March 2008

S·E·A·L·I·F·T

The U.S. Navy's Military Sealift Command

USNS Lewis & Clark returns

T-AKE completes first deployment

U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Jackey Bratt

INSIDE — Fast sealift ship delivers Marine Corps cargo • Submarine tender transfers to MSC

MSFSC: Growing in Tidewater

It started back in 1997 as MSC was "reinventing" itself. MSC Atlantic relocated from New Jersey to Naval Station Norfolk. But there wasn't room for everyone, so the Afloat Personnel Management Center — then called Naval Fleet Auxiliary Force East — and others went to Camp Pendleton State Military Reservation in Virginia Beach, Va.

By the next year, we were actively looking for space on the base at Norfolk, and in 2000 MSC was offered space in the Breezy Point complex, including three buildings that needed renovation. Then Sept. 11, 2001, came along and force protection issues meant additional changes to the buildings at Breezy Point, including the need for explosive-proof glass for 250 windows to eliminate the shattered-glass factor and moving the 350-car parking lot at least 50 feet from the buildings.

U.S. Navy photo by Bill Cook

Construction continues on Military Sealift Fleet Support Command's headquarters facilities at Naval Station Norfolk. When the project is complete, 10 disparate units will be colocated there.

In 2003, Hurricane Isabel severely damaged the now vacant buildings' brick facing, roofs and gutters.

Nonetheless, MSC continued to consolidate our shore infrastructure, and in 2005 Military Sealift Fleet Support Command began its standup.

Since that time, there's been a lot of execution-level churn associated with our transformation efforts, including bringing the new MSFSC facilities online. Much progress has been made in consolidating more than 400 geographically dispersed MSFSC and MSC people into 10 colocated buildings. When the contract was let in January 2007, work began to remove the asbestos and lead that were part of our Breezy Point buildings when they were first constructed more than 50 years ago. New roofs on the three buildings preceded the change out of all the windows. New security vestibules were completed, and handicap access was incorporated into the reconstructed buildings, along with shafts for new elevators.

Marvin Mullins, MSFSC's facility manager, keeps me up to speed on this very complex and time-critical undertaking. His latest report: work on all the buildings is on schedule.

MSFSC people are scheduled to begin moving into the complex this spring.

The first of 10 buildings coming on line, beginning in May, will be SP-64. This building will be the home for MSFSC's headquarters office staff and various departmental personnel, including the command master chief, facilities, public affairs, port captains, port engineers, class managers, operations, safety, the Small and Disadvantaged Business Unit, personnel security and contract personnel.

— SP-47 will be on line in late June and will house the maritime forces and manpower management, comptroller and equal employment opportunity staffs.

— SP-48 will be the last of the three principal MSFSC and MSC buildings in Breezy Point and will be turned over in August. This will be the home for our legal services offices, support staff for the class managers and the logistical team.

The other buildings include:

— SP-257, for the command, control, communications and computer systems staff, due in June.

— R-48, the home for the financial services branches of the comptroller shop. It will be accepted in July.

— SP-312 will be the new home for the Customer Support Unit East, force medical, and the mobile sealift operations center support. This building should be completed by July.

— R-52 will become home for Sealift Logistics Command Atlantic, MSFSC's military administration and the afloat training team after MSFSC offices there are relocated to the three Breezy Point buildings. This is expected around August. At this time, Building Z-101, the previous location of SEALOGLANT command headquarters, will be demolished.

— SP-45 will house the new employee orientation room, administrative support for the NEO and the guard-mail processing area.

— LP-26 will be accepted in March and will serve as the new Real-time Residual Asset Management System facility with the MSC Technical Library as well as several of the MSFSC supply chain. The move enables us to close a high-cost warehouse lease in Chesapeake, Va. This move will commence in the spring and will take about nine to 12 months to complete due to the amount of material and equipment to be moved.

— X-132 is strictly a storage facility that has already been turned over to us, and we're using it.

The single-campus concept will colocate MSFSC's senior management and their staffs, enhancing productivity in support of the MSC mission. It will enable a whole new level of support to our civil service mariners, the backbone of MSC.

MSFSC is in the home stretch on this project, but I'm not going to consider the MSC organization's three-year transformation journey complete until MSFSC is up and running in its new Breezy Point facilities.

We plan on having a ribbon-cutting ceremony and open house this fall for our new complex. Our commercial industry and union partners will be invited, as well as CIVMARs who live or are on leave in the area. It's going to be an auspicious occasion, marking a new and exciting chapter for MSC.

I never cease to be amazed with our most dedicated and highly capable staff at MSFSC. Operating the Naval Fleet Auxiliary Force and keeping our government-owned, government-operated ships optimally manned and equipped is no easy task — especially when I am counting on them to continue to evolve their business processes, identify efficiencies and reign in costs during these demanding times. And my hat's off to them as they continue to meet the needs of the Fleet amidst a hectic, noisy, construction-surrounded, staff-relocation type of environment. Their unwavering devotion to duty to our ships and crews speaks volumes.

Last year, I directed a command climate survey to gauge employees' morale and concerns of our ashore workforce. While every climate survey yields areas for improvement, MSFSC's results (along with the SEALOGs and MSCHQ) exemplified their "can-do" spirit and mission focus.

However, our transformational churn ashore, although coming to an end soon, certainly had the potential for generating some additional churn with our afloat workforce.

Our CIVMARs and afloat military workforce have been faithfully delivering the goods at an increased pace. Now it's time to seek out your thoughts and capture any concerns you may have in our afloat workplace.

It's my intention to conduct a survey of all MSC afloat personnel to get perspective on what's happening out there on the oceans of the world. I need to know what's on your mind as you conduct the nation's business.

Your perceptions of our business processes are every bit as important as the reality of those processes. I need to know how you view MSC from the deckplates, using proven Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI) techniques.

You'll be hearing more about this survey in the next few months.

I liken this to taking a fix on the North Star from the bridge of a new ship … or perhaps, these days, lighting off that new GPS display in the charthouse.

In the meantime, thanks for your good work, shipmates.

Keep the faith,

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

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Algol transports Marine cargo and MRAPs

MSC puts 'fast' in fast sealift ship

By Laura M. Seal
MSC Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command fast sealift ship USNS Algol departed Wilmington, N.C., Feb. 2 carrying 66,000 square feet of U.S. Marine Corps cargo destined for Afghanistan and more than 50 mine-resistant, ambush-protected vehicles destined for Iraq.

This was just 15 days after MSC received a request from the Army's Surface Deployment and Distribution Command to carry the Marine Corps cargo on the first leg of a three-part journey to Afghanistan.

The short timeline for this lift was due to a change in the deployment orders of the Camp Lejeune, N.C.-based 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit, whose cargo Algol was activated to carry.

"We received a deployment order in January to go to Afghanistan and conduct security and stabilization operations as part of the International Security Assistance Force," said Marine Corps Capt. Kelly Frushour of the 24th MEU. "This was a big adjustment from what we were originally preparing for, which was to deploy with the Nassau Expeditionary Strike Group."

As the Marines of the 24th MEU worked nearly around the clock in Norfolk to off-load their cargo from the amphibious ships and transport it to Wilmington, MSC and SDDC coordinated to get the cargo the next three parts of its journey.

"SDDC came to us with the cargo offer on Jan. 18, and we were able to turn that into an activation order for Algol within a week," said Tim Pickering, cargo project officer at MSC.

Algol is one of eight U.S. government-owned fast sealift ships, reserved for time-sensitive deployments. The ships can travel at an average speed of 27 knots – about 10 knots faster than other cargo ships – and up to speeds of more than 30 knots.

In addition to unparalleled speed for its ship type, the 946-foot long FSS also have an impressive cargo-carrying capacity of more than 150,000 square feet. The ship has steel-reinforced decks for out-sized equipment and a side ramp and a series of interior ramps that make the ship ideal for fast loading and off-loading.

"We needed to activate an FSS because it's the only cargo ship that can travel at high enough speeds to get the 24th MEU's gear overseas in time to meet the requirement," said Pickering.

Algol received its activation orders Jan. 23, and just four days later, left its layberth of Violet, La., for Charleston, S.C., where the ship picked up more than 50 MRAP vehicles to piggyback on the load.

"There is a near constant influx of MRAPs arriving in Charleston as they roll off the assembly lines, and in order to get the vehicles to the troops as quickly as possible, SDDC utilizes all available ships traveling through the area to carry the MRAPs," said Pickering.

While MSC was activating Algol, the 24th MEU's cargo began arriving in Wilmington Jan. 26 and was carefully staged on the pier just about 500 feet from the ramp.

"We were making sure that everything was ready to begin loading as soon as the ship arrived," said George Pearson, MSC's representative in Wilmington who coordinated all of the many groups involved in the evolution.

In addition to Marines from the 24th MEU, soldiers from the 841st Transportation Battalion based out of Charleston, S.C., were on hand to assist by developing the load plan.

"These ships are loaded completely differently from the amphibious ships," said Marine Corps Capt. Mark Windham, embarkation officer for the 24th MEU. "We load our amphibs based on what cargo we need to take off first, but the main consideration in loading this ship was distributing the weight evenly."

Algol arrived in Wilmington Jan. 31, and at 7 a.m. that day, Marines, Sailors, longshoremen and stevedores began loading more than 600 pieces of equipment including vehicles, weapons and containers. Eighteen hours later, at 1 a.m. the next morning, the last piece of cargo was finally on board.

"The support that MSC and all the other players gave to us was phenomenal. My hat's off to everybody," said Windham.

"This is just what we do all the time," said Pearson. "It's our flexibility. We just jump on it at the last moment and make things happen. When you have a lot of experience, it's easy. You know what you need to get done, so you get it done."

Algol carried the 24th MEU's cargo to the United Arab Emirates and off-loaded it in late February. MSC's rapid delivery ensured that SDDC will get the equipment to the Marines in Afghanistan when they need it. Algol then continued to a nearby Persian Gulf port and delivered the MRAP vehicles.

A small number of Marines from the 24th MEU rode Algol to monitor and maintain their equipment during the voyage. The rest of the MEU's 2,200 Marines will fly into theater this spring.

Each FSS is crewed by about 40 civilian mariners who work for private companies under contract to the U.S. government.

Top right: A Marine from the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit positions cargo for loading aboard Military Sealift Command fast sealift ship USNS Algol in Wilmington, N.C., in February.

Bottom: Marine Staff Sgt. Dawn Brammer directs a Marine vehicle from the 24th MEU into position to drive up Algol's load ramp.

Photos by U.S. Marine Corps Cpl. Randall Clinton

T-AKE 1 RETURNS FROM

By Bill Cook
MSFSC Public Affairs

On Feb. 8, dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Lewis and Clark — the first ship in Military Sealift Command's newest class of ships — returned to Naval Station Norfolk, Va., after its first deployment.

The ship successfully completed a six-month tour to the U.S. Central Command area of operations to resupply U.S. Navy ships — providing logistics support in the Persian Gulf, around the Horn of Africa, along the length of Somalia and beyond the equator.

The ship's maiden voyage was reminiscent of the explorers for whom the ship was named and their famous journey.

At the beginning of the original Lewis and Clark expedition in 1804, William Clark wrote in his journal, "… all in health and readiness to set out. Boats and everything complete, with the necessary stores of provisions."

Like those boats 204 years ago, MSC's Lewis and Clark was well provisioned as it headed out on its first deployment.

Delivered to MSC in June 2006, today's Lewis and Clark is designed to replenish the Navy's underway carrier strike groups and other naval forces, alleviating the need for them to constantly return to port for supplies.

Lewis and Clark and other ships of the T-AKE class, each crewed by 124 civil service mariners and 11 military personnel, are replacing aging, single-mission underway replenishment ships. This includes ammunition ships and combat stores ships that are, on average, 40 years old and near the end of their service lives.

Deployment preparation

Like the initial ship of any class, Lewis and Clark's first year focused on post-delivery tests and trials. For the ship's civil service master, Capt. Randall Rockwood, the stakes were high, since the success of the tests would influence not only his ship, but many other existing and future ships of the class.

"Lewis and Clark's test period was chock-a-block with artificial, abstract cargo movements," said Rockwood. "There were loads of clipboard-toting testers observing and timing the choreography of fork trucks and cargo slinging needed to accomplish a given event. Though that phase was completed in May 2007 with flying colors, this first-ever deployment was when we collectively learned the real-world capability of T-AKE logistics support."

Logistics support

During its deployment, Lewis and Clark provided 73 underway and 28 in-port replenishments, delivered 5,856 pallets of food and supplies, and transferred nearly 15 million gallons of fuel to USS Enterprise and USS Harry S. Truman carrier strike groups and USS Bonhomme Richard, USS Wasp and USS Kearsarge expeditionary strike groups. Lewis and Clark also resupplied coalition naval forces from Pakistan, Germany, France, Australia and the United Kingdom.

Lewis and Clark transferred ammunition, provisions, stores, spare parts, potable water and petroleum products. Though T-AKEs were designed to carry 700,000 gallons of diesel fuel in their available stores, the crew was also able to use fuel from their own bunkers to provide up to 1.2 million gallons to their customers.

"It was interesting to be employed as a 'light' oiler for much of our deployment," offered Rockwood.

He added that the ship outperformed in its fuel provision capacity, which came in handy for vessels in need.

Rockwood also noted that with Lewis and Clark's large flight deck, unobstructed cargo deck and pre-stage areas, modern high-speed cargo elevators and the large freeze and chill boxes, the ship's being serviced could never keep up with Lewis and Clark's capabilities.

"Our state-of-the-art design is focused on logistics support, and for that, a better ship has not been built," said Rockwood. "With every resupply evolution, we demonstrated that our standard of support was far-and-away better, faster and safer than any previous logistics ship."

"Customers at the end of the ship's long supply route were always pleased to see Lewis and Clark rendezvous with fresh fruits and vegetables, more fuel and, of course, much sought-after mail," mused Rockwood. "That's one of the joys of operating a logistics ship: Our customers always want to see us."

U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Jackey Bratt

Dignitary visits

In August 2007, Sealift Logistics Command Central Commander, Navy Capt. Anthony Dropp, responsible for logistics in the Middle East, experienced Lewis and Clark's capability firsthand. Dropp was aboard to see the ship in action as it replenished Bonhomme Richard and amphibious dock landing ship USS Rushmore.

He was impressed by the performance of the ship.

"Lewis and Clark is a substantial improvement over prior [combat logistics force] designs," said Dropp.

During another part of the deployment, Lewis and Clark visited Djibouti, and while there, Rockwood

FRESHMAN DEPLOYMENT

U.S. Navy Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Patrick Gearhiser

met with the U.S. ambassador to that country, W. Stuart Symington.

"The ambassador impressed upon us the importance of logistics support in his region and the explosive growth of Djibouti — plus how we aboard Lewis and Clark were benefiting from that expansion," said Rockwood.

New discoveries

During the deployment, Lewis and Clark's engineers, under Chief Engineer Timothy Nesbitt's supervision, made constant discoveries about new mechanical functions, software and technical updates.

"Although the effort and work on the first in class is greater, Lewis and Clark's engineering department takes great pride in knowing that we on the first deployment will share responsibility for the successes of all the T-AKEs that follow," said Nesbitt.

Discoveries and improvements also spread above decks. A major enhancement accomplished early in the deployment was the installation of the commercial version of the electronic chart display and information system on the bridge. The commercial system provided accurate charts and was easy to use. Using the system, one watch officer could hold the navigational picture and maintain situational awareness while operating in heavy commercial traffic. This capability increased ship safety and efficiency while voyage plans were calculated and executed without misstep.

In addition, as a result of this deployment, Rockwood has requested the installation of an additional international maritime satellite antenna to improve communication capability.

Continuing the legacy

Lewis and Clark was replaced in-theater by dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Sacagawea — the second ship of the class. These ships are the first of a projected class of 14 ships, the first 11 of which will serve as combat logistics force ships. The remaining three T-AKEs will be part of MSC's Maritime Prepositioning Force.

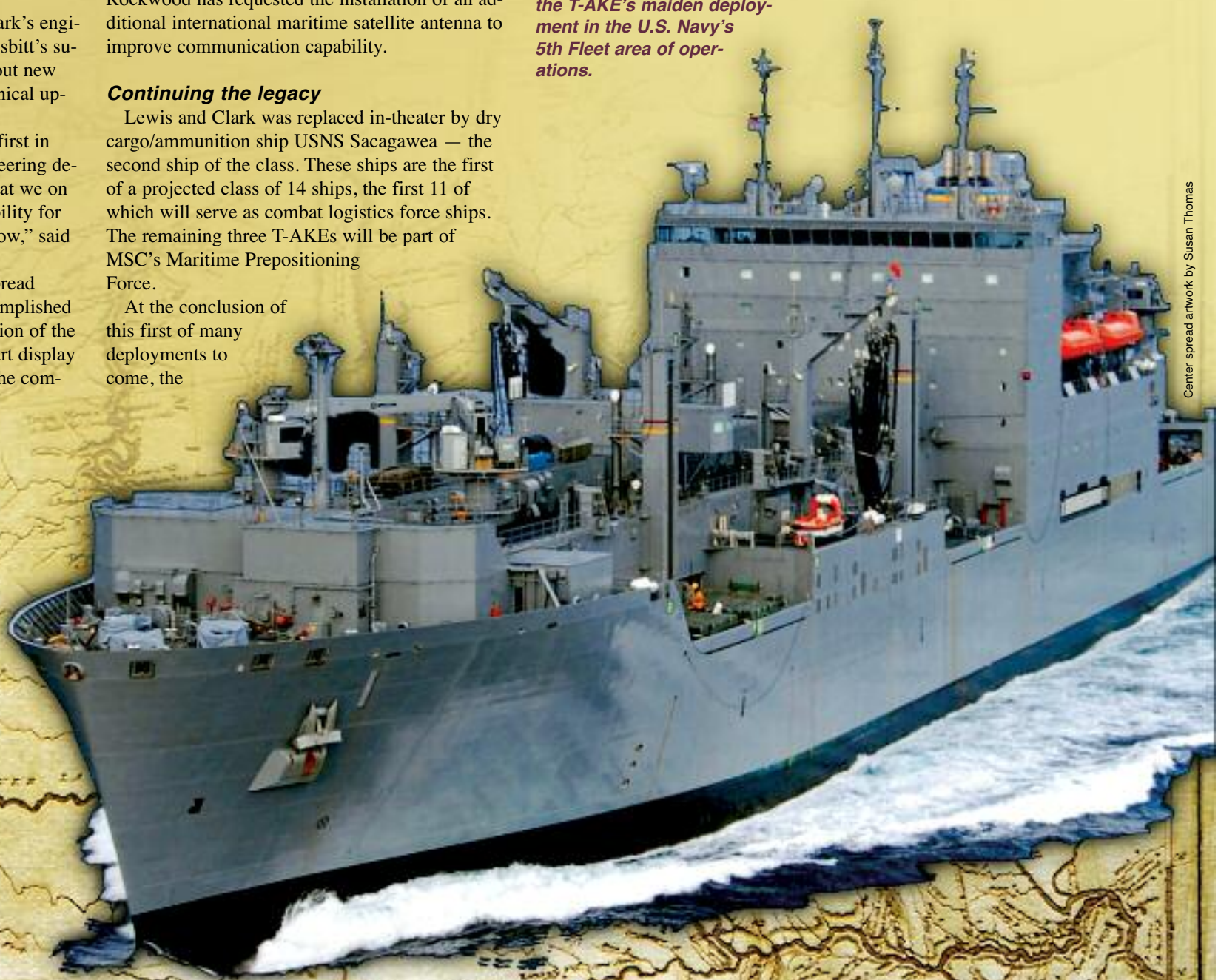
At the conclusion of this first of many deployments to come, the ship brings to full circle a legacy reaching back more than 200 years when the two men bearing the names Lewis and Clark emerged from the wilderness to complete their historic deployment.

President Thomas Jefferson wrote to Congress in December 1806 of the successful completion of the expedition that, "Messrs. Lewis and Clark, and their brave companions, have by this arduous service, deserved well of their country."

Near left: Military Sealift Command dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Lewis and Clark sends a fuel probe to guided-missile destroyer USS Porter to begin an underway refueling Nov. 11, 2007, in the Indian Ocean. Lewis and Clark was supporting maritime security operations in the 5th Fleet area of operations.

Left: Aboard Lewis and Clark, a Puma helicopter awaits passengers for transfer to shore. The ship carried two of the civilian-operated helicopters for vertical replenishment and personnel transport.

Cover: Lewis and Clark refuels German frigate FGS Augsburg Nov. 17, 2007, during the T-AKE's maiden deployment in the U.S. Navy's 5th Fleet area of operations.


Center spread artwork by Susan Thomas

HQ • HIGHLIGHTS

YN1 Kevin Harden

Navy **Yeoman 1st Class Kevin Harden,** Sealift Logistics Command Europe, received the Military Sealift Command 2007 Shore Sailor of the Year award, and Navy **Storekeeper 1st Class Eric Jackomino**, hospital ship USNS Comfort, received the Military Sealift Fleet Support Command 2007 Sea Sailor of the Year award during a ceremony in Washington, D.C., Feb. 6.

MSC also awarded the headquarters-level junior and senior sailors of the year for 2007 during the ceremony. Navy **Information Systems Technician 1st Class Damien Moore**, command, control, communications and computer systems, is the senior Sailor of the Year, and Navy **Yeoman 2nd Class Rebecca Williams**, administrative support center, is the Junior Sailor of the Year.

Navy **Operations Specialist 2nd Class Leticia Parker**, operations, was selected as MSC's Sailor of the Quarter for the fourth quarter of 2007.

John Quandt, strategic planning, represented MSC at the Joint Sea Basing and Force Projection from the Sea Research and Development Symposium in January in Duck, N.C. The conference covered topics such as seabasing, Maritime Prepositioning Force (Future), Joint High-Speed Vessel and Joint Logistics Over the Shore.

MSC welcomes **Anna Hancock**, public affairs; **Johanna O'Neill** and **Lorna Taylor**, administrative support center; **Leslie Mickel**, operations and plans; **Jeremy Fuchs**, engineering; **Cynthia Davis**, **Binh Loi**, **Marcelle Prewitt**, **Cora Salaveria**, **Cora Stephens**, comptroller's office; and **Danielle Lloyd**, contracts and business management.

MSC bids farewell to **Sharron Roberts**, comptroller's office; and **Mae Bartley**, contracts and business management.

COMPASS • HEADING

Military Sealift Fleet Support Command successfully completed the Military Sealift Command Mission Capability Assessment in January. MSFSC Deputy Director **Fred McKenna** thanked command evaluator **Gary Redmond** for the superb effort in preparing the command for this high-visibility review.

Navy **Capt. Owen Honors** is the new commanding officer of the U.S. Navy's 6th Fleet command ship USS Mount Whitney. Honors accepted command of the ship from Navy **Capt. Joseph Kuzmick** during a change of command Jan. 18 in Gaeta, Italy. Kuzmick will be the commanding officer of aircraft carrier USS John C. Stennis.

Fleet replenishment oilers USNS Laramie and USNS Yukon and rescue and salvage ship USNS Grasp won the Captain David M. Cook Food Service Excellence Award in mid-January. Awardees will be honored at the International Food Service Executives Association Joint Military Awards Ceremony in April in Denver, Colo.

Civil service masters **Capt. Doug Casavant** and **Capt. Nate Reybold** and their crews aboard rescue and salvage ship USNS Grasp and fleet ocean tug USNS Apache, respectively, supported a Feb. 1 visit by MSC Commander **Rear Adm. Robert D. Reilly Jr**.

Fair winds and following seas to the following civil service mariners as they retire: **Medical Services Officer George Green**, **Able Seaman Marvin Guyon**, **Boatswain Lionel Kimokeo**, **Pumpman William Kubeck**, **Utilityman Henry Mallari**, **Able Seaman Ozy Pace**, **Able Seaman Angel Paderes** and **Utilityman Napoleon Pico**.

For more MSFSC and civil service mariner news, go to the online newsletter at www.msc.navy.mil/msfsc/newsletter.

FAR • EAST • HAILS

Navy **Storekeeper 1st Class Chris A. Lapid**, Military Sealift Command Office Korea, was named Sealift Logistics Command Far East Sailor of the Year during a ceremony in Singapore, Jan. 8. Lapid also received a Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal from SEALOGFE commander Navy **Capt. Susan Dunlap**. "Petty Officer Lapid is one of those Sailors who works hard every day and does his job superbly," said MSCO Korea Commanding Officer Navy **Cmdr. Ron Oswald**.

Navy **Capt. Ulysses Zalamea**, Commander of Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron Three and civilian **Capt. Rich Horne**, master of prepositioning ship USNS 1st Lt. Jack Lummus, hosted Guam Gov. Felix Camacho and Lt. Gov. Mike Cruz aboard the squadron's flag ship, Jan. 28.

MPS Squadron Three bid fair winds and following seas to Navy **Ensign Ben Murphy**, supply officer, and Navy **Chief Yeoman Willie James**, administrative officer.

Navy **Ensign James Desautels** relieved Murphy, and Navy **Chief Yeoman Dustin Boulware** relieved James.

Before departing the command, Murphy received his Surface Warfare Supply Corps Officer pin from Zalamea in a ceremony aboard Lummus Jan. 23.

SEALOGFE welcomed Navy **Lt. Jeremiah Dailey** as the command's Special Mission Ship officer. Dailey replaces Navy **Lt. Victor Cirilo**, who is scheduled to detach from the command in May.

U.S. Navy photo

Elementary school children gather to see their new textbooks and skateboards delivered by the crew of USNS Niagara Falls during the ship's recent port visit to Subic Bay, Philippines, in support of Project Handclasp. Niagara Falls' crew completed the community relations project at New Cabalan Elementary School in Olongapo City during the port visit.

School Principal Dialina Tangonan, along with more than 1,100 pupils of the school, enthusiastically greeted the crew with welcome banners and presentations from the kindergarten through sixth-grade classes that included local dances, songs and speeches. In the finale, Niagara Falls crew members joined the children to perform a local dance, 'The Papaya.'

PACIFIC • BRIEFS

Military Sealift Command fleet replenishment oiler USNS Guadalupe participated in the recent Joint Forces Training Exercise off the coast of San Diego. Guadalupe provided fuel and dry stores to U.S. and Canadian ships participating in the exercise.

Sealift Logistics Command Pacific hosted the 2008 Joint Conference of Reserve Units, Jan. 26-27, in San Diego. The conference, attended by **Rear Adm. Robert Wray**, Military Sealift Command deputy commander; Navy **Capt. David Kiehl**, SEALOGPAC commander; and Navy **Capt. Susan Dunlap**, SEALOGFE commander; focused on 2008 support of Navy exercises, as well as unit readiness during contingencies. Eleven reserve units participated in the conference.

Fifteen operations officers, representing all the sealift logistics commands, traveled to San Diego for an off-site meeting at SEALOGPAC headquarters Feb. 5-7. Navy **Capt. William Hardy**, MSC headquarters' operations officer, led the discussions on issues related to sealift logistics operations, including transformation.

Ten volunteers from SEALOGPAC and Ship Support Unit San Diego represented their organizations at an MSC booth at the 2008 Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association West Convention, Feb. 5-7 in San Diego. During their four-hour shifts, volunteers answered questions regarding MSC missions and operations.

Fair winds to **Arthur Vasquez**, contract specialist, as he retires from government service.

U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communications Specialist 1st Class Brian Brannon

T-AKE 5 christened

Balloons and bunting decorate the bow of dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Robert E. Peary during its christening ceremony at the National Steel and Shipbuilding Company shipyard in San Diego Feb. 9. The ceremony, originally scheduled for Oct. 27, 2007, was postponed due to the San Diego wildfires. The ship is named for the man who led the first expedition to the geographic North Pole.

EUROPE • NEWS

Military Sealift Command tanker USNS Paul Buck delivered more than 7.5 million gallons of fuel to Mersin, Turkey, during a Jan. 27-30 visit. The majority of this fuel was transferred to the U.S. Air Force's Incirlik Air Base in southern Turkey.

Large, medium-speed, roll-on/roll-off ship USNS Seay helped save four lives Feb. 9 while it sailed to Rota, Spain. As Seay was transiting the Strait of Gibraltar, the ship received word that a 25-foot fishing vessel was in distress. Seay quickly diverted to the small boat's last known position and located the boat, which was in trouble because of the 10-plus-foot seas. Seay positioned itself within 75 feet of the boat, creating a patch of calm, in which the small boat safely awaited rescue by a boat from shore. "The crew performed flawlessly," said Seay's civil service master **Capt. Thomas P. Madden**. "The bridge team of **3rd Mate Terry Simmons**, **2nd Mate Garrett Winner**, **Helmsman Greg Johnson** and **Lookout Ron Poole** did what they were supposed to do. The deck gang led by **Chief Mate Dave Centofanti** and assisted by **3rd Mate Kevin Zeller** and **Boatswain John Wells** rigged all needed gear for personnel recovery and provided needed situational information."

Later that day, Seay arrived in Rota to load 53 helicopters and equipment redeploying to the United States after a tour of duty with the U.S. Army's 82nd Combat Aviation Brigade in Afghanistan.

Transport planes from Air Mobility Command transported the helicopters from Afghanistan to Rota. Seay loaded the equipment and departed Rota Feb. 11.

Commander, Sealift Logistics Command Europe Navy **Capt. Nicholas H. Holman** and SEALOGEUR staff members **Pete Lewis** and **Phil Ketner** briefed participants at U.S. 6th Fleet's Naval Attachés conference in Naples, Italy. Holman, Lewis and Ketner gave an overview of MSC to naval attachés assigned to U.S. embassies in both Europe and Africa.

SEALOGEUR's operations department bid farewell to, now, Navy **Ensign Pawel Oscik** as he departed the command to become the officer in charge of a beach detachment stationed at Marine Corps Base Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii. He served as a Chief Boatswain's Mate with SEALOGEUR. Holman commissioned Oscik Jan. 31 before he departed the command.

SEALOGEUR also said farewell to Navy **Command Chief Harold Oneal** Feb. 1. Oneal's next assignment is aboard USS Peleliu in San Diego.

CENTRAL • CURRENTS

Military Sealift Command dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Lewis and Clark and fleet replenishment oiler USNS Tippecanoe departed the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations in January.

Lewis and Clark and Tippecanoe supported the USS Enterprise and USS Harry S. Truman carrier strike groups, USS Kearsarge and USS Tarawa expeditionary strike groups and other coalition naval forces.

Tippecanoe conducted 32 underway and 12 in-port replenishments, transferring more than 4 million gallons of fuel.

Lewis and Clark conducted 73 underway and 28 in-port replenishments, transferring nearly 15 million gallons of fuel. Before leaving 5th Fleet, Lewis and Clark transferred 292 pallets of stores, ammunition and other material to sister ship USNS Sacagawea.

Sacagawea's master, civil service **Capt. George McCarthy**, joined his brother in the 5th Fleet area of operations. Civil service **Capt. Bill McCarthy** is master of fleet replenishment oiler USNS John Lenthall.

The brothers have worked together in the past as master and first mate, but this is the first time they've worked on ships as captains in the same region.

While in port in Jebel Ali, UAE, Sacagawea participated in an oil-spill exercise conducted at the Star Energy Oil Tanking berth. The exercise enabled Star Energy to execute its emergency procedures and earn an important qualification for continued operations and international certification.

In January, SEALOGCENT coordinated six dry cargo operations delivering more than 460,000 square feet of combat equipment and three wet cargo operations moving more than 35 million gallons of fuel in support of operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom.

Atlantic • Lines

Military Sealift Command combat stores ship USNS Saturn returned to Norfolk Jan. 12 from a five-month deployment to the U.S. Southern Command area of operations in support of U.S. Navy units conducting counter-narcotics operations.

Steaming 32,305 miles, the ship conducted 33 replenishments, delivered more than 700 pallets of cargo and pumped 2 million gallons of fuel, enabling other vessels to remain on station an additional 130 days to disrupt the flow of illegal drugs.

Saturn's integration into the joint operations played an important role in the seizure of 12 vessels and 41 tons of illicit narcotics and the detention of 42 suspected drug runners.

Sealift Logistics Command Atlantic bids farewell to four longtime employees:

Norm Williams, anti-terrorism and force protection, transferred to Construction Battalion One, at Little Creek Naval Amphibious Base, Norfolk, Jan. 18, where he is the director of future operations and plans.

Navy **Chief Petty Officer Raphael Reyes**, administrative officer, retired in February after a 23-year Navy career.

Cecilia Lafoe, command secretary, departed in February to follow her Navy spouse to his next assignment in Florida.

Charlie LeBlanc, SEALOGLANT Beaumont, Texas, operations director, retired in February after 17 years with MSC. During LeBlanc's career, he worked ports in 12 Central and South American countries, two Caribbean islands and seven European nations.

Welcome Aboard

Submarine tender joins MSC fleet

By Trish Larson
MSC Public Affairs

Tucked away in a corner of the Pacific Northwest, a proud ship with nearly 30 years of outstanding service to the Navy's submarine forces quietly underwent a revolutionary change on Feb. 1. This milestone occurred while the 649-foot ship was in port at Naval Base Kitsap in Bremerton, Wash. Without fanfare, the operation, maintenance and modernization responsibility for Navy submarine tender USS Emory S. Land transferred to Military Sealift Command.

For the ship, which was typically crewed by 64 Navy officers and 941 enlisted personnel, the transfer marked a historic first: the integration of MSC civil service mariners with Land's military crew.

For MSC, the transfer also marked a history-making change as the command added a new ship to its inventory and a new mission support area — at-sea repair for Navy submarines — to its already diverse array of services.

A small group of CIVMARs first embarked Land in September 2007, and the number grew to 36 by the beginning of February. The ship's new hybrid crew will eventually transition to 160 CIVMARs and 292 uniformed Navy personnel over the next two years, all under the command of a U.S. Navy captain. The military component will include 151 Sailors that are currently part of the ship's on-board repair department.

U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jesus Uranga

U.S. Navy Sailors aboard submarine tender USS Emory S. Land man the rails as the ship departs its homeport in Italy for the final time. Emory S. Land transferred to Military Sealift Command Feb. 1 and is now homeported in Bremerton, Wash.

MSC's responsibility for operation and maintenance of Land centers on the command's federally employed CIVMARs. These highly trained merchant mariners, all licensed or credentialed by the U.S. Coast Guard, make it possible to free up Navy Sailors for assignment to critical war-fighting roles. For more than 35 years, CIVMARs have successfully operated the Navy's support ships. Today, CIVMARs crew more than 40 Navy ships around the world, including underway replenishment ships, rescue and salvage ships, fleet ocean tugs, hospital ships, a cable-laying and repair ship and a command ship.

Land's CIVMARs will be responsible for the deck department, navigation services, engineering plant, galley and steward services. In addition, CIVMARs will have primary responsibility for communications and ship supply functions.

Military personnel will maintain and operate the on-board repair facilities and shipboard information systems, maintain defensive weapons systems and coordinate supply functions with CIVMARs.

While Land awaits a scheduled shipyard overhaul, work aboard ship is in high gear. CIVMARs have already assumed responsibility for shipboard communications. The deck department, now under the CIVMAR leadership of Chief Mate/Officer in Charge Gerald Hickey, and the engineering department, now under the CIVMAR leadership of Chief Engineer Charlie Smith, have each been reconfigured to combine military and CIVMAR personnel.

Work continues on the transfer of functions in other areas as well, including supply, food service and damage control. In addition, CIVMARs have joined forces with their military shipmates to inspect and refurbish shipboard equipment.

"The transfer of functions and responsibilities between the military and civil service crew members has been a huge, but rewarding, experience for all involved," Hickey said. "All of those who participated, either civilian or military, can justifiably be proud that their efforts and hard work have assisted greatly in ensuring a smooth transition."

Land, currently homeported in Bremerton, is awaiting entry into nearby Puget Sound Naval Shipyard in June, where the ship will undergo a 10-month overhaul. During this time, in addition to other significant work, modifications will be made to convert living spaces for MSC crewing.

After leaving the shipyard, Land will resume its mission as a floating repair facility — providing maintenance and logistic support for Navy submarines. The ship will remain homeported in Bremerton for about the next two years and will be assigned to Commander Submarine Group 9 for forward deployment upon completion of its conversion.

Prior to arriving in Bremerton, the ship was homeported in La Maddalena, Italy, where it was assigned to the U.S. 6th Fleet's Submarine Group 8.

Instead of having a USNS designation and being commanded by a civilian master, Land will operate as a commissioned ship with a U.S. Navy captain in charge of the hybrid crew. The 6th Fleet command ship USS Mount Whitney, which transferred to MSC in 2004, is the only other MSC ship that retains its commissioned status and operates with a similar leadership and crewing configuration.

Land's commanding officer, Navy Capt. Jeffrey Hughes said, "MSC civilian mariners currently assigned to the ship bring a wealth of knowledge and experience that have ensured this pioneering transition for the tender will be successful and will benefit the future of the submarine force."

The second of the Navy's two submarine tenders, USS Frank Cable, is expected to transfer to MSC in 2009. Currently, Cable operates in the Western Pacific as 7th Fleet's mobile repair and support platform.

Marine jets target drones launched by Safeguard

By Edward Baxter
SEALOGFE Public Affairs

With the ability to support Navy divers and conduct salvage and tow operations, Military Sealift Command rescue and salvage ship USNS Safeguard can perform multiple missions.

Safeguard displayed that mission flexibility in early February when the ship was tasked to launch drone missiles to be used as target practice for U.S. Marine Corps fighter jets.

For Safeguard and its crew, it was the first time for such a unique mission.

About a hundred miles off the coast of Okinawa, Japan, six surface-to-air drone missiles were launched about 15 minutes apart from Safeguard's stern platform.

Safeguard, formerly a commissioned active-duty, Sailor-crewed ship, transferred to MSC for civil service crewing in September 2007. The ship underwent a conversion and modification in Sasebo, Japan, to accommodate civil-service crew members.

After the conversion, when the rescue and salvage ship was scheduled to go to the Pacific island of Saipan to bring aboard Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit divers, Safeguard was tasked to serve as a launch platform. Normally, a frigate or destroyer is used for this type of mission, but none was available due to other mission requirements.

The crew of Safeguard had about three weeks' notification that it would support this mission, and embarked 15 Navy personnel from White Beach Naval Facility, Okinawa.

Immediately prior to the first launch, a U.S. Navy P-3 Orion maritime surveillance aircraft cleared a designated area. Next, a U.S. Air Force E-3 AWACS aircraft was used to vector the Marine F/A-18 pilots to the drones.

The Marine pilots shot down all the drones using their advanced, medium-range, air-to-air missiles.

"Safeguard had the deck-space layout and flexibility in her schedule to support and stepped up to the plate," said Navy Lt. Cmdr. Charles Ehnes, diving and salvage officer for Commander, Logistics Group Western Pacific and Commander, Task Force 73.

U.S. Navy photo

Surface-to-air drone missiles sit on the deck of Military Sealift Command rescue and salvage ship USNS Safeguard before being launched as targets for Marine F/A-18s near Okinawa, Japan.

CTF-73 is the operational commander for MSC's Naval Fleet Auxiliary Force ships in the U.S. 7th Fleet area of responsibility and is collocated with Sealift Logistics Command Far East in Singapore.

Safeguard is one of four MSC rescue and salvage ships.

The ship is about 250 feet long and has a beam of 51 feet.