

# SEALIFT

Our U.S. Navy's Military Sealift Command

Safeguarding

WWII wreck  
USS Houston

Commander's perspective

# CIVMAR pay, and movie service



MV Cape Ray (T-AKR 9679) enters the Medcenter Container Terminal Italian port on July 1, 2014, to receive Syrian cargo containing chemical agents. Cape Ray is tasked with neutralizing those materials while operating in international waters. (U.S. Navy photo by MCSN Desmond Parks)

**The following blog was written by Rear Adm. T.K. Shannon, Commander, Military Sealift Command. MSC civil service mariners are now receiving their paychecks from the Defense Finance and Accounting Service, and their movie entertainment afloat has been restored. Shannon looks at both as improvements in life at sea for our CIVMARs.**

**W**e measure our progress with milestones. I highlight a couple that have an impact on our CIVMARs and life at sea:

June 1 was a milestone for our CIVMARs and our DOD pay system. Our CIVMARs were the last group in DOD not being paid by Defense Finance

and Accounting System. That is fixed! Now, all military and civilian employees throughout our DOD belong to a unified pay system. This change for the better allows personnel actions to be synchronized with payroll. For our CIVMARs, it means that they can make changes to direct deposits, allotments, federal and state tax withholding and payroll mailing addresses using the MyPay website at <https://mypay.dfas.mil/mypay.aspx>. We completed our first pay period successfully, and there were minimum glitches. This momentous accomplishment was made possible through the outstanding professionalism, hard work, dedication and extraordinary teamwork of our MSC experts and DFAS project representatives.

As of late June, nearly 1,000 CIVMARs signed up for account access, and more than 800 made changes to their accounts – something they couldn't do before now. A big round of thanks goes to all our MSC folks in our Personnel and Comptroller directorates. Their hard work over the past several years has overcome some pretty big hurdles and vastly improved the quality of life afloat.

July 1 was another milestone for our CIVMARs afloat. Navy Motion Picture Service used to provide 16-20 first-run and older DVD movies monthly to show on our ships' closed-circuit television systems. A glitch in the process halted that practice, but due to the arduous and extended nature of our CIVMARs'

deployments, coupled with having little to no other entertainment options at sea, it was determined that the program could resume. That means the movies began delivering to our government-owned/government-operated ships shortly after July 1. It's these small victories that can have a big impact on life afloat. Thanks to our MSC Counsel for all their hard work on helping this happen.

Thanks for your service.

T.K. Shannon  
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy  
Commander, Military Sealift Command

## Cape Ray neutralizes Syrian chemical materials

By Amaani Lyle  
DoD News, Defense Media Activity

**W**ASHINGTON, July 25, 2014 – Teams aboard the U.S. ship MV Cape Ray continue to neutralize materials from Syria's declared chemical stockpile, Pentagon spokesman Army Col. Steve Warren said today.

Warren told reporters the teams had used the installed field deployable hydrolysis system to destroy 411 tons of chemicals as of July 21.

"As of this morning, the crews neutralized over 25 percent of the DF [or methylphosphonyl difluoride], which is a sarin precursor," the colonel said, adding the international Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons has verified the amount.

Warren showed reporters an OCPW pie chart indicating two chemical classifications: Category 1 chemicals, which have little or no peaceful use and were removed from Syria for destruction outside of the country, as well as isoproponol, and Category 2, which includes other toxic chemicals and other chemical agents outside of Category 1.

The chart showed that as of July 21, 36.6 percent, or 380.1 of the 1038.5 metric tons of declared Category 1 chemical materials, had been destroyed, as well as 12.4 percent, or 31.5 of 254.17 declared metric tons of Category 2 chemical materials.

Joint teams from the OPCW and the United Nations began securing Syrian chemical sites in early October, and the Syrian government gave up the last of its declared chemical stockpiles June 23. The Cape Ray was modified and deployed to the eastern Mediterranean to dispose of the chemical agents in accordance with terms Syria agreed to late last year.



Capt. Rick Jordan, civilian master of MV Cape Ray (T-AKR 9679), watches from the bridge as the ship enters an Italian port. (U.S. Navy photo by MCSN Desmond Parks)

Sealift is an authorized publication for members and employees of the Navy's Military Sealift Command. Contents are not necessarily the official views of or endorsed by the U.S. government, the Department of Defense or the Department of the Navy. Sealift is published monthly by the MSC Office of Public Affairs as authorized under NAVPUBINST 5600.42A. Submission of articles and letters should be addressed to Editor, Sealift, Military Sealift Command, 914 Charles Morris Court, S.E., Washington Navy Yard, D.C. 20398-5540; phone (202) 685-5055 or DSN 325-5055; fax (202) 685-5067; or via e-mail to [sealift\\_editor@navy.mil](mailto:sealift_editor@navy.mil). All photographic submissions must be sent via e-mail, express mail or parcel service.

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MSC reports to Commander, U.S. Transportation Command for defense transportation matters, to Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command for Navy-unique matters and to the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development and Acquisition for procurement policy and oversight matters.



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## Southern Partnership Station continues in Guatemala

By MC1 Rafael Martie  
Southern Partnership Station  
Public Affairs

**P**UERTO BARRIOS, Guatemala (NNS) -- Joint high-speed vessel USNS Spearhead (JHSV 1) moored to the pier in Puerto Barrios, Guatemala July 22 to commence the offload of gear and personnel in support of Southern Partnership Station 2014 (SPS-JHSV 14).

The Sailors, Marines, Soldiers and Airmen that make up the adaptive force packages (AFPs) supporting SPS-JHSV 14, disembarked here to start their subject matter expert exchanges with Guatemalan military, government, and health officials.

The AFPs are comprised of Coastal Riverine Squadron 2, Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit 202, Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit 3, Mobile Diving Salvage Unit 2, Naval Criminal Investigation Service agents, Engineering engagement teams, medical and dental teams and various Marine components.

"After great engagements in Belize, I hope we continue to do the same in Guatemala," said Utilitiesman 1st Class Corey Mueller a native of Suffolk, Virginia. "We look forward to working on their library out in town and have great things planned here with our host nation partners."

For five weeks the AFPs will spend time working with host-nation partners

to strengthen relationships and fortify joint interoperability in areas such as maritime security tactics, medical procedures, health prevention, dive operations, construction projects, weapons handling, safely handling explosive devices, and land navigation.

For some servicemembers supporting the Southern Partnership mission, this will be their first time visiting the country of Guatemala.

"I am really excited to experience their culture, customs, and meeting new people," said U.S. Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Charles Alford, a native of Bellevue, Washington.

After the offload, Spearhead is scheduled to depart Guatemala to conduct counter illicit trafficking operations.



Sailors help members of the Raven Aerostar team inflate the Persistent Ground Surveillance System aerostat aboard USNS Spearhead (JHSV 1). (U.S. Navy photo by Lt. Jessica Crownover)

SPS-JHSV 14 is a U.S. Navy deployment focused on subject matter expert exchanges with partner nation militaries and security forces. U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command and U.S. 4th Fleet employ maritime forces in

cooperative maritime security operations in order to maintain access, enhance interoperability, and build enduring partnerships that foster regional security in the U.S. Southern Command area of responsibility.

## Family tradition of service to the maritime industry

*USNS Lawrence H. Gianella (T-AOT 1125) recently completed maintenance and repairs at Signal Ship Repair in Mobile, Alabama. The overhaul is being managed by three family members – Todd Jacobsen, Port Engineer OSI; his father Robert Jacobsen, Port Engineer OSI; and his brother Terry Jacobsen, Gianella's chief engineer. The following blog interviews Todd about the overhaul and his family's tradition of service in the maritime industry.*

**Have you always had an interest in the maritime industry? What is one professional belief that guides you?**

Yes, my father had started working at Lockheed Shipbuilding and Drydock in Seattle, Washington, when I was about four years old. He had exposed me to the industry very early on and I was quite certain at an early age this would be my profession.

One professional belief that guides me is "To do what is best for the ship," as doing what is best for the ship is what is best for the mariners who depend on her at sea, and best for the owner/operators who expect her to be mission ready at all times.



Terry Jacobsen, USNS Lawrence H. Gianella's (T-AOT 1125) chief engineer, his father Robert "Jake" Jacobsen, Port Engineer OSI, and his brother Todd Jacobsen, Port Engineer OSI, manage Gianella's maintenance and repair at Signal Ship Repair in Mobile, Alabama. (U.S. Navy photo)

**What are your duties and responsibilities during the USNS Gianella overhaul?**

I am the Port Engineer and Project Manager for USNS Gianella, responsible to create the work item package and ensure the items are completed as per the specifications. [These include]:

1. Track costs and change orders
2. Evaluate condition found reports for corrective action
3. Liaison with ABS and USCG for class compliance
4. Provide and supervise Service engineers for critical systems overhauls  
a. Main Engine; b. Main Generator; c. Stern Tube Seal; d. Turbo Charger; e. Framo Cargo Pumps
5. Assemble the drydock management team to insure all repairs are inspected and accepted.

**How do you interact professionally with your father and brother on the job?**

For this project, I am working with Robert "Jake" Jacobsen (OSI Port Engineer), my dad, and Terry Jacobsen (Gianella Chief Engineer), my brother. Collectively we have over 100 years in the maritime industry and for those 100-plus years, we have all worked for the same company – Ocean Shipholding Inc. Our personalities differ, however we all have one common belief, "To do what is best for the ship." This belief acts as a compass and keeps our course true regardless of any personal conflicts.

**How do you resolve professional challenges as a team when things get tough? Please give an example.**

We handle professional challenges as a team with communication, dedication and perseverance. Our family trust is strong; we respect one another's capabilities and are confident each will act for the sake of the team.

We had a small challenge the other day when a telescopic tube for the Main Engine got bent so severely it could not be removed from the engine, and the service engineer needed immediate action to resolve the problem.

I arranged for additional industrial assistance to remove the entire water box from the main engine and transport to the shipyards' machine shop so the bent pipe could be drilled out on the horizontal milling machine. Terry cut a piece of an old telescopic pipe and supplied this along with detailed drawings so the machinist could set up the milling machine to cut just the bent pipe and not damage the water box.

Jake contacted our OSI Property Manager to arrange for spare pipes from our shore-based spares in Houston to be transported to the shipyard for immediate use.

All went well and the main engine is back together and ready for sea.

**What lessons have you learned about working together in the same organization?**

I have learned that successfully working for the same organization greatly depends on the organization itself. We have been very fortunate to have an organization that has allowed each of us to act on the company's behalf to do what is best for the ship.

# Navy dive team

The following stories are reprinted and excerpted from a series of blogs originally posted on the U.S. Naval Institute - Naval History & Heritage Command blog at <http://www.navalhistory.org/>. They follow the June survey of World War II wreck USS Houston (CA 30) from USNS Safeguard (T-ARS 50).

**Day 1.** NHC underwater archaeologist arrives in Jakarta, begins mission planning

Naval History and Heritage Command  
Communication and Outreach Division

After a three-day and more than 10,000-mile journey from Washington, D.C., Naval History and Heritage Command Underwater Archaeologist Dr. Alexis Catsambis arrived in Jakarta, Indonesia, June 9 to begin collaboration on a survey of the World War II wreck of the cruiser USS Houston (CA 30).

The survey is a training evolution as part of the Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) 2014 exercise series and involves Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit One divers embarked in USNS Safeguard (T-ARS 50), assisted by personnel from the Indonesian navy.

Houston was chosen as the training site after reports surfaced of unauthorized disturbances on the ship, which remains sovereign property of the U.S. under customary international law. In addition to threatening a valuable cultural resource, unauthorized disturbances could damage what is a popular recreational dive site (non-intrusive, sport diving on Navy wrecks is not only legal, but encouraged as recreational divers are often the first to alert authorities when something is amiss).

Catsambis is on hand during the dive to provide operations planning support in order for the mission to effectively document the state of preservation of Houston. Documentation methods will include personal inspection by divers, as well as the planned use of sonar sensing systems and a remotely operated vehicle (ROV).

Ultimately the ship's crew, the MDSU team, the Indonesian navy and Catsambis all agreed to a survey plan that will allow the simultaneous undertaking of multiple tasks including "surface-supplied" diving, SCUBA diving and remotely operated vehicle operations. The plan also allows for the maximum amount of time on station.

Catsambis said the ship will get underway tomorrow and the dive team plans to begin the survey as soon as possible that day.

**Day 2.** Dive on Houston: The survey begins

Dr. Alexis Catsambis  
NHC, Underwater Archaeology Branch



Operations began this morning (Tuesday, June 10, 2014) at 6 a.m. when I held a brief with Master Diver Phillips and Chief Warrant Officer Jason Shafer. By 6:30 a.m. Safeguard was located near the vicinity of the first set of coordinates that we had for USS Houston and shortly thereafter three side-scan sonar technicians and I engaged in a small-boat survey of the area to locate the target. After eliminating two possible sets of coordinates, we had a positive hit at 11:35 a.m. on a large metallic target significantly larger than 300 feet long.

Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit One divers were in the water by 11:40 a.m. and by 12:05 p.m. one extremity of the vessel had been marked with a buoy. Indonesian divers went in at 1:45 p.m. to follow the length of the vessel, which lies on its starboard side, and to affix a second buoy at the opposite extremity. By the end of the dive, the second buoy was placed approximately 100 feet inboard from the first.

By 2:45 p.m. we launched the small boat again, having established the orientation of the vessel with the two buoys, to obtain side-scan sonar data along the length of the vessel, on both sides (keel and superstructure). During the third dive of the day, a combined team of U.S. and Indonesian divers moved the second buoy farther along the sheerline of the vessel.

At 3:15 p.m. we initiated a six-pass side-scan sonar survey of the hull. The survey concluded at 3:50 p.m., succeeding in capturing the overall length of the target (between 570 to 610 feet - Houston was 600 feet in length).

At 4:20 p.m., the determination was made to moor Safeguard in preparation for surface-supplied diving, which would provide divers with increased bottom time. The mooring evolution concluded at 6:15 p.m., after which I met with MDV Phillips regarding tomorrow's objectives.

At the end of the day, the question is, are we moored over USS Houston? I can say the target we are straddling is in the approximate area of the engagement, is of the correct length and time-period, and appears as one of two major wrecks on nautical charts of the area. I did not observe anything in the data gathered thus far that would positively identify the site as USS Houston. However, nothing we have come across thus far would question such identification.



**Cover:** While aboard USNS Safeguard (T-ARS 50), during a wreath-laying ceremony at the survey site of sunken WWII Navy vessel USS Houston (CA 30), Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy Jakarta, Indonesia, Kristen Bauer, top left, Marine Lt. Col. Miguel Avila and Navy Capt. Mark Stacpoole, honor those who perished. (U.S. Navy photos by MC3 Christian Senyk)

**Background, this page:** Divers assigned to Mobile Diving Salvage Unit One conduct a diving exercise on the wreck of Houston.

**Center spread, bottom, left to right:** A Navy diver monitors the air pressure of a recompression chamber. MC1 Chris Perez, assigned to MDSU One, translates between Indonesian navy and U.S. Navy divers for the diving exercise on the wreck of Houston.

Sailors, assigned to MDSU One prepare to dive from a rigid hull inflatable boat on the site of the sunken Houston.

Navy Divers survey the site of Houston in a RHIB.

Sailors prepare a RHIB for a diving survey of the site of sunken Navy vessel USS Houston with the Indonesian navy.



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*USS Houston (CA 30) was commissioned in June 1930, and served as flagship of the U.S. Fleet in late 1938. The ship also carried President Franklin D. Roosevelt on numerous occasions during the 1930s.*

*During WWII, Houston took part in the Battle of the Java Sea in February 1942. The next day, with Australian light cruiser Perth, they encountered a Japanese navy force near the Sunda Strait. In a valiant night battle against overwhelming odds, Houston and Perth were sunk. Some 675 Sailors and Marines died with the ship.*



# surveys historic site

## Day 3. A pause to honor our fallen, then work continues

Today (Wednesday, June 11, 2014) has been an exceptionally long and productive day.

Between 7 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. we began preparations for the day's dives readying dive gear, prepping cameras and tagging valves, knobs and pumps aboard Safeguard to set the stage for diving operations. Following the first surface-supplied dive, it appeared clear that SCUBA diving provided a more appropriate alternative, as it offered divers increased flexibility to swim along the wreck-site. Divers from Indonesia and the U.S. Navy were both able to dive on the wreck before the 11:15 a.m. arrival of a VIP delegation.

The delegation arrived from Jakarta to participate in a wreath laying ceremony which took place at noon on the fantail of Safeguard. In attendance were the U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission Kristen Bauer, U.S. Naval Attaché Capt. Mark Stacpoole, U.S. Marine Corps Attaché Lt. Col. Miguel Avila, as well as members of the USS Safeguard crew, and the U.S. and Indonesian dive teams. A wreath was passed from the ship to a joint U.S. and Indonesian dive team, which descended into the water and affixed it to the hull below.

Following lunch with the dignitaries, and having updated them on the site assessment, the delegation departed at 12:45 p.m.

By 1:15 p.m. we were back at work launching a Seabotix remotely operated vehicle in the water on the eastern extremity of the vessel, while divers were undertaking the task of swimming the entire length of the hull to affix a second buoy on the far western extremity.

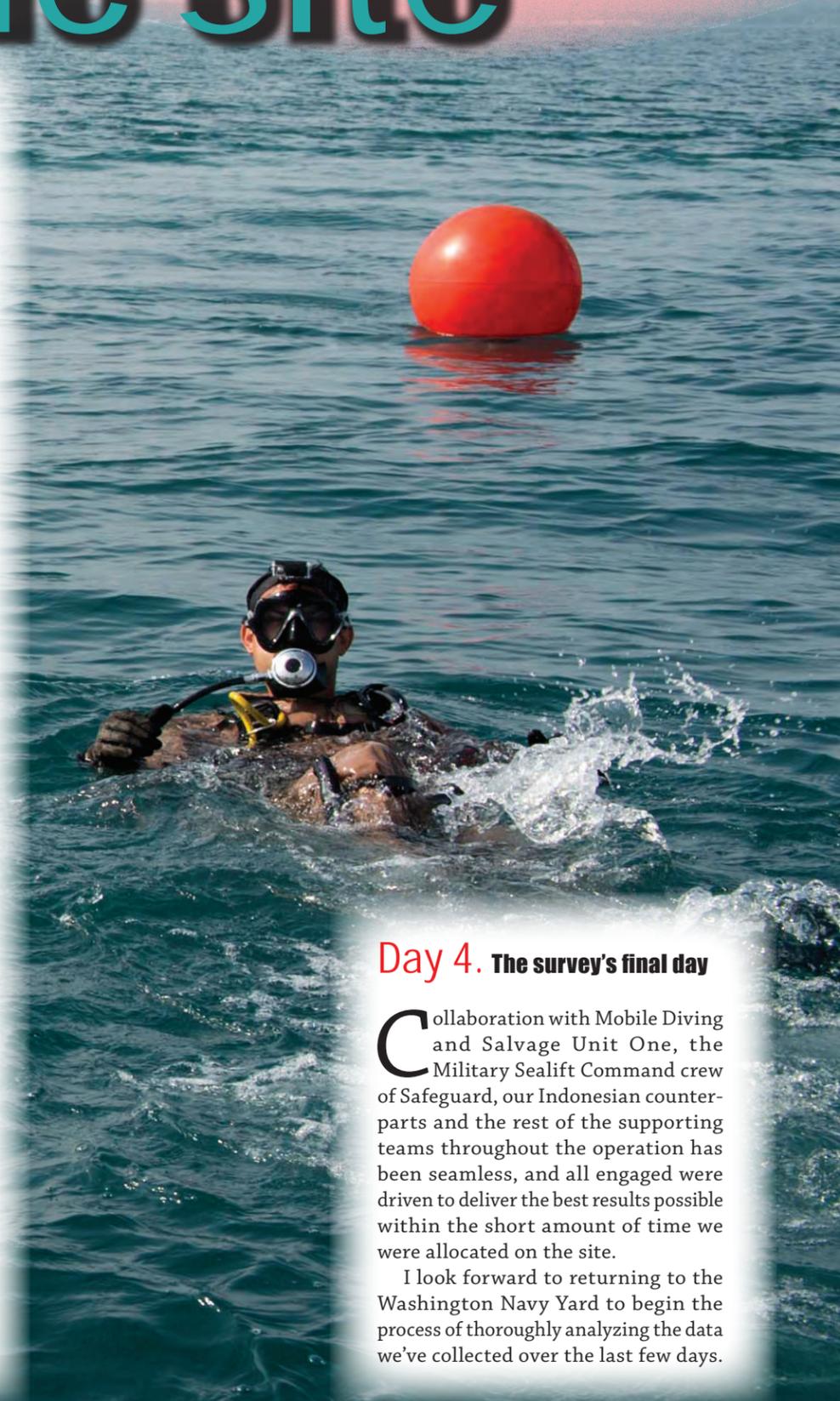
Dives continued until 5:25 p.m. and were followed by a dive brief that ended at 6:45 p.m.

Today's operation was very productive allowing us to accomplish a series of tasks including:

- \* Securely establishing buoys on both extremities of the wrecked vessel.
- \* Obtaining GPS coordinates for both extremities.
- \* Establishing that the vessel is lying on its starboard side with its deck, mostly exposed.
- \* Observing anchor chain, and two large, hollow rings — within which the main gun turrets would have rested — along the Eastern extremity. The characteristics of the eastern extremity match those of World War II cruisers as well as USS Houston, allowing us to identify this end as the bow of the wrecked vessel. Additional mangled debris and significant elements lay beyond what has presently been identified as the extremity. I suspect significant battle damage was concentrated in this area.

\* Observing a series of cleats, bollards, and a single large hollow ring, similar to those associated with the bow turrets, along the western extremity allowed us to identify this end as the stern of the vessel; once more, such features match those of World War II era cruisers including USS Houston. An extensive series of nets appear to blanket the bitter end of the stern. A significantly deformed area exists adjacent to the location of the former gun turret, potentially the result of the vessel losing its aft mast during the wrecking event.

At the end of the day, we made the decision to halt surface-supplied diving operations altogether in favor of SCUBA operations, affording us increased flexibility to cover the most ground in our last day of the exercise tomorrow.



## Day 4. The survey's final day

Collaboration with Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit One, the Military Sealift Command crew of Safeguard, our Indonesian counterparts and the rest of the supporting teams throughout the operation has been seamless, and all engaged were driven to deliver the best results possible within the short amount of time we were allocated on the site.

I look forward to returning to the Washington Navy Yard to begin the process of thoroughly analyzing the data we've collected over the last few days.





USS Donald Cook (DDG 75) conducts an underway replenishment with USNS John Lenthall (T-AO 189) in the Mediterranean Sea. (U.S. Navy photo by MCSN Edward Guttierrez III)

## DC • HIGHLIGHTS

**Rear Adm. T.K. Shannon**, commander, Military Sealift Command, recognized multiple awards during an all-hands call July 15 in Washington, D.C.

**Brad Parks**, Combat Logistics Force; **Judy Gladson**, engineering; and **Jessica Harker** and **Stefani Nick**, contracts and business management, received a Special Act Award Certificate for work on the radiological contamination response team for MSC ships following involvement in Operation Tomodachi after the 2011 earthquake and tsunami in Japan.

Shannon applauded **Richard Carmack** and **Iben Gantt**, Prepositioning Program, for successfully completing MSC's 3-year Marine Transportation Specialist Intern Program.

**Operations Specialist 2nd Class Robert Boothe**, Junior Sailor of the Quarter for the second quarter; **Operations Specialist 1st Class Joseph Golfieri**, Sailor of the Quarter for the second quarter; and **Intelligence Specialist 1st Class Kelly Pritt**, Sailor of the Quarter for the first quarter, were commended for their outstanding performance.

Navy **Capt. Kenneth McKinley**, contracts and business management, received the Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal for support to the Civil Air Patrol from March 2008 to June 2014.

Shannon frocked **Information Systems Technician 2nd Class Timothy Shirley**, operations and plans, and with **Information Systems Technician 2nd Class Gustavo Guevara**, operations and plans, presented the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal for work in the MSC Global Command Information Center to transition the SIPRNET message system to the Command and Control Office Information Exchange.

Navy **Lt. James Masterson**, Navy **Lt. Kevin Laughary** and Navy **Lt. Christopher Malta** received the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal for service during their tours as MSC headquarters Battle Watch Captains and flag briefers.

Multiple individuals also received recognition for length of service: **Frances Carter**, Total Force Management, and **Pat Tully**, operations and plans, 40 years; **Joyce Green**, office of the comptroller, and **Craig Gibson**, logistics, 35 years; **David Lyle**, operations and plans, **Kim Thorpe**, command, control, communications and computer systems, and **Shawna Edmonds**, office of the comptroller, 30 years; **Marc Bromante** and **Norman Wolf**, engineering, **Kristine Boyles**, contracts and business management, and **Brad Reiber**, operations and plans, 25 years; **Theresa Curbelo**, Total Force Management, and **Ken Jones**, Sealift Program, 20 years; **Hilda Ponder**, logistics, and Tim Vickers, Special Mission Program, 15 years; and **Ralanda Miller**, logistics, 10 years.

MSC bids farewell to **Yeoman 1st Class Jose Rojas**, command administration; **Lt. Cmdr. Stella Obayuwana**, contracts and business management; Coast Guard Cmdr. Dan Somma, engineering; and **Cmdr. Joel Harvey**, operations and plans.

The command welcomes Navy **Lt. David Going** and Army **Maj. Ernest Lane**, operations; **Lt. Cmdr. Jarred Henley**, contracts and business management; and Coast Guard **Cmdr. Linda Sturgis**, engineering.

## EUROPE/AFRICA • NEWS

Throughout June, USNS John Lenthall (T-AO 189), the duty oiler in the Mediterranean Sea, conducted 14 underway replenishments with nine U.S. Navy and NATO assets, delivering 1.7 million gallons of F-76 fuel and 181,284 gallons of F-44 fuel, and transferring 646 pallets of cargo.

U.S. 6th Fleet flagship, USS Mount Whitney (LCC 20) participated in Exercise Baltic Operations June 9-19 in the Baltic Sea. Thirteen nations participated in the 42nd annual joint exercise, which enhances multinational maritime capabilities and interoperability, while improving involvement in the larger Baltic region theater security cooperation strategy.

MSC Europe and Africa conducted Sealift operations in June. Chartered ship MV Combi Dock III transited the U.S. 6th Fleet area of operations en route to Alexandria, Egypt, where it chopped to U.S. 5th Fleet before arriving June 19.

MT Arctic Bay arrived in Algeciras, Spain, for an inspection before loading fuel for Operation Pacer Goose, an annual replenishment mission to Thule Air Base in Greenland.

BBC Seattle (T-AK 5272) provided ammunition resupply to U.S. European Command in Nordenham, Germany, June 2-3, before departing the U.S.

6th Fleet area of operations June 10.

MV Markab and MV Antares supported Exercise Phoenix Express, a U.S. Africa Command-sponsored regional maritime exercise, in the central Mediterranean, May 28 to June 1. Both were boarded by foreign navies during visit, board, search and seizure scenarios as part of the exercise. MSCEURAF maritime transportation specialist **Bruce Martin** supported the Sealift operations on the ground in Malta.

Eight members of the Mission Capability Assessment team from MSC headquarters in Washington, D.C., and Norfolk, Virginia, visited MSCEURAF June 9-13. The members conducted their biannual assessment of 39 MSCEURAF processes. Maritime transportation specialist **Matthew Sweeney** organized and ensured the successful execution of the MSCEURAF assessment.

MSCEURAF/Commander, Task Force 63 welcomes Navy **Lt. Sherri Flippin**, ship scheduler; Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Stuart Grazier**, aviation logistics, and Navy **Yeoman First Class Tywan Tramel**, command administration.

The command bids fair winds and following seas to Navy **Yeoman Chief Felicia Cretchen**, command administration, and Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Jared Jacobs**, aviation logistics.

## CENTRAL • CURRENTS

MSC Central and Commander Task Force 53 coordinated 85 underway replenishment evolutions to U.S. Navy and coalition warships, and also supported a major prepositioning exercise in conjunction with a multi-national exercise. MSCCENT/CTF-53 are primed to provide U.S. 5th Fleet with the supplies it needs to fight and operate.

MSCCENT/CTF-53 extend special gratitude to the crews of USNS Robert E. Peary (T-AKE 5), USNS Joshua Humphreys (T-AO 188), and USNS 1ST LT Baldomero Lopez (T-AK 3010). Peary and Humphreys went above and beyond normal operations in June, volunteering for several time-critical delivery assignments. Lopez executed a flawless prepositioning demonstration during Exercise Native Fury in Aqaba, Jordan. This was the first prepositioning demonstration in the region in many years, and reasserted the logistics effectiveness of the MSC prepositioning concept and fleet. MSCCENT/CTF-53 wish a fond farewell to the crew of Lopez, who returned to Diego Garcia.

MSCCENT/CTF-53 would also like to bid farewell and following seas to several longtime members of its team. **Lis Young**, **Petty Officer Samantha Mincey** and **Petty Officer Max Miranda** all departed in June. The command is also pleased to welcome **Stewart Belt**, Navy **Lt. James Trahon**, Navy **Lt. j.g. Timothy Trask**, **Chief Petty Officer Reuben Amarh**, **Petty Officer Jones Kwaobaffour**, and **Petty Officer Paul Shillingford**.

## Byrd rescues nine in Gulf of Oman

U.S. Naval Forces Central Command Public Affairs

**M**ANAMA, Bahrain (NNS) – USNS Richard E. Byrd (T-AKE 4), a Lewis and Clark-class dry cargo ship, rescued nine crew members from a Yemeni-flagged cargo vessel that had lost power, was taking on water and was adrift in the Gulf of Oman, July 28, at approximately 9:00 a.m. local.

The crew from Asaed requested assistance and Byrd was the first ship on scene. Asaed crewmembers departed their vessel via the ship's own lifeboat and maneuvered to Byrd, where they were safely recovered.

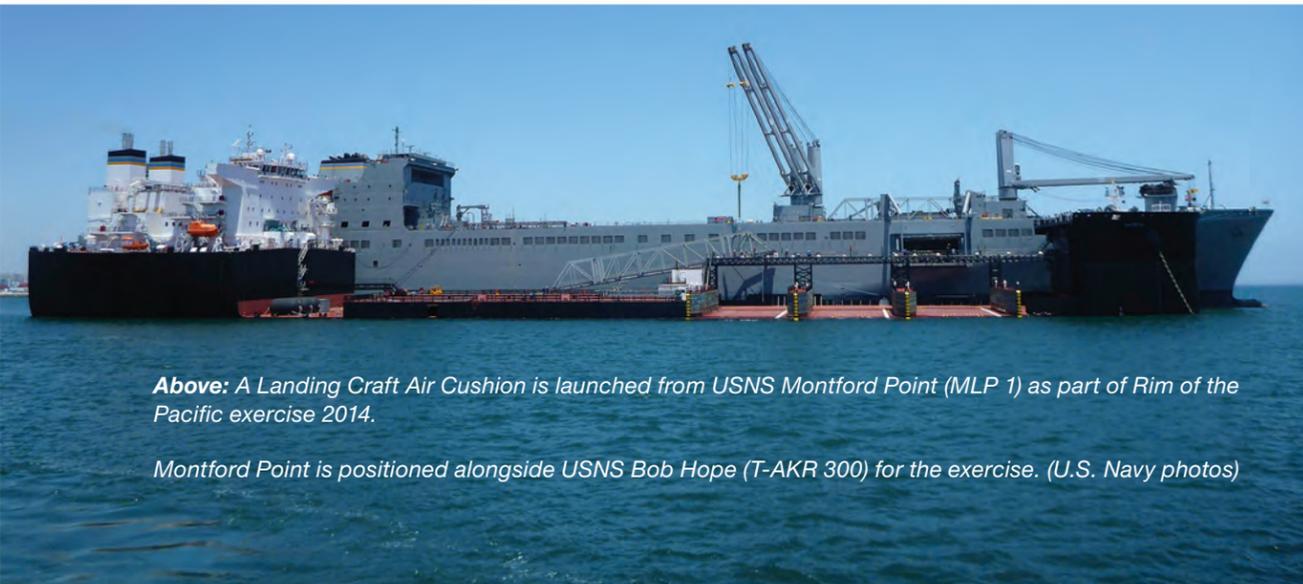
There are no reports of casualties or injuries to personnel. The Yemeni sailors were further evaluated by Byrd's medical team. The Navy coordinated the sailors' transfer ashore.

Richard E. Byrd is currently on a scheduled deployment to the U.S. 5th Fleet area of responsibility conducting maritime security operations and theater security cooperation efforts.

(U.S. Navy photo)



## PACIFIC • BRIEFS



*Above: A Landing Craft Air Cushion is launched from USNS Montford Point (MLP 1) as part of Rim of the Pacific exercise 2014.*

*Montford Point is positioned alongside USNS Bob Hope (T-AKR 300) for the exercise. (U.S. Navy photos)*

USNS Bob Hope (T-AKR 300) supported the post-delivery tests and trials of USNS Montford Point (MLP-1) June 17-19 inside the Los Angeles/Long Beach breakwater. Using 16 mooring lines, Bob Hope accomplished a skin-to-skin configuration with the MLP over a period of 48 hours. While moored, Bob Hope lowered its ramp to allow transfer of vehicles between the two ships. The exercise enabled a test team and the crews of the two ships to analyze ramp stresses, boom angles and design concerns.

**Dr. Jonathan Woodson**, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs, visited USNS Mercy (T-AH 19) June 13. Woodson was briefed on Mercy's biennial role in the humanitarian Pacific Partnership mission as well as a tour of the ship. Navy **Capt. Michael Taylor**, commander MSC Pacific, **Capt. Tom Giudice**, Mercy's civil service master and **Capt. Jeffery Paulson**, commanding officer of Mercy's Military Treatment Facility joined Woodson on the tour.

USNS Millinocket (JHSV-3) arrived in San Diego June 20. Millinocket is the first joint high-speed vessel in the Pacific area of operation. On June 25, the ship executed a craft interface test with Montford Point in the Los Angeles/Long Beach breakwater and returned to San Diego June 27. Millinocket will continue with post-delivery tests and will participate in exercises with ships in the Southern California area including MLP-1.

Welcome aboard **Ronald Soriano**, MSCPAC deputy combat logistics officer. Soriano joins the MSC team following a position at the Southwest Regional Maintenance Command's Fleet Logistics Center, where he served as a logistics management specialist.

## ATLANTIC • LINES

In June, the MSC Atlantic team set the benchmark for providing replenishment and dry cargo services, giving the Coast Guard a platform to conduct a six-hour exercise, and supporting Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit Two's training requirements for the Navy.

MSC chartered ship MV Super Servant 4 to load two Patrol Craft Squadron vessels from Norfolk's Naval Station in Virginia to Bahrain. Using the float-on/float-off method, the vessel ballasted her deck down to the required depth and then each Patrol Craft was placed into proper position, known as blocking cradles, using tugboats and workboats. Once the cargo floated over the submerged portion of the ship, Super Servant de-ballasted, and the patrol craft raised the ship, completing the load. Marine Transportation Specialist **Brian Hill** played a key role in the ship's arrival to Norfolk June 26. "Although the operation was challenging, it was a very rewarding experience, working with a team of professionals

who understand how to successfully and safely execute the mission," Hill said.

MSC also chartered MV Ocean Giant, a multi-use container and break-bulk ship, to support Operation Pacer Goose. Ocean Giant loaded 4.1 million pounds of dry cargo in Norfolk, Virginia. MT Arctic Bay, a tanker, will also transport 200,000 barrels of jet fuel loaded at Algeciras, Spain. This annual resupply mission is expected to sustain Thule Air Base in Greenland, the Department of Defense's northernmost deep water port, located 750 miles north of the Arctic Circle for one year.

"Because of Greenland's frequent fogs, strong winds and changing currents that often come with ice and icebergs, there is only a brief period each year in the summer when sea ice thins sufficiently to send supply ships to the base," **Richard Caldwell**, supervisory marine transportation specialist, said. Brian Hill served as MSC's representative, overseeing the entire mission, June 28 to July 31.

Two MSC oilers, USNS Laramie (T-AO-203) and USNS Leroy Grumman (T-AO 195), departed Naval Station Norfolk in Virginia for scheduled deployments.

Supporting Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit Two (MDSU-2), USNS Grasp (T-ARS 51) participated in eight dive training exercises: Salvage; Seamanship; Recompression Chamber Operations; Surface Supplied Air; Surface Supplied Mixed Gas; Mk. 16; Scuba; and Supervisor training.

**Tom D'Agostino**, director of ship operations at Joint Base Charleston in South Carolina, assisted with the arrival of MT Evergreen State June 21. This was the first time ever the 29,606-ton deep draft tanker called on the port to discharge more than 249,572 barrels of Jet A fuel. Marine Transportation Specialist **Mary Ann Liberto** coordinated port services for the ship's arrival.

Commander Task Force 83 and MSCLANT welcome **Heather Davis**, administrative assistant. Also joining the team is **Yeoman Chief Nashera Brown**, administrative officer.

CTF 83 and MSCLANT bid farewell to three of its own. **LaSontra Anderson**, port service assistant, and **Quenton Haynes**, ordnance supply, resigned their positions to pursue other career aspirations and Navy **Capt. Greg Marvil** retired from a 30-year career in the Navy reserves. We wish them all continued health, peace and prosperity in the next chapters of their lives.

*IT2 Zachary Brady wraps waterproof electrical tape to prevent leakage on the OE-82(C) satellite communications secure/non-secure voice antenna aboard USNS Comfort (T-AH 20). (U.S. Navy photo by Robin Hicks)*



## Mount Whitney returns to Gaeta following BALTOPS

By MC2 Mike Wright, USS Mount Whitney Public Affairs

**G**AETA, Italy (NNS) -- The U.S. 6th Fleet command and control ship USS Mount Whitney (LCC 20) arrived in Gaeta, Italy, July 15, after completing Baltic Operations 2014 with its European counterparts.

BALTOPS is an annual, multinational exercise designed to enhance maritime capabilities, interoperability and support regional stability. This year's BALTOPS, the 42nd iteration of the exercise, saw the participation of naval forces from 14 countries including Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States.

"BALTOPS was an amazing exercise," said Yeoman 2nd Class Roman Garcia. "I think it was awesome to work with our European allies, it was great having the opportunity to learn from one another while creating a stronger global force of unified nations."

The training objectives of the exercise included gunnery, replenishment-at-sea, anti-submarine warfare, radar tracking and interception, mine countermeasures, seamanship, search and rescue, maritime interdiction operations and scenarios dealing with potential real world crises and maritime security.

Mount Whitney's crew dedicated a significant amount of their time building stronger relationships with regional partners and allied nations with port visits to Sweden, Germany, and Belgium, ensuring the advancement, security and stability in Europe.

"I couldn't believe that we were actually involved in such a historically known exercise like this," said Information Systems Technician 1st Class Danny Suarez. "Many of the local nationals that we met were very warm and welcoming. They really enjoyed our presence in their country," said Suarez. "I loved being a part of this mission. It was great!"

During Mount Whitney's extended underway period, Sailors had the opportunity to experience many different cultures, including festivals, foods, music, and dialects in Karlskrona, Sweden; Kiel, Germany; and Brugge, Belgium.

Mount Whitney, forward deployed to Gaeta, Italy, operates with a combined crew of U.S. Navy Sailors and Military Sealift Command civil service mariners. The civil service mariners perform navigation, deck, engineering and supply service operations, while military personnel support communications, weapons systems and security. It is one of only two seaborne joint command platforms in the U.S. Navy, both of which are forward deployed.

U.S. 6th Fleet, headquartered in Naples, Italy, conducts the full spectrum of joint and naval operations, often in concert with allied, joint, and interagency partners, in order to advance U.S. national interests and security and stability in Europe and Africa.



Sailors assigned to USS Mount Whitney (LCC 20) raise the colors as the ship arrives in Zeebrugge, Belgium. Mount Whitney operates with a combined crew of Sailors and civil service mariners. (U.S. Navy photo by MC3 Luis R. Chavez Jr.)

## Faces of MSC: William Ramos

*The following blog is by MC3 Luis R. Chavez Jr, NPASE-EAST Det. Europe.*

**B**altic Operations (BALTOPS) 2014, the largest multinational naval exercise in the Baltic region this year, took place June 6 – 21. U.S. 6th Fleet's command ship, USS Mount Whitney (LCC 20), became a hotbed of activity with receptions and visits from high-profile guests including foreign military officials and Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus frequenting the ship's daily activity.

With all these events on board Mount Whitney, every inch of the deck has to be squared away, including the reception area and the flight deck. This coordination falls in the hands of one Military Sealift Command's civil service mariner. His name is William Ramos, and he's the ship's boatswain aboard Mount Whitney.

William "Chulo" Ramos, was born in South Bronx, New York. He joined MSC

after a friend told him about what the command offers, and the great opportunities he would have as a CIVMAR. Ramos has now sailed with MSC for nearly 21 years.

"One of my friends told me MSC was a great job and opportunity, I'd be able to see the world, and make good money," said Ramos, who like most CIVMARs, spends eight to 10 months a year working aboard ships forward-deployed around the world. "I miss my kids but I like the opportunities of this job and I love sailing."

Ramos joined Mount Whitney's hybrid crew of 146 CIVMARs and 157 U.S. Navy Sailors in March 2014. Aboard Mount Whitney, CIVMARs are responsible for the deck, engineering and supply departments, while the uniformed Navy is responsible for the communications,

medical and weapons departments. As ship's boatswain, Ramos runs Mount Whitney's deck department, leading 10 percent of the CIVMAR crew aboard.

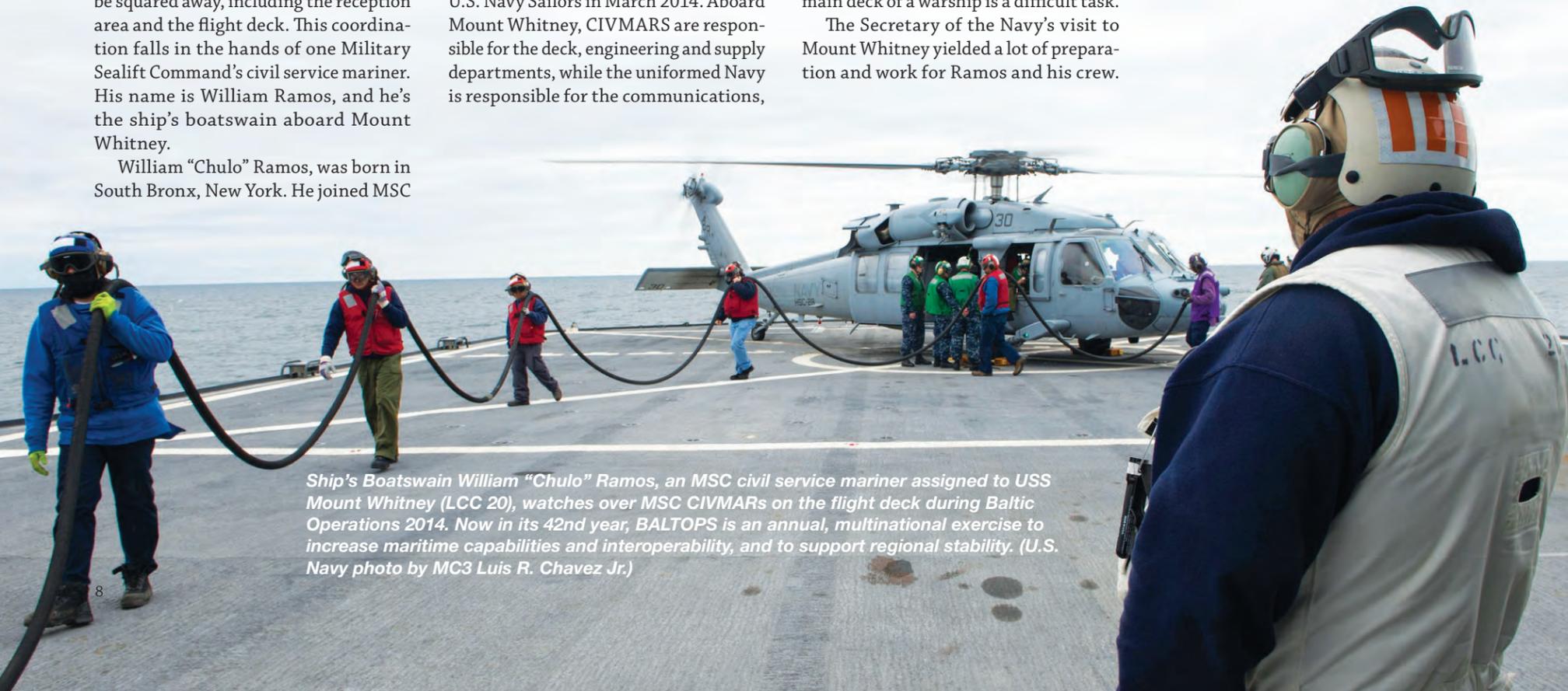
"I am in charge of two boatswain mates, 14 day workers and nine watch standers," said Ramos. "My job is to keep the main deck maintained. I also fill the role of safety officer during flight operations, to make sure that everyone on the flight deck is squared away."

Ramos said that for Mount Whitney's CIVMARs, the most physically challenging days of BALTOPs are reception days. The requirement to build a reception area from the bottom deck to the main deck of a warship is a difficult task.

The Secretary of the Navy's visit to Mount Whitney yielded a lot of preparation and work for Ramos and his crew.

"When the SECNAV visited the ship, we spoke for a bit when I met him," said Ramos. "He told me I did a good job and thanked me for making the ship look presentable. It was a great feeling to be given thanks by someone as important as him."

"I love this job and I appreciate all the opportunities it has given me, and to be able to travel and support my family," he said. "I will keep striving to move up to higher positions, and hopefully in the end become one of the officers for MSC. I give thanks to my kids and my parents for the support they've given me these past 21 years."



Ship's Boatswain William "Chulo" Ramos, an MSC civil service mariner assigned to USS Mount Whitney (LCC 20), watches over MSC CIVMARs on the flight deck during Baltic Operations 2014. Now in its 42nd year, BALTOPS is an annual, multinational exercise to increase maritime capabilities and interoperability, and to support regional stability. (U.S. Navy photo by MC3 Luis R. Chavez Jr.)