

December 2011

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

THE U.S. NAVY'S MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND

Safeguarding international naval partnerships



Background photo: Royal Cambodian navy officers stand alongside U.S. Navy personnel during the opening ceremonies for Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training Cambodia 2011.

INSIDE — MSC program sends interns worldwide • CIVMAR crews recognized at AOTOS awards

Holiday greetings and bandwidth news!

Where has this year gone? I remember sitting down to write last year's holiday greeting just a month or so ago, or so it seems. I suppose that is because we have all been so darn busy again this year. Beyond all the normal work we all had to do to support the fleet each day, we had our own version of "March Madness" this year as MSC simultaneously ramped up to support both earthquake/tsunami relief efforts in Japan and NATO operations against Libya in the Mediterranean. And amidst it all, there was the ongoing battle to keep our ships maintained and mission ready.

Ashore, we expected new ships to come to the MSC fleet – TAKEs, JHSVs and an MLP in the near term. We planned for a reorganization, and kept pushing forward on the 50 People-First initiatives we began last summer. Yeah, it sure has been a busy year across our entire operation – a great year! The entire MSC family ought to be justifiably proud of our accomplishments, which brings us right back around to the holidays.

While many of us will have the opportunity to celebrate holiday time at home with our families, many more of you will be away from your families this year, executing our 24/7, 365-day-a-year mission. Any of us who have sailed have probably spent at least one holiday away from our loved ones "on watch," and it's never easy. Even for those who are ashore with family and friends, stress often finds its way into the equation due to big hopes that don't always come true.

The point is, while enjoying the meaning of the season and the fellowship of our friends and family wherever we are, we need to be ever vigilant for those for whom the holidays can be a trigger for serious depression. I have been involved in at least two such situations during my career. Thankfully, we were able to intervene and reach out to the shipmates who were adrift in despair.

So, my request to you all – my MSC family – is that we be especially mindful of our family, friends and shipmates this holiday season and be ready to extend a hand to those who may be in need of support. Saving a life would make for one memorable holiday.

Better connectivity!

MSC is moving forward with a replacement to our current BEST satellite communications system. The replacement system is referred to as Next Generation Wideband, or NGW, with full deployment scheduled to begin in spring 2012. The service provider – Stratos – is already at work building the NGW support network, which will then go through testing and certification this year. The pre-deployment phase will include low-rate initial production testing in an MSC lab



Navy Rear Adm. Mark H. Buzby, commander, Military Sealift Command, addresses members of MSC headquarters Nov. 4 in front of the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian. MSC headquarters personnel attended cultural events at the museum to promote diversity awareness as part of the command's celebration of American Indian and Native Alaskan Heritage Month.

in Norfolk and afloat onboard a test ship. Once the system is certified to connect, we are targeting deployment on 50 of 70 ships in the first 12 months.

So what does this mean to you? The new system will employ the dual KU and L bands to provide global coverage at higher rates (64 kbps minimum) than the old system (48 kbps average). The dual bands will provide inherent backup while offering lower-cost bandwidth that can be incrementally increased to meet MSC fleet needs within budget constraints. The new system will eliminate the need to time-share channels and offer greater overall reliability. We also expect that this will give us the option to expand to more personal-use bandwidth, possibly as a "pay as you go" service. Stay tuned. I'll keep you updated as this new capability rolls out to the fleet.

Budget realities coming

While most of you are doing your jobs miles away from

Washington, difficult decisions that are being made by Congress right now concerning reducing the national debt. Spreading cuts across the DOD will impact all of us, both personally and at MSC. It remains to be seen specifically how any budget cuts will affect us, as the possible scenarios are endless.

I believe that our ongoing ashore realignment efforts will help put us in a good place to deal with whatever could be headed our way. Through it all, our goal remains to provide the best service to our Navy and DOD customers in the most effective manner at the lowest possible cost to America's taxpayers. It is something we've gotten pretty good at, but we'll keep trying to do even better. I know that all the "churn" can be quite worrisome. I will do my very best to keep you all cut in as decisions are made that could impact MSC, and what our plans are to deal with them.

All things considered, we remain blessed to be part of a wonderful organization that adds a lot of good to our nation and our allies. In this holiday season, I count among my greatest blessings the privilege I have in calling you shipmates. Gina and I wish you all our very best in the coming year. Sail safe.

Yours aye,

Mark H. "Buz" Buzby
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy
Commander, Military Sealift Command

Moving forward with ONE MSC



Recently held town hall-style meetings in late October at MSC headquarters and Military Sealift Fleet Support Command to start bringing our shipmates ashore up to date on realignment. We've also got town hall meetings scheduled for MSFSC and MSC headquarters in early December to keep the communication flowing both ways.

The Chief of Naval Operations has given the go-ahead to have a feasibility study done to see if it makes sense to consolidate MSC headquarters and MSFSC under one roof. The Navy is in the process of determining funding for the study, which will include a business-case analysis that will help us determine if consolidation is the right thing to do, where the consolidation should take place, and what impact such a consolidation would have on our mission capabilities. It's a long and involved process. I'll let you know when there's something to report.

In the meantime, there is a place where you can ask questions about the ONE MSC realignment process. That place is **MSC-Future@navy.mil**. I've mentioned this before, but it bears repeating – you don't need to worry about retribution. The FROM line is removed before the e-mails are forwarded to subject matter experts for answering. I will protect your anonymity.

In addition, I urge you to check the MSC portal, <https://www.mysealift.msc.navy.mil/sites/n01/mscfutures/default.aspx>, as many of your questions have already been asked and answered.

We're still in the early stages of realignment. I'll keep you updated in this column and through other means as necessary. Let me know what you're thinking. I really do want to know.

Carry on!

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MSC mentors future maritime leaders

Women on the Water Conference promotes opportunities for women

**By Susan Melow, MSFSC
Public Affairs**

Seven members of Military Sealift Command attended the fifth annual Women on the Water Conference Oct. 27-29 at Massachusetts Maritime Academy in Buzzards Bay, Mass. The event gave a number of prominent members in the U.S. maritime industry the chance to meet some prospective future leaders.

The MSC representatives included female civil service mariners, shoreside leadership and staff members. They joined cadets from the nation's six state maritime academies and the U.S. Coast Guard Academy at the conference.

"The purpose of this conference is to provide mentorship to young women entering the maritime industry," said Sealift Technical Director Joan Divens, who helped coordinate MSC representation at the conference. "The conference allows women the benefit of shared experience through which they can grow professionally, and to provide camaraderie among women in the industry."

Notable speakers at the conference included Senator Therese Murray, president of the Massachusetts Senate, Coast Guard Rear Adm. Sandra Stosz, superintendent of the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, U.S. Maritime Service Rear Adm. Richard Gurnon, president of Massachusetts Maritime Academy, and retired Navy Rear Adm. Wendi Carpenter,

superintendent of the State University of New York Maritime College.

During the three-day conference, attendees participated in panels, workshops and networking sessions to discuss the growing role of women in the maritime industry.

"As you listen to the experiences of both the recent graduates and those who laid the original path, you will see that times have changed for the better," said Maritime Administrator David Matsuda, Maritime Administration, which sponsors the conference.

"Where once it was rare to see a woman in the crew, it is now common to have multiple women in the crew. Take the opportunity while you are here to learn from the experiences of those around you."

More than 40 panelists and speakers discussed a variety of U.S. maritime-related topics during the conference. These included preparing for shore employment after a career of shipping out; maintaining health and well-being; building a supportive network of colleagues; and gaining information on professional societies and maritime regulations.



U.S. Navy photo by Susan Melow

Above: Female civil service mariners, shoreside leadership and staff members represent Military Sealift Command at the fifth annual Women on the Water conference held this year Oct. 27-29 at Massachusetts Maritime Academy.

Eileen Roberson, MSC Naval Fleet Auxiliary Force and Special Mission director, moderated a panel on making the transition to government service. Roberson led a discussion among representatives from the U.S. Coast Guard, the Maritime Administration and the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency about recruitment and mentoring practices for women in shoreside professional maritime positions.

"What does your organization do to nurture and mentor women once hired?" asked Roberson. "Have you

seen positive trends as a result of these programs?"

Sarah Daleo, first officer aboard MSC dry cargo/ammunition ship Robert E. Byrd, also served as a panelist during a session aimed to prepare maritime academy cadets for at-sea terms as part of their academy careers and to provide advice for future employment.

Two MSC recruiters also attended the conference and were available as a resource for attendees to discuss potential career opportunities with MSC.

Female CIVMARs create unique team

Rosie the Riveter is model for underway replenishment

By MSC Public Affairs

A large poster of Rosie the Riveter proudly displaying a bicep hung over the side of Military Sealift Command dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Wally Schirra as the vessel performed an underway replenishment with guided-missile destroyer USS Truxton in the Arabian Gulf.

The iconic World War II-era image – with the motto "We Can Do It" encouraging women to enter into industrial jobs during the war – found new meaning as an all-female team of MSC civil service mariners aboard Schirra conducted the underway replenishment. They pumped 108,000 gallons of marine diesel fuel to the destroyer in late September.

Team Golf, or Team GO-GO – representing Government-Owned, Government Operated ships – never lost sight of the seriousness of the mission and kept safety paramount. The UNREP was completed without incident and provided a great opportunity for team members to build morale and gain hands-on experience in resupply operations.

Able Seaman Patricia Green, a graduate of the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy, served as the rig captain leading the team. Able seamen Heather Williams and Katherine Demoure-Aldrich, assistant storekeepers Annie Smith, Kimberly Clement and Tina Flowers, Steward Utility Joeanna Truitt

and Navy Logistics Specialist 2nd Class Charlia Rice rounded out the UNREP team.

"This was the first time we had a large enough number of females on board who could fulfill all the roles required to crew a whole team," said Williams. "The rest of the crew was very supportive. It

was satisfying to show that gender doesn't really matter."

Team GO-GO formed a few weeks prior to the UNREP with Truxton, primarily as a unique way to boost morale.

"We formed the team as something new to do here on board USNS Wally Schirra," said Smith.

"Also, we had never heard of an all-female UNREP team. So we decided to do this."

Like any other UNREP team, Team GO-GO was not a fixed part of Schirra's crew. Due to the relatively short rotational nature of CIVMAR shipboard assignments, teams are not permanent, but are subject to CIVMARs coming and going as four-month assignments are completed and individuals are reassigned aboard other ships or go on leave.

"We had enough women to take on this mission, and [we] went for it, a kind of tribute to Rosie the Riveter," said Flowers. "The whole ship supported us. It was an amazing experience, and I would do it again proudly."

Susan Melow, MSFSC Public Affairs, contributed to this story.



U.S. Navy photo by Hiram Davies

Left to right: Navy Logistics Specialist 2nd Class Charlia Rice, Assistant Storekeeper Tina Flowers, Steward Utility Joeanna Truitt, Assistant Storekeeper Kimberly Clement, Able Seaman Katherine Demoure-Aldrich, Assistant Storekeeper Annie Smith and able seamen Heather Williams and Patricia Green model Rosie the Riveter on the deck of MSC dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Wally Schirra. The CIVMARs formed an all-female underway replenishment team.

Rescue and salvage ship

By MSC Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command's rescue and salvage ship USNS Safeguard, operating off the tropical seaport of Sihanoukville in southern Cambodia, was the training site for U.S. Navy divers participating in the diving and salvage portion of the exercise Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training Cambodia 2011, or CARAT, Oct. 15-28.

While nearly two dozen Navy divers conducted a series of diving-training maneuvers below the water's surface, Safeguard's 26 civil service mariners worked above board around-the-clock to ensure smooth shipboard operations.

CARAT includes a series of annual, bilateral maritime exercises between the U.S. Navy and the armed forces of Bangladesh, Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand that occurred June to October.

This year's CARAT, the second annual exercise of its kind to be conducted in the Kingdom of Cambodia, focused on a variety of maritime security training, including visit, board, search and seizure operations; humanitarian and civic assistance projects

navigation, and providing meals for crew members and embarked personnel.

Safeguard and sister ships USNS Grasp, USNS Grapple and USNS Salvor – all regular participants in theater security cooperation missions – conduct regular forward deployments to support fleet commanders, including U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa/U.S. 6th Fleet and U.S. 7th Fleet.

The four ships – all formerly commissioned vessels that transferred to MSC for CIVMAR crewing beginning in 2006 – support forward-deployed U.S. Navy forces in four mission areas. These include de-beaching stranded vessels, conducting heavy lifts from ocean depths, towing vessels and supporting manned-diving operations. Each year, the ships have demonstrated their versatility, flexibility and value, resulting in increased demand of their presence.

"When I got to my first salvage ship in 1980, we were still doing what we call today theater security cooperation, and quite often," said Mark Helmkamp, ocean tug and salvage ship class manager and former Navy diving officer. "It's a great way to use these ships because they are incredibly flexible – the Navy's Swiss Army pocket knife."

"Their ability to switch missions and make things happen is unparalleled," said Navy Cmdr. John Moulton, U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa/U.S. 6th Fleet Explosive Ordnance Disposal/Dive and Salvage Officer. "They can go from a real world rescue, salvage or towing operations to theater security cooperation and back in the same deployment."



U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Robert Clowney

ashore; and diving and salvage training.

For the diving and salvage portion of CARAT, Safeguard's CIVMARs and embarked Navy divers worked together with the Royal Cambodian navy to exchange military tactics, techniques and procedures – all with the overarching hope of building cooperative relationships, improving interoperability and fostering closer military-to-military ties.

"The entire Safeguard team worked like a well-oiled machine, supporting each other to ensure the overall success of the exercise," said Safeguard's civil service master Capt. Ed. Dickerson.

During the two-week exercise, embarked U.S. Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit One Company 1-7 divers from Hawaii and Cambodian divers conducted classroom training, as well as pierside and open-water scuba dives. Safeguard's CIVMARs supported the divers by operating cranes, ensuring generators were supplying power, providing ship



U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Robert Clowney

s strengthen ties to allies

Safeguard-class ships foster theater security cooperation

While Safeguard was deployed to U.S. 7th Fleet for CARAT, Grasp and Grapple both deployed in 2011 to the U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa/U.S. 6th Fleet area of responsibility to perform rescue and salvage work. When not otherwise tasked, the rescue and salvage ships have proven to be effective platforms with which to conduct a range of theater security cooperation visits.

"It's a lot easier to engage using the ARS [rescue and salvage ships] and the dive company than with other platforms," said Moulton. "Almost all the navies in the world have scuba divers and some type of a workhorse platform, similar to the ARS, and we are able to come in and work with them, instead of just sharing what we have."

Recent deployments by MSC's rescue and salvage ships have demonstrated just how versatile these multi-mission ships are in support of theater security cooperation.

Grasp and its diving team from Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit Two Company 2-6, deployed Apr. 1 to Sep. 30, supported Eurasian Partnership in Constanta, Romania, Exercise Sea Breeze, in Odessa, Ukraine, and conducted bilateral training with the Danish Royal Navy dive school.

Meanwhile, Grapple, with its embarked divers from Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit One Company 1-4 traveled to the port of Monrovia, where they worked from July 27 to Aug. 23 with the Liberia coast guard to clear 3 tons of debris from the harbor area, to repair a Liberia coast guard floating pier that had been stressed during recent weather events and to create a physical training swim lane. From Sep. 4 to 10, Grapple visited the port of Al Hoceima, Morocco, for bilateral diving operations with the Royal Morocco navy.

"The strategic aim for 6th Fleet is to establish good working relationships with several navies in different areas of responsibility," said Moulton. "Having our forces in these countries shows commitment of the United States to partner with other countries. The rescue and salvage ships can work with countries that have a range of experiences – countries like Liberia that have a newly established diving community, to Denmark, a NATO-ally that brings the same capability and the same dive rigs. It's a great opportunity to exchange tactics with an ally."

"While the benefit on the European side is the ability to demonstrate our commitment to our allies and partners with whom we share similar capabilities," said Navy Lt.

Cmdr. John Riggs, U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa/U.S. 6th Fleet Explosive Ordnance Disposal/Dive and Salvage Officer. "On the Africa side, we work with countries to help them increase

their capability so that they can successfully dive underwater to keep their ships maintained to keep their navies running, which means in turn they contribute to the security and stability in the region."

CIVMARs: The foundation for cooperative ventures

At the heart of Navy's rescue and salvage operations are the CIVMAR crews.

"Since the rescue and salvage ships have been operated by MSC, what I've seen as a positive is the professional experience the CIVMARS bring with them because of the amount of steaming hours they have," said Moulton. "I'm always impressed with their professionalism and ability to safely get the mission done. It's been really great to work with them."

CIVMARs in the engineering departments constantly monitor and maintain the material readiness of the ships and their associated equipment, including embarked workboats.

"Anytime we do a sponsor- or partner-related mission, anything other than our normal job of towing or diver operations, our job expands from ship-oriented repairs and maintenance," said Grasp's Chief Engineer Frank Wells. "The job on this ship never fits into the box."

"The deck department worked diligently and safely through harsh environments and unusual circumstances due to weather and operational requirements to complete the mission," said Thomas Sellers, Grasp's chief mate. "Whether it was dense fog and big seas in the North Sea, or difficult salvage operations in the Black Sea, the deck department adapted as a team."

Keeping a ship of almost 50 people – including civil service mariners and U.S. Navy divers – fed and ready for work falls on the shoulders of the stewards in the supply department. The variety of missions conducted by the rescue and salvage ships usually mean the crew isn't always able to break away at an exact meal time, so stewards like Cook/Baker Renato Cueto on Grasp maintain flexibility to ensure hot and healthy meals are available.

Sean Farrell, a 3rd assistant engineer aboard Safeguard, said the Cambodians reacted very positively and with "honest gratitude" for the ship's efforts in Cambodia.

"The efforts to strengthen our partnerships with other foreign countries are critical in today's world," said Farrell.

Kim Dixon, MSC Europe and Africa, and Ed Baxter, MSC Far East, contributed to this story.



Background: Military Sealift Command rescue and salvage ship USNS Safeguard lies moored pierside in Chittagong, Bangladesh, Sept. 18. Safeguard participated here in Cooperation Afloat and Readiness Training 2011, the third of four countries the ship visited during the exercise.

Far left, inset: Royal Cambodian navy Vice Adm. Ouk Seyha feels the weight of diving gear during a tour of Safeguard Oct. 20, part of CARAT Cambodia 2011.

Left, inset: U.S. Navy Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit One and Philippine Naval Special Operation Group team members position a divers' cage aboard Safeguard July 6 before lowering the divers into the water during CARAT Philippines.

Above, inset: Boatswain Robert Murry (left) and Boatswain's Mate Marlon Andries, civil service mariners aboard USNS Grasp, work the kinks from a new bundle of line July 20 in preparation for its use in diving operations in the North Sea.

HQ • HIGHLIGHTS

Navy Rear Adm. **Mark Buzby**, commander, Military Sealift Command, hosted Air Force Gen. William Fraser, commander, U.S. Transportation Command, at MSC headquarters in Washington, D.C., Nov. 1. The visit served to brief Fraser, who took command in October, about the MSC organization as a whole, as well as to inform him more specifically about the 21 percent of MSC's fleet that falls under USTRANSCOM.

Kyrm Hickman, maritime forces, manpower and management; **Lance Murray** and **Brad Reiber**, force protection; and **Spencer Taylor**, operations, joined Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood and many representatives from U.S. shipping companies, maritime unions and foreign embassies at the Maritime Administration's anti-piracy training and education roundtable at MARAD headquarters in Washington, D.C., in mid-October. The event focused on the effectiveness of the international maritime community's anti-piracy actions, from pre-sail preparations aboard ships to hostage survival training.

Several members of MSC headquarters staff attended the annual Joint Task Force-Port Opening Leadership Conference in St. Louis Oct. 17-21, along with leadership from 11 of the 17 MSC expeditionary port units, or EPUs. The focus of MSC discussion was on fiscal year 2012 training opportunities, EPU readiness and continued integration with MSC's Army counterparts.

MSC headquarters employees were acknowledged for length of

government service during a ceremony held Oct. 13 in the Washington Navy Yard Catering and Conference Center. **David Ranowsky**, office of the counsel, was recognized for 35 years of service. **John Burkhardt**, engineering, **Sherri Jennings**, office of the inspector general, **Kathleen Montgomery**, office of the comptroller; and **Jerri Salyers**, maritime forces, manpower and management; were recognized for 30 years of service. **Fred Woody**, engineering, was recognized for 25 years of service. **Achille Broennimann**, contracts and business management; **John Hepp**, Naval Fleet Auxiliary Force; **Edward Salgado**, Special Mission Program; and **Michael Tisler**, engineering, were recognized for 20 years of government service. **Shaun Kanak**, Special Mission Program; and **Chara Pina**, office of the comptroller, were recognized for 15 years of service. **Roger Clark** and **Arturo Pereras**, office of the comptroller; and **Richard Martin**,

command, control, communication and computer systems, were recognized for 10 years of service.

Congratulations to **Brian Brooks**, command, control, communication and computer systems, who was named MSC headquarters civilian of the quarter for third quarter 2011 during an MSC headquarters ceremony Oct. 13. Brooks was recognized

for his work as the lead on MSC headquarters' daily operations brief, for which he has developed new procedures that save 10 hours per week in report generation and notification.

MSC headquarters welcomes **James Sires**, Prepositioning Program and **Alfred Poe**, office of the comptroller.

The command bids farewell to **Scott Nicholas**, engineering.



Air Force Gen. William Fraser, commander, U.S. Transportation Command, attends a briefing at Military Sealift Command headquarters Nov. 1 with Navy Rear Adm. Mark Buzby and other MSC headquarters leaders. Fraser took command of USTRANSCOM Oct. 14.

EUROPE/AFRICA • NEWS

Military Sealift Command fleet replenishment oiler USNS Big Horn returned to Naval Station Norfolk Oct. 28, following a seven-month deployment to the U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa/U.S. 6th Fleet area of responsibility. The ship provided underway replenishment services primarily to U.S. and NATO forces supporting Operation Unified Protector, the NATO-led mission to protect Libyan civilians and enforce a no-fly zone.

"Your contributions set the benchmark for operational effectiveness," said Navy Vice Adm. Frank C. Pandolfe, in his Navy message to the ship. "Best wishes for a well-deserved reunion with family and friends. Bravo Zulu!"

In total, Big Horn travelled 39,355 nautical miles during the deployment and conducted 112 underway replenishments, delivering 10 million gallons of fuel – including more than 570,000 gallons of jet fuel – and 1,042 pallets of stores and equipment to U.S. and NATO ships across the northern Atlantic Ocean and Mediterranean Sea.

From Oct. 1-17, MSC fleet replenish-

ment oiler USNS Kanawha participated in the second iteration for 2011 of the multinational exercise Joint Warrior off the coast of Scotland, working alongside navies from the United Kingdom and other NATO-allied partners. Ships and aircraft participated in scenarios including small boat attacks, boarding operations, air defense, anti-submarine warfare and tactical ship maneuvering.

MSC fleet replenishment oiler John Lenthall supported a twice-weekly underway replenishment during October to support amphibious transport dock USS Mesa Verde and NATO ships operating in the U.S. 6th Fleet area of operations.

Following a successful repair period in a shipyard in Trieste, Italy, dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Robert E. Peary returned to its logistics-support mission by conducting an underway replenishment in the Mediterranean Sea with guided-missile destroyer USS The Sullivans.

MSC Europe and Africa bids farewell to chief staff officer Navy **Cmdr. Bradley Hawksworth** and welcomes his relief, Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Robb Toliver**.

COMPASS • HEADING

Vista Point Naval Station Norfolk was the site of Military Sealift Command's principal port engineers' conference for three days, beginning Oct. 31. Engineers and senior leadership from MSC headquarters, Military Sealift Fleet Support Command and MSC ship support units attended. Speakers included **John Thackrah**, MSC executive director; **Jack Taylor**, MSFSC director; **Kevin Baetsen**, engineering director; **Deidre Fisher**, MSFSC director of contracts; and **Becky Yates**, MSFSC command, control, communications and computer systems director.

MSC fleet ocean tug USNS Apache and MSC rescue and salvage ship USNS Grapple conducted annual tow training for assigned shipboard civil service mariners for three days in mid-October. At Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story, both ships' crews participated in ship-handling exercises and received instruction on towing machinery and in simulators in order to comply with U.S. Coast Guard requirements.

Voyage repairs were completed aboard MSC fleet replenishment oiler USNS Walter S. Diehl Oct. 17. MSC Ship Support Unit Singapore's port engineer **Anh Ho** supervised the contracted repair operations while the ship was pierside at Cam

Ranh, Vietnam, from early October.

Work continued in November aboard MSC command ship USS Mount Whitney during the ship's regular overhaul and drydocking at Viktor Lenac Shipyard in Croatia. The 60-day yard period included deck and bulkhead steel replacement, hull cleaning and preservation and propeller, rudder and tail shaft inspections.

Marine Surveyor **Ray Key** received a 40-year pin, recognizing four decades in federal service. **Mike Zirpolo** was promoted to the position of deputy engineering type desk within the branch of the logistics directorate responsible for ammunition and fast combat support ships.

MSFSC welcomes Navy **Lt. Noel Smith**, MSFSC's new flag secretary.

The command bids fair winds and following seas to **Capt. Gregory Horner**, able seaman **Ronald Butcher** and **Ray Sewell**, Assistant Cook **Wilfredo Portacio**, engine utilitymen **Ernesto Miranda** and **Frederick Pryor**, Electrician **Jeffrey Sutton**, human resources specialist **Joyce Sutton** and contract surveillance representative **Junko Howser** as they enter onto the retirement rolls.

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



MSC command ship USS Mount Whitney undergoes a scheduled maintenance period in Viktor Lenac shipyard, Croatia.

FAR • EAST • HAILS

Navy **Rear Adm. Brian LaRoche**, deputy commander, Military Sealift Command, visited Diego Garcia Oct. 5-6 to meet with Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron Two Commander Navy **Capt. Gene Emmert** and squadron staff members aboard the squadron flagship USNS SGT William R. Button.

LaRoche toured four other MPS Squadron Two vessels in Diego Garcia's lagoon and visited MSC Office Diego Garcia's commanding officer Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Patrick Haney** and command staff members ashore.

In Singapore, seven MSC Far East staff members embarked MSC dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Amelia Earhart for a brief cruise Oct. 31 hosted by civil service master **Capt. David Boudreaux**. Earhart, which had completed scheduled repairs at nearby Sembawang commercial shipyard, transited the Straits of Johor while undergoing sea trials. The ship later departed Singapore Nov. 3, returning to normal duties as U.S. 7th Fleet's primary combat logistics ship.

Navy **Capt. Deidre McLay**, commander, Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron Three hosted U.S. Coast Guard Capt. Casey White, U.S. Coast Guard Sector Guam's commander, for a tour of squadron flagship USNS 1ST LT Jack Lummus Oct. 24 off the coast of Guam. McLay briefed White on MPS Squadron Three's mission in the U.S. 7th Fleet area

of responsibility. White also met with Lummus' civilian master **Capt. David Hagner** and Chief Engineer **Mike Fagan**.

McLay served as keynote speaker at a Saipan Chamber of Commerce meeting held at Saipan's Grand Hotel Nov. 2, discussing MPS Squadron Three's mission in the U.S. 7th Fleet area of responsibility.

Capt. Adam Parsons, civilian master of MSC high-speed vessel Westpac Express, and MSCO Okinawa director **Carl Welborn** co-hosted two ship visits during October.

First, Naha commercial port authority director Yoshihisa Fujita toured Westpac Express pierside at Naha, home to MSC Office Okinawa, Oct. 13. Thirty-seven people from Okinawa-based U.S. Navy and U.S. Army commands, as well as United Seamen's Service center personnel, embarked Westpac Express Oct. 27, transiting between Naha and Kin Red military ports.

The command bids farewell to materiel officer Navy **Lt. John Crowe**. McLay presented Crowe with a Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal for outstanding performance during his tour of duty. MSC Far East strategic sealift officer Navy **Cmdr. Glen Macario** also departed the command in October.

MSC Far East welcomes chief staff officer Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Jeffrey Seigler** and materiel officer Navy **Lt. j.g. Brandon Walker**.

PACIFIC • BRIEFS

Navy **Capt. Sylvester Moore**, commander, Military Sealift Command Pacific, attended the U.S. 3rd Fleet Executive Leadership Training Seminar Oct. 4-5 in San Diego. Topics of discussion during the seminar included the chief of naval operation's Sailing Directions, U.S. 3rd Fleet Commander's priorities and warfighting training and readiness.

MSC fleet replenishment oiler USNS Guadalupe and MSC dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Charles Drew supported USS Carl Vinson and USS Abraham Lincoln carrier strike groups and the USS Bonhomme Richard Amphibious Ready Group as they conducted exercises in the Southern California area of operations throughout October. During the exercise period, Guadalupe replenished 12 ships, including both aircraft carriers within a 36-hour period. Drew provided more than 900 pallets of stores and provisions to the strike groups during a 48-hour period.

Members of the MSCPAC Strategic Sealift team **Tom Brown** and **Larry Larsson** represented Commander Task Group 31.11 during the week of Oct. 3-7 in a meeting with the planning staff from the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force at Camp Pendleton, Calif., for the initial coordination for Exercise Pacific Horizon 2012. The annual Maritime Prepositioning Force exercise off the

Southern California coast tests the core competencies of the 1st MEF and the 1st Marine Expeditionary Brigade. The meeting focused on confirming the process for ship selection assignment, command and control during ships' transit and exercise support.

MSC fleet ocean tug USNS Sioux arrived in Pearl Harbor Oct. 22 to support attack submarine USS Chicago's sea trials, providing a standby platform for the Submarine Rescue Diving and Recompression System.

Coast Guard Sector San Diego presented civil service **Capt. Bob Wiley**, Guadalupe's master, and the ship's crew with a plaque and certificate of appreciation Oct. 31 for the ship's June 30 participation in the apprehension of a 25-foot panga boat carrying over 1,200 pounds of marijuana. The operation led to a second Coast Guard seizure the next morning of another boat that had thrown 21 bales of marijuana overboard in the area. In total, more than 2,200 pounds of marijuana were intercepted with a street value of between \$8 million and \$11 million.

MSCPAC welcomes Navy **Quartermaster 1st Class Christian Arscott**. He joins the MSCPAC operations team following a tour of duty with the Maritime Expeditionary Mobile Security Squadron Five in Coronado, Calif.

CENTRAL • CURRENTS

Military Sealift Command ships in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of responsibility conducted 73 underway replenishments involving 36 different ships from seven countries in October.

Navy **Rear Adm. Brian LaRoche**, deputy commander, MSC, traveled to the U.S. 5th Fleet area of responsibility in early October. LaRoche met with MSC Central/Commander Task Force 53 staff in Bahrain and visited MSC fleet ocean tug USNS Catawba and MSC dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Wally Schirra. LaRoche embarked fast combat support ship USNS Rainier Oct. 7-9 to observe a transit through the Strait of Hormuz, then toured facilities and met with sailors in Fujairah, Jebel Ali and Dubai in the United Arab Emirates. LaRoche also toured MSC ammunition ship USNS Flint, undergoing its maintenance period at Dubai Drydocks World.

After the UAE, LaRoche flew to Kuwait Oct. 9-10 to meet with MSC-CENT personnel. He concluded his visit by meeting the Kuwaiti navy chief, the director of the Kuwaiti Ports Authority

and conducting an all-hands call with sailors undergoing the Warrior Transition Program.

MSC-chartered cargo ship MV Ocean Charger delivered the sixth of 12 patrol boats slated for delivery to Iraq during the next year, arriving in Bahrain Oct. 15. The patrol boat sailed Oct. 24 to Umm Qasr, Iraq. After departing Bahrain Oct. 17, Ocean Charger continued to Kuwait, where it off-loaded the patrol boat's support equipment Oct. 19 and loaded 153 containers Oct. 20 for redeployment back to the United States.

Catawba conducted a week of salvage operations in the North Arabian Sea in late October, recovering the wreckage of a U.S. Marine Corps AV-8B Harrier II that was lost at sea in March 2011.

The command bids fair winds and following seas to Navy **Lt. Cmdr. John Callahan**, Navy **Lt. Gilbert Uy**, Navy **Chief Petty Officer Monique Graves** and Navy **Petty Officer 2nd Class Yancy Davis**.



Navy Rear Adm. Brian LaRoche, deputy commander, Military Sealift Command, presents a ship's chronometer Oct. 10 to H.H. Sheikh Dr. Sabah Al-Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah, general manager of the Kuwait Ports Authority and chairman of the board, Arab Sea Ports Federation, during LaRoche's visit to Kuwait.

MSCCENT/CTF-53 welcomes Navy **Lt. Leah Moss**, Navy **Senior Chief Petty Officer Nicholas Sibley**, Navy **chief petty officers Robert Bernardo**

and **Mario Comia**, Navy **Petty Officer 1st Class David Teachey**, and Navy **petty officers 2nd class Raymond Solis** and **Errmon McClarin**.

ATLANTIC • LINES

MSC rescue and salvage ship USNS Grapple returned to Naval Station Norfolk Oct. 7 after five months supporting U.S. Africa Command. MSC rescue and salvage ship USNS Grasp returned to Norfolk Oct. 6 after deploying for nearly seven months conducting salvage operations in the Mediterranean Sea.

MSC oceanographic survey ship USNS Pathfinder returned to the East Coast Oct. 7 after conducting operations in European waters, and then got under-

way Oct. 14 for mission operations in the Atlantic area of responsibility. While in Norfolk, the vessel hosted tours Oct. 12 for a number of dignitaries, including Adm. John C. Harvey, commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command.

MSC high-speed vessel HSV 2 Swift arrived in Mayport, Fla., Oct. 5, after nearly six months supporting Exercise Africa Partnership Station, a cooperative international security initiative aimed at strengthening global maritime partnerships through training and collaborative

activities designed to improve maritime safety and security in Africa.

MSC fleet replenishment oiler USNS Big Horn returned to Norfolk Oct. 28 after more than seven months supporting exercises and operations off the coast of the United Kingdom and Libya. MSC fleet replenishment oiler USNS Kanawha returned to Norfolk Oct. 29 after similar support of U.S. and NATO partners during Exercise Joint Warrior near the United Kingdom.

MSC large, medium-speed, roll-on/roll-off ship USNS Watkins sailed Oct. 2 after **Tom D'Agostino**, director of ship operations at MSCLANT's Charleston, S.C., office, assisted the

loading of U.S. Army prepositioned cargo comprising 1,456 pieces of equipment. MSC large, medium-speed, roll-on/roll-off ship USNS Watson followed Watkins, off-loading Army prepositioning cargo comprising 1,303 pieces of equipment and totaling nearly 253,000 square feet. D'Agostino and **Mary Ann Liberto**, assistant operations officer in Charleston, who provided agency services to both ships, received Bravo Zulus from Prepositioning Program Technical Director **Keith Bauer** for their efforts.

MSCLANT welcomes Navy **Lt. Frank Lemene**, anti-terrorism officer, to its anti-terrorism/force protection team.

Interns sent worldwide for training

By Eric Katz
MSC Public Affairs

One has 20 years of Navy experience, while the other is right out of college. One is a native of the Philippines, while the other was born and raised in Texas. One is 45 years old, while the other is 24. Both, however, make up the inaugural class of Military Sealift Command's Marine Transportation Specialist Outport/Area Command Internship Program.

Reynaldo Macawili and Josh Skinner, while coming from different backgrounds and experiences, were both hired in April to complete a three-year, rotational program that will send them to each of the five worldwide MSC area commands, as well as assorted MSC offices, with assignments ashore and at sea.

The program is an offshoot of an existing internship program that emphasized MSC headquarters-based training. The new program was conceived by Strategic Sealift and Prepositioning Director Chris Thayer as a way to bring capable, highly-qualified specialists into the MSC workforce. The new emphasis is to help recapitalize the civilian workforce at the MSC area commands and other field offices. Participants in the internship program are full-time, salaried civil service employees who have the potential to be promoted twice during the internship. Despite their designation as interns, they are given substantial, entry-level marine transportation specialist responsibilities.

Succession planning is a high priority as MSC and other U.S. government agencies prepare for members of an aging workforce to retire in future years – taking significant corporate knowledge with them.

"We realized many of our marine transportation professionals are at the



Reynaldo Macawili

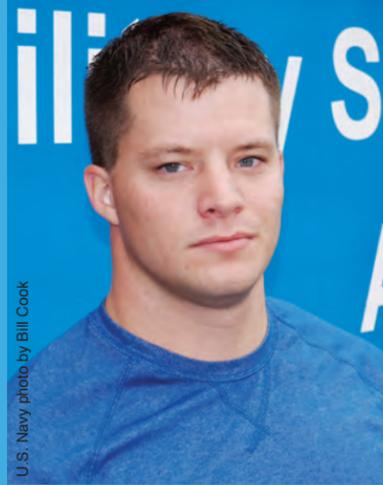
higher end of their careers, and we wanted to gear up for [them] retiring," said Rick Appling, deputy operations officer at MSC Pacific in San Diego and Macawili's supervisor.

Both interns reported to MSC headquarters in Washington, D.C., for orientation in mid-July after being hired from a pool of applicants solicited via the federal government's official jobs website, usajobs.gov.

Skinner and Macawili departed to their respective area commands in early August. Throughout their various rotations, each intern has one marine transportation specialist serving as supervisor. For Macawili, this person is Appling; Rick Caldwell, MSCLANT, oversees Skinner's progress.

"It's going to be challenging," said Macawili, who was first assigned to MSCPAC, "but I'm going to get a lot of experience before I complete this."

Both interns are enjoying travel around the globe as they gain a wide range of practical experience in MSC marine transportation matters.



Josh Skinner

"People would always tell me they like to travel," said Skinner, who graduated from the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy last year. "I'm really excited to be able to do that."

In San Diego, Macawili was exposed to the core of MSC operations. He has worked on ship scheduling, assisted in overseeing cargo offloads and sailed aboard fleet replenishment oiler USNS Guadalupe in early September to get firsthand experience with underway replenishment operations. Macawili also traveled to Seattle to experience MSC operations in the Pacific Northwest area of operations. He helped coordinate port calls for MSC strategic sealift point-to-point tankers in November.

As part of his current rotation at MSC Atlantic in Norfolk, Va., Skinner traveled to Jacksonville, Fla., Aug. 13 to Sept. 2 to assist the on-site MSC representative with several tasks. This included briefing the ship's master of Ready Reserve Force ship MV Cape Trinity on environmental factors

pertaining to the ship, and also taking inventory of an MSC storage container. From late September through mid-October, he spent a month aboard Ready Reserve Force ship SS Wright as a safety coordinator. In November, Skinner also helped with diplomatic clearances that assert sovereign immunity for MSC government-owned ships or MSC time-chartered U.S.-flagged ships.

"I've been tasked with a diverse range of daily activities," Skinner said. "I never know what I will be doing from day to day."

"He's our future," said Caldwell, Skinner's supervisor and mentor. "He's very astute and eager to do what we need him to do."

Appling acknowledged that the cost of sending the interns around the world is significant, but the outcome will ultimately justify the expense.

"It is an investment in money, time and effort," Appling said. "But the benefit is that you have an intern with a global perspective and a global experience, and we're a global organization."

Appling said each intern draws upon his unique experience – Skinner from his education at USMMA and Macawili from his career with the Navy.

"Both [Macawili and Skinner] lend themselves well to the MSC mission and the role marine transportation specialists play in support of that mission," he said.

Macawili said it is a natural transition from the Navy to MSC and is happy to have the opportunity to work in support of his former colleagues.

"Whatever MSC does, it's in support of the men and women in uniform. As a former sailor, I like to support them in any way that I can," said Macawili. "Wherever MSC wants to send me, I will be happy to go there. I just want to learn."

MSC crews honored with AOTOS awards

By MSC Public Affairs

The United Seamen's Service honored the civil service crews of two Military Sealift ships Oct. 28 at this year's Admiral of the Ocean Seas Awards banquet in New York City, which was attended by more than 700 U.S. maritime leaders from industry and government.

The annual event, regarded as the U.S. maritime industry's most prestigious awards event, commends the heroism and outstanding seamanship of American seafarers who have risked their lives to save others.

This year, the United Seamen's Service gave awards to the officers and crews of MSC fast combat support ship USNS Bridge, under the leadership of civil service master Capt. Steve Purdue, and MSC rescue and salvage ship USNS Safeguard, under the leadership of civil service master Capt. Ed Dickerson, for their outstanding support of Department of Defense-led Operation Tomodachi.

Bridge's Norfolk-based class manager, Mike Ricci, received the award on behalf of that ship and crew, and Safeguard's Chief Engineer Scotty Robinson received the award on behalf of his ship.

Tomodachi, which means "friend" in Japanese, was the humanitarian aid and disaster relief effort after a massive 8.9-magnitude earthquake struck northeast Japan March 11, triggering



Navy Rear Adm. Mark Buzby, commander, Military Sealift Command (center) Michael Ricci, class manager for MSC fast combat support ships (left) and USNS Safeguard Chief Engineer Scotty Robinson accept two AOTOS awards Oct. 28.

widespread tsunamis that killed more than 12,000 people and displaced 164,000 more from their homes. Seven MSC ships, including Bridge and Safeguard, operated at times in heavy winds, rough seas and sub-freezing temperatures to aid U.S. efforts.

Navy Rear Adm. Mark H. Buzby, commander, MSC, commended Bridge's and Safeguard's crews during remarks at the awards banquet.

"These ships do not have this mission as one of their normal functions, but as you will hear, they performed magnificently when called upon to help the people of Japan" said Buzby.

USNS Bridge

Bridge, enroute to the Republic of Korea, was diverted to Japanese waters and arrived in Japan March 13, less than 48 hours after the earthquake occurred. Crewed by 170 civil service mariners, or CIVMARs, Bridge was the first MSC ship on site.

Bridge navigated through uncharted debris fields at sea to conduct search and rescue operations, remaining close to the coast to provide logistical support and airborne search and rescue support. Bridge stayed in the area for almost a month, conducting 23 underway replenishments that transferred more than 5 million gal-

lons of fuel to keep U.S. Navy ships in the area on station. The ship also delivered more than 30,000 pounds of supplies ashore.

USNS Safeguard

After being directed to proceed to the Japanese coast, Safeguard first arrived in Yokosuka, Japan, and departed March 20 with embarked diving units to Hachinohe, one of Japan's hardest-hit seaports. Beginning March 25, Safeguard conducted harbor-clearance and survey operations there. Working with shallow-draft landing craft from dock landing ship USS Tortuga, Safeguard used side-scan sonar to survey more than 4.5 million square yards of harbor and removed 5 tons of wreckage, including cars, a small storage building and massive 200-ton concrete blocks. Safeguard's 35-strong CIVMAR crew and embarked diving units cleared a channel, enabling a commercial liquid natural gas tanker to safely dock at Hachinohe and deliver vital heating fuel for the first time since the earthquake.

Air Force Gen. Duncan J. McNabb, former commander of U.S. Transportation Command, to which MSC reports for defense transportation matters, also received an AOTOS Award for his leadership at USTRANSCOM, in particular for his strong support of the Maritime Security Program, which ensures the continuation of a viable U.S.-flagged fleet for defense purposes.