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

THE U.S. NAVY'S MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND

Where is Bonhomme Richard?

John Paul Jones bids goodbye to his victorious ship, USS Bonhomme Richard.



USNS Henson leads the charge to find John Paul Jones' iconic ship

INSIDE — Swift wraps up High-Speed Vessel-Southern Partnership Station • MSC ships host VBSS exercises

Painting by Percy Moran

U.S. Navy photo

MSC ships, CIVMARs, host and role-play in Valiant Shield 2010

By Ed Baxter, SEALOGFE Public Affairs

On a calm morning near the coast of Guam, U.S. Marine Corps Harrier jets thundered over the bow of a suspicious ship. The wop-wop sound of Marine Cobra and Sea Knight helicopters followed. One Sea Knight hovered over the ship's flight deck just long enough for Marines to pour out of the aircraft, fast-roping to the deck below.

Once aboard, the Marines tactically spread out across the ship. Some secured the bridge and engine room, while others took crew members into custody.

One crew member was handcuffed by the Marines and questioned about the ship's cargo and destination, while another found herself face down, hands cuffed behind her back, yelling at the Marines in Arabic.

In this case, the "suspicious" ship was Military Sealift Command dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Alan Shepard, which served as a staging platform for Marines to train in a real-world visit, board, search and seizure exercise Sept. 18.

Sandison Macklin, a third officer aboard Shepard, played the role of the ship's master while Tamara Kaileh, a cadet at the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy who is fluent in Arabic, played the role of a suspect crew member. Other members of Shepard's civil service mariner, or CIVMAR, crew assumed other roles.

The VBSS exercise was part of Valiant Shield 2010, which was held off Guam and the Republic of Palau Sept. 12-22. The exercise tested the U.S. military's ability to detect, locate, track and engage enemy forces at sea. Participants included the USS George Washington carrier strike group, USS Essex expeditionary strike group, the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit and Air Force B-52 bombers from Guam's Andersen Air Base.

MSC's CIVMAR-crewed rescue and salvage ship USNS Navajo and fleet replenishment

oiler USNS John Ericsson also participated in the annual exercise, which was first held in 2006.

"Working with the Marines allowed a large percentage of the crew to gain valuable insight and experience on how their role translates to improving the effectiveness of the warfighter," said Shepard's civil service master Capt. Lee Apsley.

Valiant Shield also included the sinking of ex-USS Acadia about 135 miles southwest of Guam. Navajo towed the 22,000-ton destroyer tender more than 3,400 miles from Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, so air and surface forces could use the ship for live-fire target practice.

The tow operation began Aug. 27 when harbor tugs positioned Acadia near Navajo's stern in Pearl Harbor's main channel. Navajo then secured a 50-foot tow wire to Acadia and carefully maneuvered the ship out of the narrow channel. Once in the open ocean, the tow wire was extended to about 2,000 feet to ensure the ships kept a safe distance throughout the 24-day voyage.

Sailing at an average speed of six knots, Navajo and Acadia reached their final destination the morning of Sept. 19. But before Navajo's CIVMARs could release the tow wire, however, they had to board Acadia in order to re-energize the ship's navigation lights, which had unexpectedly failed.

"Without navigation lights, the dead ship presented a real danger to navigation," said Navajo's civil service master Capt. P. Todd Christian.

Navajo's First Officer Michael Keller, Chief Engineer Keith Chamberlin and Wiper Ronnie Josfat boarded Acadia by climbing a 60-foot Jacob's ladder from one of Navajo's rigid hull, inflatable boats. Once safely aboard, the team used flashlights to move through the compartments of the ghost ship.

"The ship was eerily quiet and dark, without fan or engine noise, only the sounds of our footsteps on the steel deck and an open hatch creaking as the ship rolled back and forth," said Keller.

The crew restored the navigation lights, and Acadia was set adrift. Mission complete, Navajo headed away from Acadia for a port call in Guam.

On the morning of Sept. 20, Marine and Navy aircraft, helicopters, surface ships and Air Force B-52 bombers began firing missiles, shooting guns and dropping laser-guided bombs on Acadia. By the afternoon, Acadia had slipped beneath the ocean's surface forever.

Ericsson and Shepard also conducted underway replenishments with both the Essex and George Washington strike groups, delivering more than 7.9 million gallons of fuel and 602 pallets of cargo.

"Throughout the exercise, MSC ships displayed why they are such an important part of our national maritime security," said Sealift Logistics Command Far East commander Navy Capt. Chip Denman. "MSC ships support valuable, real-world training exercises, which keep our warfighters operating at the highest level."



Marines fast rope onto Military Sealift Command dry cargo and ammunition ship USNS Alan Shepard during a visit, board, search and seizure exercise, which was part of Valiant Shield 2010, Sept. 18 in the Philippine Sea.



Alan Shepard Third Officer Sandison Macklin roleplays the part of a hostage during the role-playing portion of a noncompliant boarding exercise.

U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Richard Doolin

Mount Whitney participates in Jackal Stone 2010 exercise

By MC1 Terry Vick

U.S. Naval Forces Europe/U.S. Naval Forces Africa/U.S. 6th Fleet Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command command ship USS Mount Whitney participated in exercise Jackal Stone 2010, a joint military operation in the Baltic Sea, off the coasts of Lithuania and Poland Sept. 16-26.

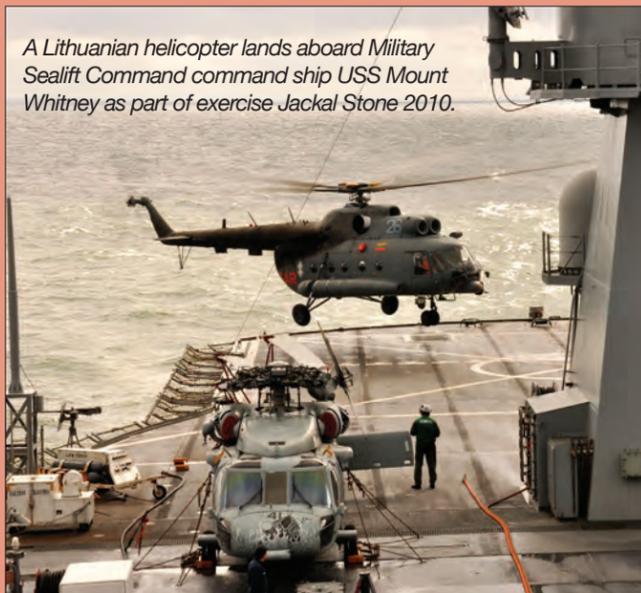
The multinational, military special operations exercise organized by Special Operations Command Europe was designed to improve international military partnerships through joint training with special operations forces from Croatia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Ukraine and the United States. Mount Whitney, the flagship for the U.S. 6th Fleet, which operates with a hybrid crew of MSC civil service mariners and U.S. sailors, served as the platform for the exercise.

During the exercise, special operations forces, also called SOF, from participating nations practiced airborne insertion maneuvers, and visit, board, search and seizure, or VBSS, techniques.

"Jackal Stone 2010 was a unique opportunity for SOF units from these countries to promote better communication and improve our readiness to build a greater fighting force worldwide," said Chief Warrant Officer Daniel Spencer, a special operations task group liaison officer from Naval Special Warfare Unit Two. "Mount Whitney answered the call by providing the ability to practice the underway-vessel troop-insertion techniques of fast-roping and small-boat operations on numerous occasions to assist the SOF units on the ground."

Fast-roping is a military insertion technique used

A Lithuanian helicopter lands aboard Military Sealift Command command ship USS Mount Whitney as part of exercise Jackal Stone 2010.



U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Sylvia Nealy

to deploy troops from a helicopter using braided nylon descension ropes and is used by operators during VBSS operations. Another technique practiced on Mount Whitney was the hook and climb, a more subtle VBSS insertion method that uses rigid-hull, inflatable boats or combat-rubber raiding craft to approach a suspicious vessel and climb aboard.

Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 28, Detachment One, embarked on Mount Whitney to coordinate combat fast-rope training exercises on the flight deck with MI-8 helicopters from the Lithuanian Air Force. It was the responsibility of the CIVMARs to keep flight operations running without interruption.

"I was a senior landing signal enlisted for Mount Whitney," said CIVMAR Boatwain's Mate Kenneth Graham. "During flight operations, I directed all aircraft for proper and safe landings aboard the ship."

Mount Whitney also supported the exercise by providing a for-

ward afloat staging platform for special operations units and their support elements.

"We were able to be a mobile-operating base for the Special Operations Surgical Team, as well as provide aerial reconnaissance and logistical support through the use of our organic air asset," said Navy Lt. Tiffany Hill, Mount Whitney's operations officer. "During the 10-day special operation exercise, Mount Whitney's presence was a huge asset," said Spencer. "The ship provided excellent surveillance of targets at sea and helped the SOF planners maintain an excellent perspective of the big picture by strategically placing itself off the coast ready to perform any task the SOF required."

The Mount Whitney crew knew its role was critical in keeping the exercise on track.

"This exercise was important because we handled all the engineering, which kept the ship operating 24 hours a day with zero casualties," said CIVMAR Christopher Bongard, a deck engineer machinist.

"We were able to rig up a fueling system to fuel small boats coming along side and complete this task at a moment's notice."

"I felt privileged and honored to be part of such an event, and in support of all other Joint Task Force evolutions," said Graham.

"I spent most of my career sailing on civilian ships," said Bongard. "Working aboard Mount Whitney gives me a perspective on how the [uninformed] Navy and MSC do things differently. This [exercise] actually allows both organizations to come together and work toward a common goal."

Kim Dixon, MSC Public Affairs, contributed to this story.

John Paul Jones'

spirit of determination

lives on in Henson survey

By Kim Dixon, SEALOGEUR Public Affairs

"They did not abandon her 'til after nine o'clock; the water was then up to the lower deck, and a little after ten I saw, with inexpressible grief, the last glimpse of the Bon Homme [sic] Richard."

So wrote the determined godfather of the U.S. Navy, John Paul Jones, on Sept. 25, 1779, two days after his historic victory against the British Royal navy's HMS Serapis, when his Continental Navy ship Bonhomme Richard sank into the depths of the North Sea off England. For more than two centuries Jones' famous phrase, "I have not yet begun to fight," has continued to inspire members of the U.S. Navy, as well as U.S. merchant mariners who have supported the United States' defense around the world. Today Bonhomme Richard and the legendary leader whose memory it invokes are at the forefront again as Military Sealift Command oceanographic survey ship USNS Henson undertakes a new search for the celebrated ship.

For 10 days beginning Sept. 10, Henson, which is operated by MSC for the Naval Meteorology and Oceanography Command, was tasked from a routine deployment to the European theater of operations – under U.S. 6th Fleet – to serve as the primary platform for a survey team hoping to narrow the 100 square miles of seabed in the North Sea off the coast of Flamborough Head, England, where Bonhomme Richard is thought to have sunk to its watery grave.

"Throughout their years of active service, the Navy's MSC oceanographic ships have sailed hundreds of thousands of nautical miles collecting critical oceanographic and hydrographic data," said Rear Adm. Jonathan W. White, commander, Naval Meteorology and Oceanography Command. "I consider it an honor that our cutting-edge naval ocean survey technology now will be used to forge a connection with this historic ship and its commander, U.S. Navy hero, John Paul Jones."

The crew of Henson, U.S. merchant mariners who work for a private company under contract to MSC, expressed their enthusiasm for the opportunity to participate in the search.

"Finding the wreck could provide insight into the lives of Capt. Jones, his crew, and their battle with the Serapis, and perhaps even some new discoveries about the events of the time," said Henson's Third Officer Barnaby Bosanquet. "I watch television shows about this type of mission when I'm home, so I'm feeling quite lucky to have been involved."

A ship commits to a watery grave

From all accounts, the battle on Sept. 23, 1779, was a ferocious one, almost impossible to comprehend in the modern age of naval warfare.

"...and I made both ships fast together in that situation, which, by the action of the wind on the enemy's sails, forced her stern close to the Bon Homme Richard's [sic] bow, so that the ships lay square alongside of each other, the yards being all entangled, and the cannon of each ship touching the opponent's," wrote Jones.

Serapis was struck by gunfire in more than 10 different locations, but as dismal as its situation was, Bonhomme Richard fared much worse on that day.

"With respect to the situation of the Bon Homme Richard [sic], the rudder was cut entirely off, the stern frame, and transoms were almost entirely cut away, and the timbers by the lower deck, especially from the mainmast towards the stern, being greatly decayed with age, were mangled beyond my power of description, and a person must have been an eye witness to form a just idea of the tremendous scene of carnage, wreck, and ruin, which every where appeared," wrote Jones. "Humanity cannot but recoil from the prospect of such finished horror, and lament that war should be capable of producing such fatal consequences..."

Despite the dire state of Bonhomme Richard, Jones' counterpart, Royal navy Capt. Richard Pearson, surrendered before he realized the condition of his opponent. Jones and his crew transferred to his newly-won prize Serapis, as Bonhomme Richard, a victor in the battle considered a turning point in the American Revolutionary War, was broken and rudderless.

"Being retired Navy, the historical significance and achievement in finding Bonhomme Richard is beyond words," said Henson's civilian Medical Department Representative Mark Pearson. "It is a part of our past and set the course for the Navy as we know it today."

The search begins

Five years ago, the Ocean Technology Foundation, a non-profit undersea research and education service organization, also called OTF, spearheaded an annual project to search for the remains of Bonhomme Richard with support from various commands within the U.S. Navy.

The first question was where to start looking. The location of the Battle of Flamborough Head was well-documented. Indications are that both ships were badly damaged and drifting, with Bonhomme Richard sinking more than a day after the battle. However, information on the crew's actions during this history-making battle does not paint a complete picture.

To fill in gaps, OTF Bonhomme Richard Project historian, Peter Reaveley, spent more than 35 years collecting and analyzing historical data about the battle, using eyewitness accounts, weather and tidal information from that time, and crew actions and ships' logs.

With the available information in hand, U.S. Naval Academy faculty members created a computer program that integrated the weather and tidal information with crew actions and last-known ship positions to try to determine where the ship ultimately sank.

"We believe the ship to be in an area where the water is less than 200 feet deep," said Dr. Peter Guth, an oceanography professor at the U.S. Naval Academy who led a group of four midshipmen on this year's expedition. "While being in water that shallow can make the search easier because more assets are available to conduct the search, it does also increase the likelihood that the remains have been scattered across the ocean floor by commercial fishing nets operating in the area [during] the past 200 years."

When OTF was created in 2006, 550 square miles fit the criteria. Each subsequent expedition has narrowed the search, with 450 square miles surveyed and 100 square miles – roughly the size of Washington, D.C., – remaining before Henson assisted in surveying 63 more square miles.

This year's collaboration included the most extensive support from the U.S. Navy to date, including the use of a variety of high-technology undersea search tools such as Henson's Klein 5000 towed side-scan sonar; the Naval Oceanographic Office's unmanned underwater vehicle REMUS 600 with side-scan and multi-beam sonar; and the Office of Naval Research's unmanned underwater vehicle REMUS 600 equipped with buried mine identification technology used for locating mines buried in the ocean bottom.

Henson's crew joined forces with various members of the project's survey team – including oceanographers from the Naval Oceanographic Office, faculty and midshipmen from the



Civilian mariners aboard Military Sealift Command ship USNS Henson recover and secure the ship's Klein 5000, a device used for locating mines buried in the ocean bottom.

"I have not yet

Henson is a platform for the Ocean Technology Foundation's search for John Paul Jones' historic ship, USS Bonhomme Richard, which sank in 1779.

n mission



U.S. Navy photo

U.S. Naval Academy, representatives from the Office of Naval Research and the Naval History and Heritage Command, members of the Bonhomme Richard Search project team from OTF and personnel from the British Royal Navy and the French Navy. This diverse team assembled in Portsmouth, England, with its related equipment, to meet Henson during its port visit there.

"The normal routine was to launch the REMUS off the stern early in the day," said civilian mariner Capt. Greg Gillotte, master of Henson. "The survey team would have us

go to a certain point where they wanted to launch the REMUS. We would put the ship into position to launch. Then after the run, we'd have to maneuver the ship alongside close enough to fire a grappling hook with a line that would catch the float line that was released on REMUS. We'd grapple the line, and then pull it onto the ship."

The REMUS 600 is a fully independent underwater vehicle that is not connected to the ship. Operators program the desired underwater-survey pattern into the vehicle's computer before putting the vehicle into the water, where it can operate in depths of up to 1,968 feet for 18 to 20 hours on batteries. When that time has elapsed, the vehicle brings itself to the surface, and the survey team on the ship recovers it. The recorded computer imagery is then played back and analyzed.

Henson's towed side-scan sonar, the Klein 5000, which is capable of working to depths of 656 feet with the ship operating at speeds of two to 10 knots, operated with the REMUS. The Klein provided a live picture of near-photographic quality back to Henson. Keeping both systems in the water simultaneously doubled the area that the survey team was able to cover during the search. That increased the workload for Henson and its crew.

"We were often working around the clock," said Gillotte. "We might have to retrieve the fish [REMUS] at two a.m., and then turn around at six a.m. and put the Klein in to tow. Plus, if the Klein was in the water, and it was time to bring in the REMUS, we had to recover the Klein first. While the NAVOCEANO team launches and retrieves the REMUS, my crew does all the operations on deck when we're using the Klein."

Mission challenges aside, Henson found itself at the mercy of what has been the bane of many mariners' existence: the North Sea in late summer. Operating during days that saw 25- to 30-knot winds with gusts more than 40

knots, and 10- to 12-foot seas, Henson's 328-foot length and 58-foot beam became valuable commodities to the experts on board.

"It was a luxury to have Henson as our working platform," said Melissa Ryan,

Bonhomme Richard search-project manager for OTF. "[The ship] was extremely stable and allowed us to work continuously, even in high seas. We have had expeditions in the past using much smaller vessels where we have lost half of our time at sea due to the weather. As an oceanographic survey ship, the Henson was perfectly suited to the mission of searching for the Bonhomme Richard. Its [Henson's] crew gave 100 percent to ensure that the mission was a success."

And the findings are ...

Three interested countries. Ten days at sea. More than 63 square miles searched. Twenty-four Henson civilian mariners. Twenty-nine oceanographers, historians, underwater archaeologists, researchers and midshipmen. Just what mysteries did these virtual denizens of the deep uncover?

"This year's search was very successful in that we [have now] surveyed 90 percent of our [total] survey area," said Ryan. In addition, the survey team identified several hundred targets under the sea within the 63 square miles searched.

However, more than 200 years spent at the bottom of the North Sea is not likely to have been kind to a wooden ship that entered the battle already a bit long in the tooth at 14 years of age. From Jones' own description, the ship was in pieces long before she slowly settled in her final resting spot. Is it realistic to assume there is something left to find?

"There's not a shipwreck out there that can't be found," said Dr. Robert Neyland, director of underwater archaeology at the Naval History and Heritage Command. "Researchers have studied every known book, drawing and model of Bonhomme Richard. When the ship was built in 1765 as a French merchant ship, there was a scarcity of wooden knees – right-angled timbers used to connect parts of a wooden ship together – so boat builders used iron knees to support the deck."

"Another unique element of Bonhomme Richard is that she was carrying 250 tons of iron ballast, during a time when most ships used rock ballast," said Neyland. The ship's 40 iron guns and large one-ton bower anchors could also stand out from other sea-bed debris.

The intersection of an experienced survey team, high-technology equipment, a crew of seasoned mariners on Henson, and knowledge of what historic artifacts they are looking for provided more positive results for this year's survey team than ever.

"We located more than 30 sites we deemed worthy of further investigation," said Ryan. "One site in particular looks very promising, and we will be excited to get a close-up look at it with a remotely operated vehicle on a future expedition." The search participants are coordinating to determine what the next step will be.

"To be part of a mission that could bring history back to life – to be able to see how time has preserved, or deteriorated, the Bonhomme Richard ... to see what secrets, if any, might be waiting to be discovered – that's what was significant to me about this expedition," said Copeland.

Oceanographer Kevin Dial of the Naval Oceanographic Office rinses an autonomous underwater vehicle after recovering it from the North Sea onto Henson.



U.S. Navy photo by Rebecca Burke

U.S. Navy photo by Rebecca Burke
Oceanographic survey ship USNS Henson
is towed to collect side-scan sonar imagery.

net begun to fight"

FAR • EAST • HAILS

Military Sealift Command's Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron Two changed leadership Oct. 5 when Navy **Capt. Wesley Brown** relieved Navy **Capt. Gene "Fred" Harr** during a ceremony held on board the squadron's flagship USNS SGT William R. Button at Diego Garcia. Brown most recently served as the expeditionary warfare module head and executive officer of Tactical Training Group Atlantic in Norfolk. Navy **Capt. Chip Denman**, commander of the Singapore-based Sealift Logistics Command Far East and the ceremony's principal speaker, presented Harr with the Legion of Merit Medal, for his service to the command since November 2009.

Following MPS Squadron Two, Harr became the division director for officer and enlisted career progression at the Navy Personnel Command's Bureau of Naval Personnel in Millington, Tenn.

Maritime Prepositioning Force ship USNS SGT William R. Button, flagship of MPS Squadron Two, and MPF ship USNS GYSGT Fred W. Stockham provided emergency assistance to a distressed commercial vessel near the British Indian Ocean Territory of Diego Garcia, Aug. 31 to Sept. 1. The Cambodian-flagged MV Intercrown, with a Russian crew embarked, reported that it was taking on water in its forward cargo holds. Intercrown then lost its main propulsion and began drifting towards Diego Garcia, home of MPS Squadron Two. Button's electrician **Andrey Zharkoff**, a native Russian speaker, acted as a translator with the Russian-speaking crew via bridge-to-bridge radio. Button also transferred two electrical submersible pumps to assist in de-watering efforts aboard the commercial ship. After Button returned to port, Stockham's Able Seaman **Sergy Kurchenko** embarked Diego Garcia-based BIOT patrol ship Blue Marlin, sent to assist Intercrown, to continue translation services. Intercrown's crew members were able to repair its main propulsion system before proceeding to Sri Lanka for further repairs. Button's crew's efforts "helped safeguard the environmentally-sensitive island and were in keeping with the finest traditions of seafarers rendering assistance to ships in distress," said Denman.

Civil service mariners and Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit One divers embarked on MSC rescue and salvage ship USNS Safeguard conducted bilateral training with Hong Kong's local civil fire and emergency services during a port visit Sept. 26-30. Safeguard's crew members toured Hong Kong's Fire and Emergency Services' diving support vessel and observed their shoreside hyperbaric chamber and related equipment. A hyperbaric chamber is used to treat or prevent decompression sickness during deep dives. Next, Hong Kong's team visited Safeguard and observed dive equipment and static displays aboard the ship. The visit concluded with a group discussion about future engagements. Safeguard's Hong Kong port call is part of a U.S. 7th Fleet initiative to build relationships with countries in

the region through mutual cooperation and engagement.

SEALOGFE hosted an oil-spill response table-top exercise at the command's headquarters in Singapore, Sept. 15-16. The scenario-driven exercise included key players from SEALOGFE, MSC headquarters, Task Force 73, MSC Office Korea, MSC Office Diego Garcia and Ship Support Unit Guam. The group shared ideas and techniques in order to respond to an oil spill from an MSC ship should it occur. The conference was organized and facilitated by SEALOGFE's strategic sealift director **Dennis Debraggio**.

MPS Squadron Three commander Navy **Capt. Herman Awai** and USNS 1st LT Jack Lummus' civilian master **Capt. Rich Horne** hosted Navy Rear Adm. Paul Bushong, commander, U.S. Naval Forces Marianas, and commander, Joint Region Marianas, Sept. 24, aboard the ship near Guam. Awai briefed the admiral on Maritime Prepositioning Force operations around Guam and Saipan, and chief staff officer Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Richard Preston** led the admiral on a tour of the ship.

During a port visit to the Republic of Palau, Awai and Horne hosted Republic of Palau President Johnson Toribiong on board Lummus, Sept. 15. Other guests included Republic of Palau First Lady Valeria Toribiong, Minister of State Victor Yano, House Speaker Noah Idechong, and ambassadors from Japan and the Philippines. "The purpose of Lummus' port call to the South Pacific island nation was to support U.S. 7th Fleet's theater security cooperation objectives and develop goodwill between the governments of Palau and the United States," Awai said.

Awai and squadron staff members then joined sailors from the Gulfport, Miss.-based Mobile Construction Battalion 11 in a volunteer event to clean and make repairs to a veterinary clinic in Koror, Palau, Sept. 28. Staff members conducted general maintenance and repaired kennels.

MPF ship USNS Dahl's civilian master **Capt. Kurt N. Kleinschmidt** and crew hosted a one-day, daylight cruise for local Saipan scout troops, as well as students and teachers from the local Whispering Palms school Aug. 31 off the coast of Saipan. Guests were briefed on the ship's mission, toured the vessel, and received basic navigation and seamanship training from embarked mariners.

MPS Squadron Two welcomes chief staff officer Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Brett Garvie** who relieved Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Brent Holbeck**. MSCO Korea welcomes administrative officer Navy **Yeoman 2nd Class Cory Henderson**.

SEALOGFE bids fair winds and following seas to special mission ship officer Navy **Lt. Jerry Daley**, who received a Navy Commendation Medal marking the end of his tour with the command, and MSCO Diego Garcia administrative officer Navy **Yeoman 1st Class Sandra Manning**, who received a Navy Achievement Medal.

COMPASS • HEADING

Several ships and shore offices around the command are holding official award ceremonies to honor the civil service mariners who are eligible to wear the Secretary of Defense Medal for the Global War on Terrorism. The medal is awarded to those who have met criteria based on duration of duty in specific geographic regions.

Military Sealift Fleet Support Command personnel collected 356 pounds of food for the Food Bank of South Hampton Roads, part of the Feds Feed Families food drive, a federal-employee sponsored campaign that orchestrates the donation and collection of healthy, non-perishable foods for local food banks. More than one-third of the food collected came from staff members within the command's medical department.

MSFSC participated in the recent American Society of Naval Engineers Fleet Maintenance and Modernization Symposium Sept. 14-15 held in Virginia Beach, Va. The event provided class managers **David Allen**, **Frank Cunningham** and **Mike Ricci**, and Director of Engineering Support **Rick Albert** an opportunity to meet with various suppliers and shipyard managers. MSFSC

Director **Jack Taylor**, Deputy Director **Fred McKenna**, Chief of Staff Navy **Capt. Al Woods** and chief engineers **Bob McManus** and **Jim Shine** also attended the conference.

In late September, dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Robert E. Peary served as the film site for an MSFSC in-house operational risk-management training video. Along with introductory remarks by Taylor, the film crew captured remarks by Navy **Capt. Randall Rockwood** and **Chief Engineer Bob McManus**, who served as the production's subject-matter experts.

Personnel in MSFSC's medical office prepared a luncheon of fresh fruits and vegetables, soup and nuts, Sept. 23, putting a spotlight on healthy eating habits in conjunction with DOD's employee wellness campaign.

Fair winds and following seas to **Chief Engineer Kenneth Fuchs** and **Third Officer David Steuber** as they retire. Thank you for your service.

MSFSC regrets to report the death of **2nd Assistant Engineer Timothy Taylor**.

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

PACIFIC • BRIEFS

Military Sealift Command dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Matthew Perry made its first fueling stop at the Manchester Navy Fuel Depot in Puget Sound, Wash., Sept. 27. Following the subsequent loading of ammunition at the Naval Magazine at Indian Island, the ship transited to Pearl Harbor for an ammunition offload. Perry relieved MSC ammunition ship USNS Kiska in the mid-Pacific area of operations in mid-October.

MSC large, medium-speed, roll-on/roll-off ship USNS Pililaa arrived in San Diego in early August following an extended layberth period in Vancouver, Wash. The ship then departed San Diego Sept. 14 en route the U.S. Gulf Coast for positioning for a regulatory shipyard period that takes place every five years. Pililaa, one of three West Coast-sited LMSRs required by U.S. TRANSCOM, was relieved by MSC large, medium-speed, roll-on/roll-off ship USNS Bob

Hope, which arrived in San Diego Sept. 29. In late October, MSC large, medium-speed, roll-on/roll-off ship USNS Mendonca conducted a cargo lift to Hawaii before transiting to Bremerton, Wash., to become the third surge LMSR sited on the West Coast.

Navy **Cmdr. Ray Franklin**, SEALOGPAC operations officer, attended U.S. 3rd Fleet's Standard Task Force Structure Workshop in San Diego in September. The workshop focused on a Chief of Naval Operations-directed examination of current task force structures. The task force is examining alternate organizations to better support command and control functions at the operational level.

Welcome aboard Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Mike Ray**, SEALOGPAC chief staff officer. Ray joins the SEALOGPAC staff following two years at Commander Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet, where he served as the enlisted personnel officer.

CENTRAL • CURRENTS

In September, Sealift Logistics Command Central and Combined Task Force 53 bid fair winds to Military Sealift Command fleet replenishment oiler USNS John Lenthall as the ship ended a successful four-month deployment in support of U.S. 5th Fleet operations New Dawn and Enduring Freedom, and maritime interdiction operations off the coast of Somalia and in the Red Sea. While in theater, Lenthall's crew conducted 42 underway replenishments in support of the USS Harry S. Truman Carrier Strike Group as well as numerous U.S. and coalition navy combatant ships.

SEALOGCENT/CTF-53's operations continued at a steady rate in September, with Naval Fleet Auxiliary Force ships delivering more than 4 million gallons of fuel, transferring 1,166 tons of cargo and delivering 588 tons of mail to U.S. and coalition ships. NFAF ships supported U.S. 5th Fleet operations Partnership-Strength-Presence, Struggle Against Violent Extremists, Enduring Freedom and New Dawn, as well as maritime security operations.

MSC fleet replenishment oiler USNS

Joshua Humphreys was activated from reduced operating status by U.S. Fleet Forces Command to support counter-piracy and overseas contingency operations in the Arabian Sea. Activating the ship, which deactivated and joined the Navy's Inactive Ships Program in 1996, was not an easy task; Atlantic Marine Philadelphia spent nearly \$13 million and took 70 days to return Humphreys to a status where it could replace Lenthall as the duty oiler to U.S. and coalition warships operating in the Arabian Sea. SEALOGCENT appreciates the efforts of NFAF and Military Sealift Fleet Support Command in getting Humphreys to U.S. 5th Fleet.

"Humphreys and her crew continue to overcome obstacles ... on a daily basis," said Humphrey's civil service master **Capt. David Gomme**. "The talented and hard-working crew members on board have dedicated themselves to ensuring that the material conditions of Humphreys get better with each passing day. Despite the challenges that lie ahead, Humphreys, once again, has 'Romeo Closed Up' in service to the fleet.

MSC welcomes new deputy commander, command master chief

By MSC Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command welcomed its new deputy commander Oct. 1 at MSC headquarters in Washington, D.C. Navy Rear Adm. Brian L. LaRoche put his civilian career on hold to don his khaki uniform on a two-year recall from the Navy Reserve.

LaRoche was recalled from his civilian job as the director of Joint Command and Control Programs for the Northrop Grumman Corporation in Northern Virginia.

"I'm really excited to be here as part of a can-do organization," Laroche said. "This organization has a long and incredible history of getting things done. It's a privilege to be joining a team of this caliber."

In his Reserve career, LaRoche has served as the commander of the Navy Reserve European Command Detachment 0193, where he was mobilized to the U.S. Central Command as commander of Task Group 56.5. He also served with the Mobile Inshore Undersea Warfare Unit 206, where he mobilized to the United Arab Emirates; and Inshore Boat Unit 23.

At sea, LaRoche served as the anti-submarine warfare officer aboard guided-missile destroyer USS Barney and as weapons officer aboard frigate USS Patterson. LaRoche has also held staff assignments at U.S. 2nd Fleet, U.S. Central Command and the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations.

LaRoche, a surface warfare officer, graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in



Rear Adm. Brian L. LaRoche

1983 with a degree in political science. He also holds a Master of Science in computer science from the New Jersey Institute of Technology. His military education includes the U.S. Air Force Air Command and Staff College and the Joint Forces Staff College.

MSC also welcomed Navy Master Chief Miguel-Juan V. Reyes as the command master chief Aug. 20.



Master Chief Miguel-Juan V. Reyes

Reyes, raised in Iloilo City, Philippines, enlisted in the Navy in July 1983 and completed recruit training and mess management specialist school in San Diego. He has since served in multiple assignments ashore and at sea – his most recent being as command master chief aboard U.S. 7th Fleet command ship USS Blue Ridge.

"I'm looking forward to meeting as many civil service mariners and sailors as possible in my time at MSC," Reyes said.

Placing the mission first, while at the same time making sure CIVMARs and sailors are cared for, is a priority, he said.

At sea, Reyes has served aboard aircraft carrier USS Ranger; guided-missile cruisers USS Texas, USS Lake Champlain and USS Chancellorsville; and fast combat support ship USS Sacramento.

Ashore, Reyes has served at Naval Training Station San Diego, as collateral duty command master chief for Afloat Training Group Western Pacific and as the installation program director for the galley at Naval Air Station Brunswick, Maine.

Reyes holds a Bachelor of Science in commerce from San Beda College in the Philippines.

ATLANTIC • LINES

Military Sealift Command fleet ocean tug USNS Apache successfully completed the tow of Moored Training Ship 635 from Norfolk, Va., to its homeport in Charleston, S.C., Sept. 17, with the escort of guided-missile destroyers USS Bulkeley and USS Truxton. Marine Transportation Specialist **Mary Ann Nobles**, from MSC's Charleston office, helped coordinate the harbor tugs and pilotage that supported the towing operation. The mission was conducted under the aegis of the newly established Command Task Force 23 Task Organization, which is part of an ongoing pilot project that Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Gary Roughead is conducting in U.S. 2nd and 3rd fleets to assess standard task force structures. Apache's civil service master, **Capt. Peter Long**, and crew received Bravo Zulus from both Fleet Forces Command and U.S. 2nd Fleet.

Richard Bolduc, senior marine transportation specialist at Sealift Logistics Command Atlantic's Jacksonville, Fla., office, reports that civil service mariners aboard MSC tanker USNS Samuel L. Cobb discharged nearly 60,000 barrels of fuel Sept. 11 with the assistance of **Dean Doolittle**, marine transportation specialist in Jacksonville. Doolittle later coordinated arrangements for the layberth for the vessel at Naval Air Station Pensacola, Fla. Doolittle also assisted with discharging more than 157,000 barrels of fuel from MSC tanker USNS Richard G. Matthiesen Sept. 13-14.

CIVMARs aboard MSC large, medium-speed, roll-on/roll-off ship USNS Sisler discharged more than 1,300 pieces of military equipment Sept. 14-28 and assisted high-speed vessel HSV 2

Swift with the layberthing and the discharge of U.S. 4th Fleet equipment Sept. 29-30.

Senior Marine Transportation Specialist **Tom D'Agostino** of SEALOGLANT's Charleston, S.C., office, assisted with loading more than 1,700 pieces – equaling nearly 280,000 square feet – of U.S. Army equipment aboard Maritime Prepositioning Force Ship USNS Soderman Sept. 7-23. In addition, D'Agostino conducted a force protection spot check and assisted with the offload of excess material from Soderman that will be available for use by other U.S. Navy assets. D'Agostino also coordinated the port call and discharge of 155,000 barrels of fuel from tug/barge OSG Navigator/Barge 252 Sept. 22-23.

SEALOGLANT conducted command-wide fire prevention training Sept. 21 with personnel tested in responding to a building evacuation and fire drill. Training focused on situational awareness regarding exits, evacuation routes and the increased danger inherent in crowded areas. Navy **Rear Adm. Mark H. Buzby**, commander, Military Sealift Command, presented 30-year service pins to **Mary Quill**, assistant scheduling officer, and **Brian Hill**, marine transportation specialist, during a Sept. 15 ceremony held in Norfolk. Buzby praised the dedication such long careers represent and congratulated both honorees on their successes over the years. Buzby also thanked SEALOGLANT's staff on behalf of Adm. John Harvey, Jr., Fleet Forces commander, and Vice Adm. Daniel Holloway, U.S. 2nd Fleet commander, for their hard work, dedication and for making operations look seamless to the rest of the fleet.

Fair winds and following seas to 40-year government employee **Lyndon Flynn**, marine transportation specialist at SEALOGLANT's Beaumont, Texas, office. Flynn, who has worked for MSC since 1983, retired Sept. 30.

EUROPE • AFRICA • NEWS

Military Sealift Command fleet replenishment oiler USNS John Lenthall, which is serving as the duty oiler in the Mediterranean Sea until late 2010, conducted replenishments at sea in September with several Navy ships that have made international headlines for their humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations to Pakistan. Two of those ships, amphibious transport dock ship USS Ponce and dock landing ship USS Carter Hall, part of the USS Kearsarge Amphibious Readiness Group, were transiting the U.S. 6th Fleet area of responsibility on their way to Pakistan, when Lenthall passed more than 800,000 gallons of diesel fuel and transferred 22 pallets of food and supplies to the ships.

Maritime Prepositioning Force Ships USNS 2ND LT John P. Bobo and USNS PFC Eugene A. Obregon anchored in the Bay of Naples, Italy, for a six-day port visit at the home of U.S. 6th Fleet. While in port, Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron One and the civilian masters of Bobo and Obregon hosted several visitors on board Bobo, including Navy Vice Adm. Harry B. Harris, Jr., commander, U.S. 6th Fleet; **Keith Bauer**, MSC Prepositioning Program technical director; and Navy **Capt. James E. Tranoris**, commander, Sealift Logistics Command Europe/Task Force 63. The next day, MPS Squadron One Navy **Lt. j.g. Marie Din** and Bobo's civilian mariners gave a group of Italian navy engineering officers a tour of the ship. "For us to see a merchant ship working for the U.S. Navy, and to see all the ship's systems and how they merge and unload the

equipment, ready to provide support when needed, is very interesting," said Italian navy Lt. Michele Gianella.

MSC command ship USS Mount Whitney hosted Dalia Grybauskaitė, the president of Lithuania, while operating in the Baltic region Sept. 21. Mount Whitney, the flagship for U.S. 6th Fleet, operates with a hybrid crew of sailors and MSC civil service mariners.

Sealift operations increased tempo in September. SEALOGEUR managed the operations of several chartered tankers that conducted bulk fuel transfers between the various distribution points throughout the Mediterranean. MSC tanker USNS Richard G. Matthiesen arrived in theater in late September to perform tanker operations for the next few months. MSC-chartered dry cargo break-bulk ship MV Advantage conducted a partial offload of Exercise Shared Accord Marine Corps equipment in Trondheim, Norway, Sep. 9-10. MSC-chartered dry cargo break-bulk ship MV Beluga Facility loaded mine-resistant, ambush protected vehicle cargo in Durban, South Africa, and transported it to U.S. Central Command.

Sealift Logistics Command Europe maritime transportation specialist **Kathleen Pavarini** participated in Joint Task Force-Port Opening training at Port Canaveral, Fla. JTF-PO is a concept that U.S. Transportation Command and its Army component, Surface Deployment and Distribution Command, have developed to open distribution pipelines immediately after securing an area, such as in war or after a natural disaster. With this expe-

HQ • HIGHLIGHTS

South Korean Brig. Gen. Kye-Sung Lee, commanding officer of the Republic of Korea Transportation Command, visited Military Sealift Command headquarters Sept. 21 as part of a tour to all the component commands comprising U.S. Transportation Command. While at the Washington Navy Yard, Lee met with Navy **Rear Adm. Mark H. Buzby**, commander, Military Sealift Command, and received briefs on MSC and the Korean Flag Shipping Program.

Fourteen members of the MSC headquarters Reserve unit toured large, medium-speed, roll-on/roll-off ship USNS Mendonca in Baltimore Sept. 25. The ship's civilian master, **Capt. Michael Murphy**, and chief engineer, **Sandy Cameron**, led the Bob Hope-class ship. The knowledge gained by Reservists will help them with their weekend assignments at the MSC headquarters Global Command Information Center.

Jay Standing of MSC headquarters attended a 10th anniversary observance of the attack on Navy destroyer USS Cole Oct. 12 in Norfolk. Standing was one of several MSC personnel involved in the mission to return the damaged Cole to the United States via a chartered heavy-lift ship in 2000.

MSC welcomes **Maria Aranas**, operations; **Versie Hamlett**, maritime forces, manpower and management; **Jody Anderson** and **John Toscano**, command, control, communication and computer systems; and **Robyn Casey** and **Shelly Hunter**, office of the comptroller.

MSC bids farewell to **Linda Broaddus** and **Maureen Boyle**, command administration; and **Derek Swanson**, operations.

ditionary capability, supplies can be brought in within hours after the military has arrived to support a range of military operations, from combat to humanitarian aid.

In other exercise support, Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Bruce Martin**, SEALOGEUR readiness/Naval Fleet Auxiliary Force officer, and Navy **Capt. Kim Martin**, SEALOGEUR Reserve commander, attended the second planning conference for Joint Logistics Over-the-Shore 2011, which is scheduled to be held in Morocco in May 2011. This exercise demonstrates the U.S. military's ability to transport warfighting equipment and supplies to shore from a cargo ship at sea without the benefit of port facilities.

SEALOGEUR warmly welcomes its new Navy Reserve expeditionary port unit commanders: Navy **Capt. Vince Tiseo**, EPU 104; Navy **Cmdr. Stacey Rogers**, EPU 105 and Navy **Capt. Paul Pender**, EPU 107.

Swift wraps up maritime security deployment to Caribbean/South America

By Adrian Schulte, MSC Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command high-speed vessel HSV 2 Swift's gray catamaran hull is a unique sight at all the ports it visits. But for five months beginning in May, Swift was also a symbol of partnership and collective security to nine countries in the Caribbean and Central and South America.

On Sept. 29, Swift wrapped up High-Speed Vessel-Southern Partnership Station, also called SPS, a U.S. Southern Command deployment aimed at strengthening regional partnerships and maritime security through training and subject-matter exchanges. Swift served as the platform for the deployment, carrying U.S. military teams that conducted maritime training with regional civil and maritime services from Barbados, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Nicaragua and Panama.

Swift is operated by 17 civilian mariners working for a private company under contract to MSC. Training teams aboard the ship included personnel from the Navy Expeditionary Training Command Security Assistance Forces and the Marine Corps Training and Advisory Group, as well as a Naval Criminal Investigative Service Security Training Assistance and Assessment Team.

During the mission, U.S. training teams participated with partner-nation defense forces, police departments and coast guards in each country. The training teams focused on locally identified needs, such as port security, professional leadership development, operational-risk management, medical readiness, martial arts, outboard motor maintenance and patrol craft operation. While each exchange included lectures and group discussions, much of the time was spent on hands-on exercises.

"With all the current events in today's world, our jobs require more coordination with other nations than ever before," said Navy Chief Hospital Corpsman Tracie Ham, a member of one of the Navy Expeditionary Training Command Security Assistance Force teams deployed aboard Swift. "These exchanges give us a better insight into the structure of each military, which makes integration much easier when needed."

This type of training and subject-matter-exchange is nothing new to Swift's crew. Five similar SPS deployments have been conducted in the region in the past few years. In 2007, Swift's five-month Global Fleet Station deployment conducted thousands of hours of training for more than 1,000 host nation military and civilian personnel during 12 visits to seven countries



Civilian mariners working aboard Military Sealift Command high-speed vessel HSV 2 Swift team up with sailors, Marines and airmen to offload 18 pallets of Project Handclasp humanitarian aid supplies in Guyana in Sept. 5.

in the Caribbean and Central America. In late 2008 and early 2009, Swift conducted Southern Partnership Station 2009, providing training and subject-matter exchanges to eight nations in the Caribbean and Central and South America.

In addition to delivering training, Swift delivered humanitarian, educational and goodwill materials to each country the ship visited. The supplies were provided by the Navy's Project Handclasp, which transports such materials on a space-available basis aboard Navy ships for distribution to foreign nation recipients, said Navy Capt. Kurt Hedberg, mission commander, Southern Partnership Station 2010.

"It's nice knowing that in addition to our military subject-matter exchanges, we can also bring these types of humanitarian goods to the people who need them most," said Hedberg. "SPS is about information sharing and relationship building, and our Project Handclasp deliveries go a long way toward showing these nations we're dedicated, and we care about the people who live there."

The mariners aboard Swift helped load and unload the Project Handclasp supplies in each country they visited. On the ship's last port call in September, the mariners delivered more than 140 tons of supplies to nongovernmental organizations in Haiti, which is still recovering from its January earthquake.

"There were a lot of very happy people on the dock when we arrived [in Haiti]," said Swift's civilian master Capt. Nick St. Jean. "It was a good way to end things with the whole ship helping the people of Haiti out."

Swift's civilian mariner crew faced many challenges throughout their deployment. The mariners assisted the military in every way they were asked, said St. Jean. They loaded and discharged all the cargo, helped in exchanges such as small boat training and participated in community relation events ashore.

Some of the mission's biggest challenges from the mariner standpoint were getting into difficult ports and supporting the operations, said St. Jean. In addition, hundreds of meals needed to be prepared daily for the host nation and Navy personnel conducting exchanges aboard and ashore.

"Every day was one unique challenge after another," St. Jean said.

Swift's civilian and military detachment worked together to accurately chart the approach into Georgetown, Guyana, Aug. 29, making history as the first U.S. military vessel to dock pierside there.

Samuel Hinds, the prime minister of Guyana, expressed his gratitude for Swift's visit to his country and said he hopes that this trip marks the start of a long-lasting partnership between the two countries.

"These exchanges, which will help build the capacity of the Guyana coast guard, represent a continuation of the link between Guyana and the United States of America, through which we pursue cooperation in several critical areas," he said.

Swift pulled into Blount Island, Fla., Sept. 29, where the ship entered a maintenance period before gearing up for Southern Partnership Station 2011 in November.

Navy MCIs Kim Williams and Rachel Leslie contributed to this story.

MSC tanker fleet adds first of two new ships; retires two

By Laura M. Seal, MSC Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command is reconfiguring the fleet of tankers it operates to meet fuel requirements in support of U.S. forces worldwide. This seagoing force of government-owned and U.S.-flagged chartered ships acquired a new chartered ship, MT Empire State, Oct. 7, after two government-owned ships completed their service to the command Oct. 1.

The newly built, U.S.-flagged Empire State is under charter to MSC for up to five years and will operate worldwide carrying refined petroleum products for DOD, primarily between commercial refineries and DOD storage and distribution facilities. Empire State is owned and operated by a private shipping company under contract to MSC.

Built at General Dynamics, NASSCO, in San Diego, the double-hulled Empire State is 600 feet long and has a cargo-carrying capacity of approximately 331,000 barrels. The ship's construction was completed in July 2010, at which time Empire State went to work for MSC under a short-term contract.

A second State-class tanker is under construction at NASSCO and is expected to come under charter to MSC in early 2011.

Two of MSC's four government-owned tankers transferred out of service Oct. 1. USNS Paul Buck

and USNS Samuel L. Cobb began their service to MSC in the mid-1980s, along with three other new-construction T-5 tankers that came under long-term charter to the command in 1985 and 1986. In 2003, MSC purchased four of those ships –

"Our T-5 tankers have served us well for the past 25 years, and as they approach the end of their service lives, the State-class ships will allow us to continue to fulfill our

requirements to transport fuel for the Defense Logistics Agency - Energy," said John Joerger, MSC's tanker project officer. DLA Energy procures and manages fuel for all of DOD.

Upon deactivation from MSC service, Cobb and Buck transferred to the Maritime Administration's National Defense Reserve Fleet, which comprises about 30 dry cargo ships and tankers kept in reserve for possible activation and use in support of national defense and national emergencies.

Gianella transferred to MSC's Maritime Prepositioning Force in 2009, and Matthiesen will remain in service to MSC until early 2011, when the ship will join Cobb and Buck in the NDRF.

In fiscal year 2010, MSC carried 1.5 billion gallons of petroleum products in support of DOD operations worldwide,

including delivering fuel to combat forces operating in Iraq to replenishing McMurdo Station, Antarctica, and Thule Air Force Base in Pituffik, Greenland.



Military Sealift Command tanker MT Empire State conducts sea trials off the coast of San Diego in June 2010. The newly built Empire State came under charter to MSC Oct. 7, 2010, and will operate worldwide carrying refined petroleum products for the Department of Defense.

NASSCO photo by Ken Wright

Buck, Cobb, USNS Lawrence H. Gianella and USNS Richard G. Matthiesen. Since then, these ships have served as the core of MSC's tanker fleet along with an MSC-chartered shallow-draft tanker.