MV 1st Lt. Alex Bonnyman off Guam in April.

Hosted by Bonnyman's master **Capt. Thomas Tankersly** and Navy **Capt. Dennis O'Meara**, commander of Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron Three, Bell and Kim toured the ship and received a briefing on MPS Squadron Three's mission and operational capability.

"Your support enables us to rapidly build combat power if political-military events dictate the employment of additional forces to the Korean area of operations," Bell wrote in a personal message to both O'Meara and Tankersly.

During a familiarization visit to Singapore, Frank R. Jimenez, General Counsel of the Navy, paid a courtesy visit to Sealift Logistics Command, Far East, meeting with SEALOGFE Commander, Navy **Capt. Susan**

**Dunlap** and Command Counsel, **Lis Young**. Margaret Leclair, U.S. Transportation Command's deputy director for plans and programs, visited SEALOGFE headquarters April 28.

Leclair met with Dunlap, who briefed Leclair on the command's mission and current operations.

In recognition of the ship's support to the tsunami that struck the Solomon Islands in early April, Leslie V. Rowe, U.S. Ambassador to Papua, New Guinea, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu sent container/roll-on roll-off ship USNS GYSGT Fred W. Stockham's master **Capt. Perry Seyler** a 'bravo zulu.'

Rowe also recognized Stockham for the rescue of crew members from a stricken Taiwanese cargo vessel.

"The robust and unique capabilities of the Stockham were in exactly the right place at exactly the right time," said Rowe.

Dunlap and the staff of Sealift Logistics Command, Far East congratulates Chief Staff Officer Navy **Cmdr. Nannette Roberts** on her selection for promotion to captain.

## ATLANTIC • LINES

Two Sealift Logistics Command Atlantic sailors were singled out for meritorious service in April. Navy **Chief Petty Officer Erin Rehberger** received the U.S. Navy's Commendation Medal for exceptional service while stationed with Combat Logistics Squadron Two from July 2004 through that command's merger with Military Sealift Command Atlantic and Sealift Logistics Command Atlantic. Rehberger left the command in mid-April for her new assignment aboard USS Gunston Hall.

Navy **Petty Officer 1st Class Anh T. Pham** received the Navy Achievement Medal. Like Rehberger, Pham came to SEALOGLANT via Combat Logistics Squadron Two, also in 2004. Pham departed the command mid-April for his next assignment in Sasebo, Japan.

**Tom D'Agostino**, SEALOGLANT's representative in Charleston, S.C., supported the deployment of U.S. Army 3rd

Infantry Division in Savannah, Ga., in April. Army gear was loaded around the clock on MSC-chartered container ship MV American Tern; large, medium-speed, roll-on roll-off ship USNS Watson and LMSR USNS Charlton. American Tern and Watson were loaded with an aviation brigade, and Charlton was loaded with a heavy combat brigade. The total load for the three vessels consisted of 3,126 pieces of equipment.

Navy Reserve **Cmdr. Stoney Mitchell**, executive officer, SEALOGLANT headquarters Unit 106 was selected for promotion to captain.

Rescue and salvage ship USNS Grapple towed the submarine ex-USS Salt Lake City from Portsmouth, N.H., through the Panama Canal from mid-March to mid-April. Pacific-based fleet ocean tug USNS Navajo picked up the tow from there for the remainder of the submarine's journey to Bremerton, Wash.

## CENTRAL • CURRENTS

On April 17, fleet ocean tug USNS Catawba quickly moved more than 110,000 pounds of USS John C. Stennis Carrier Strike group high-priority cargo from Bahrain to the United Arab Emirates. A series of aircraft maintenance issues and airfield restrictions grounded the Commander, Task Force 53 air logistics assets in Bahrain, leaving seven strike fighter aircraft engines stranded there. The ship and crew of Catawba responded to no-notice tasking and were successfully able to load the critically needed cargo and get underway en route to the port of Jebel Ali

within four hours of notification. Cargo arrived at the port in time to meet the consolidated load out with Military Sealift Command's fast combat support ship USNS Arctic and the scheduled replenishment at sea event with Stennis. Catawba's efforts enabled the carrier strike group missions to continue without delay.

Arctic departed the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations following a successful deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom, the global war on terrorism and maritime security operations. Arc-

tic provided outstanding support to British, German, Pakistani, French, Italian and Canadian naval forces, as well as USS Dwight D. Eisenhower and USS John C. Stennis carrier strike groups. Arctic played a vital role in keeping coalition forces combat ready. The ship and crew conducted 117 underway replenishments in support of operations spanning from the Northern Arabian Gulf to the Horn of Africa. Arctic provided more than 23 million gallons of fuel in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and maritime security operations.

Commander, Task Force 53 welcomes aboard Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Timothy Rafferty**, assistant operations

officer; Navy **Lt. Alex Kaczur**, budgeting officer; Navy **Lt. j.g. Brendan Casey**, air terminal operations center officer; Navy **Lt. j.g. Ryan Monroe**, air routing officer; and Navy **Chief Warrant Officer 4th Class Darrell Champion**, administrative officer.

The command bids farewell to Navy **Lt. Adam Guthrie**, air terminal operations center officer; and Navy **Chief Warrant Officer 3rd Class Michelle Hughes**, administrative officer; after completing their one-year forward-deployed tour in Bahrain. Sealift Logistics Command Central Commander Navy **Capt. Glen R. Sears II** presented both staff members with the Navy Commendation Medal.

# PHOENIX • EXPRESS • 07

## Patuxent provides partnership platform

By Gillian Brigham  
SEALOGEUR Public Affairs

When mariners sign up for a job with Military Sealift Command, they can reasonably expect to encounter certain underway tasks like manning an underway replenishment station, swabbing the deck, maintaining ship equipment or standing a bridge watch. What they may not realize is that building partnerships with U.S. allies is a big, albeit unnamed, part of their job description.

The crew of MSC fleet replenishment oiler USNS Patuxent showcased its diplomatic skills during the April 10-24 multilateral military Exercise Phoenix Express 2007 in the Mediterranean Sea and Atlantic Ocean – primarily in the areas of Rota, Spain, and the Gulf of Cadiz.

Phoenix Express is designed to strengthen U.S. and NATO partnerships with North Africa. Eleven nations – Algeria, France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Morocco, Portugal, Spain, Tunisia, Turkey and the United States – participated in a challenging training agenda that included maritime interdiction operations, search and rescue scenarios and underway re-fueling operations.

“Strengthening regional maritime partnerships allows us to address potential conflicts before they start, and awareness is the first step,” said Rear Adm. Jeff Fowler, U.S. 6th Fleet Deputy Commander. “We are committed to enhancing the awareness and maritime capability of our North African partners to help create an environment that is inhospitable to maritime criminals, extremists and terrorists.”

The exercise kicked off in Rota with a few days of in-port training for the nations, ships and thousands of personnel involved. During this training, Patuxent’s crew worked hand-in-hand with Moroccan Navy ship Hassen II,



to explain the ins and outs of the underway refueling process.

“From what we could gather, the Moroccans had never done an underway replenishment with a U.S. ship before and were a bit nervous,” said Cargo Mate Chris Cook.

Patuxent and Hassen II swapped a number of crew members while in Rota in order to familiarize the Moroccans with the underway refueling equipment and process.

“It was nice to see that the MSC oiler was looked upon as the ‘dean of unrep,’ as the captain of Hassen II said,” continued Cook.

Once out at sea in Spain’s Bay of Cadiz and along the North African coast, Patuxent was used as a platform for boarding exercises.

“Patuxent was boarded more than a dozen times by maritime interdiction teams,” said Cook. “Some boarded by small boats. Others boarded by fast roping, down from a helicopter. This involves a helicopter hovering over the flight deck while personnel slide down a large rope to the ship – all while the helo is 50 feet in the air and the ship they are landing on is rolling and pitching.”

During the final days of the exercise, Patuxent refueled seven ships from seven nations in a single day – a significant workload for the crew that, nonetheless, handled it enthusiastically.

“To see so many different nations working together so seamlessly is really quite amazing,” said Third Mate Chris Cotti. “The event was planned

so well that everything went off without a hitch.”

Able Seaman Alex Footman agreed. “This exercise really makes me feel like I am contributing to the war on terrorism,” said Footman. “It’s not your average desk job which is part of what makes it so fun.”



Top: USNS Patuxent refuels Gaziantep, a Turkish warship that participated with Patuxent in Exercise Phoenix Express 2007.

Left: Algerian sailors conduct maritime interdiction operations aboard Patuxent during Phoenix Express.

Inset photo: USNS Patuxent honors the victims of the Virginia Tech shootings by displaying the school’s flag. The tragedy hit home for members of Patuxent’s crew. Civil service master Capt. Mike Flanagan’s wife and daughter attended the university and Able Seaman Mike Kiernan, a 1988 civil engineering graduate, made the flag in the ship’s sail locker in remembrance of those who had fallen.

“It turns out there were naval personnel on both USS Nassau and USS Kaufman who had kids at Tech,” said Flanagan. Nassau and Kaufman were two of the ships Patuxent refueled April 20. “Patuxent flying the flag meant a lot to them.”