

BATARG BEACON

Issue 1

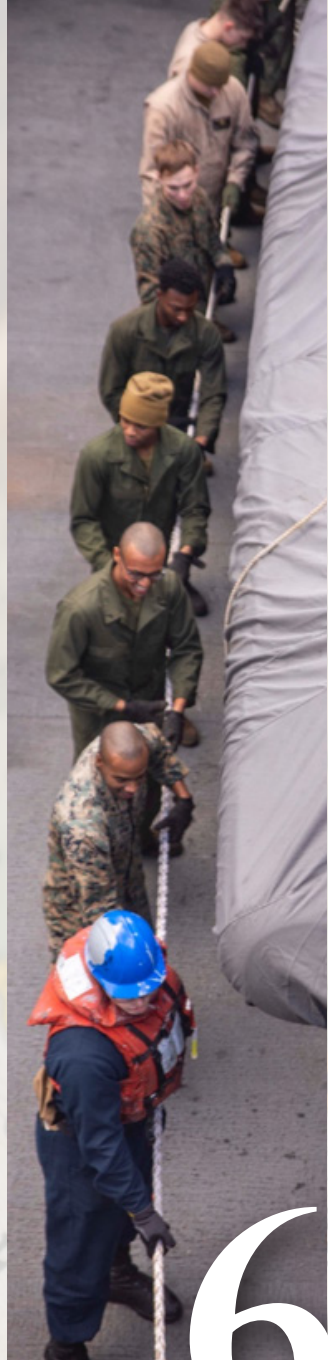
January 2, 2020



Oak Hill Conducts
Gun Shoot Qualification

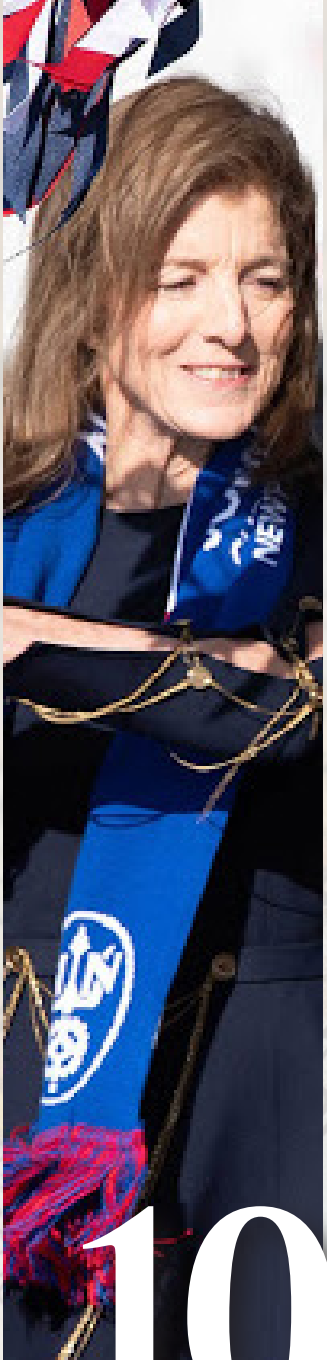
Religious Freedom
Aboard USS Bataan

Ceaseless Communications
New York Sailor Strives for Success



6

Photo stories from around the BATARG and 26 MEU.



10

When Caroline Kennedy last christened a ship in the name of her father.



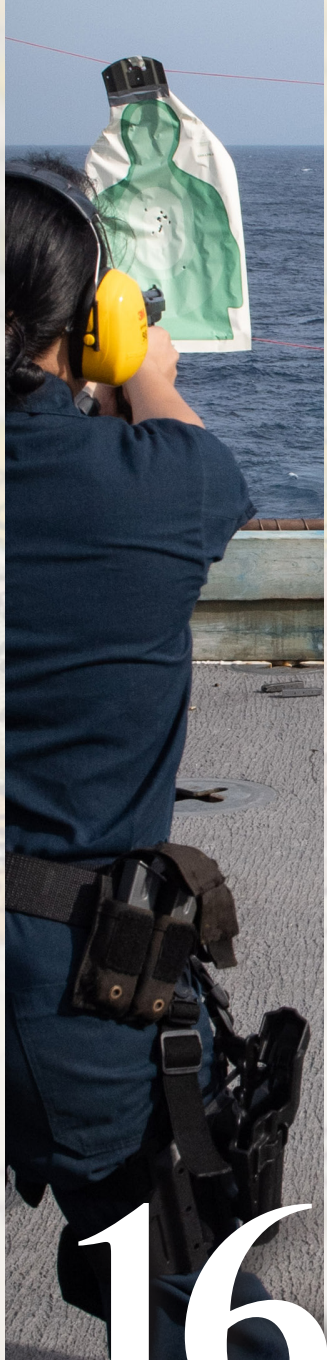
12

26 MEU and BATARG Exercise Freedom of Religion.



14

Holiday photos from around the BATARG.



16

USS Oak Hill (LSD 51) conducts a gun shoot qualification.



18

Ceaseless Communications: New York Sailor Strives for Success.

CONTENTS

BATARG BEACON

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PHIBRON 8

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COMMANDERS'



Welcome to the first edition of the BATARG Beacon, a biweekly deployment newsletter about the Sailors and Marines of the Bataan Amphibious Ready Group and 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit.

You all have worked extremely hard over the last several months to train and prepare for this deployment, through PMINT, SWATT, ARGMEUEX, COMPTUEX and hurricane relief following Dorian.

These events tested our ability to respond to a wide range of challenging scenarios, at sea, in the air, on shore and in the information arena. We were put in high-pressure, real-world situations and pushed to our limits. We learned, we adapted and we succeeded.

But now we face a different challenge. While those events were relatively short, intense periods at sea, we are now embarking on a longer voyage. The workups for deployment were sprints, and now the deployment is a marathon.

We must stay focused and vigilant every day. We hopefully will not face the same threats at the same frequency as we did during COMPTUEX, but we must be prepared to respond to any mission we are given, anywhere in the world.

To that end, we will maintain a culture of excellence during this deployment. I challenge each Sailor and Marine on this team to exceed the standard, to go well beyond the minimum requirement. Think two and three steps ahead. Have backup plans. Beat deadlines. Anticipate needs and be ready.

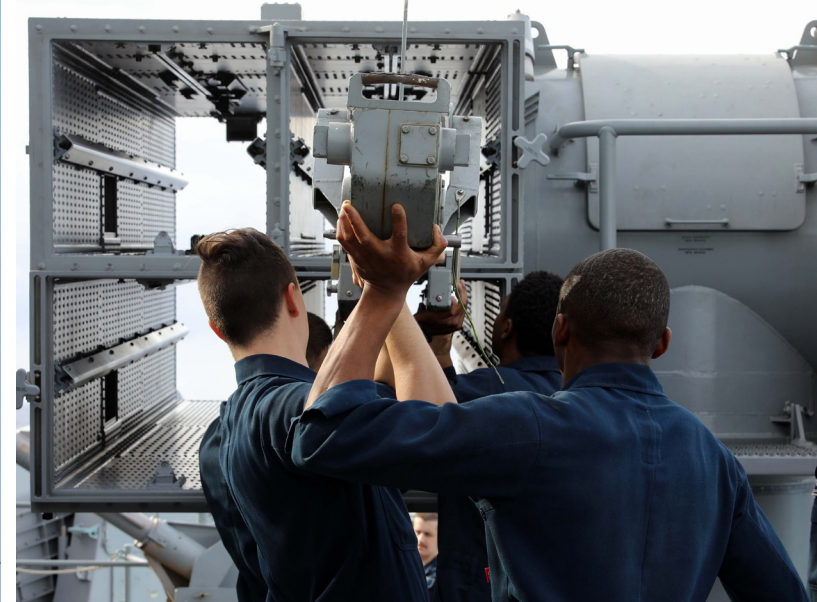
Being away from our families and loved ones for this long is hard. We miss them dearly and they miss us. But we will return to them with pride knowing that we worked hard every day to make the world a better, safer place for our children, our parents, our spouses, our sisters and brothers and friends.

I look forward to sharing a fulfilling and rewarding deployment with you.

- Capt. Lance Leshar,
Amphibious Squadron 8



CORNER



Clockwise from top left:

Operations Specialist Seaman Jesse Salazar, assigned to the Oak Hill, looks for contacts on a radar station while standing watch Dec. 29, 2019. Photo by MC3 Griffin Kersting.

U.S. Marines with the 26th MEU load their gear prior to deployment at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, Dec. 12, 2019. Photo by Cpl. Tanner Seims.

Sailors assigned to the Bataan load a NATO Sea Sparrow Missile, Dec. 23, 2019. Photo by MCSA Darren Newell.

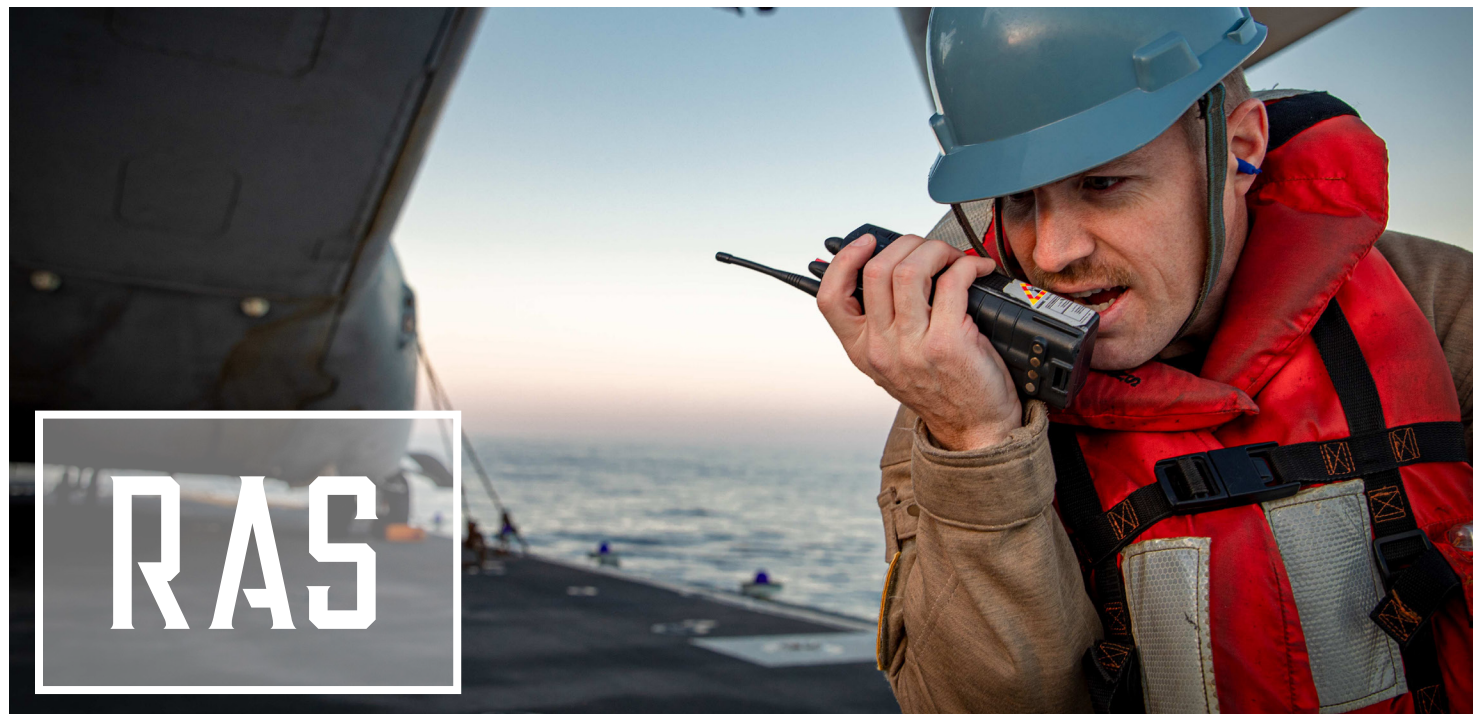
Sailors watch as a landing craft, air cushion (LCAC) enters the well deck of the amphibious assault ship USS Bataan (LHD 5), Dec. 14, 2019. Photo by MCSA Darren Newell.

Marines with the 26th MEU attach a crane to a shipping container on the flight deck of the Oak Hill, Dec. 15, 2019. Photo by MC3 Griffin Kersting.

U.S. Marine Corps Capt. William Torrrington with the 26th MEU spends time with his family before deployment at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, Dec. 12, 2019. Photo by Cpl. Tanner Seims.

Cover photo:

Lance Cpl. Josiah Grimes, assigned to Battalion Landing Team 2nd Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment (BLT 2/8), Fox Company, participates in a gun shoot aboard the Bataan, Dec. 26, 2019. Photo by MC3 Levi Decker.



RAS

Clockwise from top left:

Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Handling) Airman Zereon Martinez, assigned to the Bataan, directs an MH-60S Sea Hawk, assigned to the Dragon Whales of the Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 28, as it delivers supplies during a replenishment-at-sea, Dec. 31, 2019. Photo by MC3 Levi Decker.

Sailors assigned to the New York and Marines assigned to the 26th MEU heave on a messenger line in the boat valley of the New York during a replenishment-at-sea, Dec. 20, 2019. Photo by MC2 Lyle Wilkie.

Sailors, assigned to the Bataan, participate in a Foreign Object Debris (FOD) walkdown before a vertical replenishment, Dec. 31, 2019. Photo by MCSA Darren Newell.

Lt. Stephen Friedrich, assigned to the Bataan, speaks to the bridge before a replenishment-at-sea with the dry cargo and ammunition ship USNS William McLean (T-AKE 12), Dec. 31, 2019. Photo by MC3 Levi Decker.

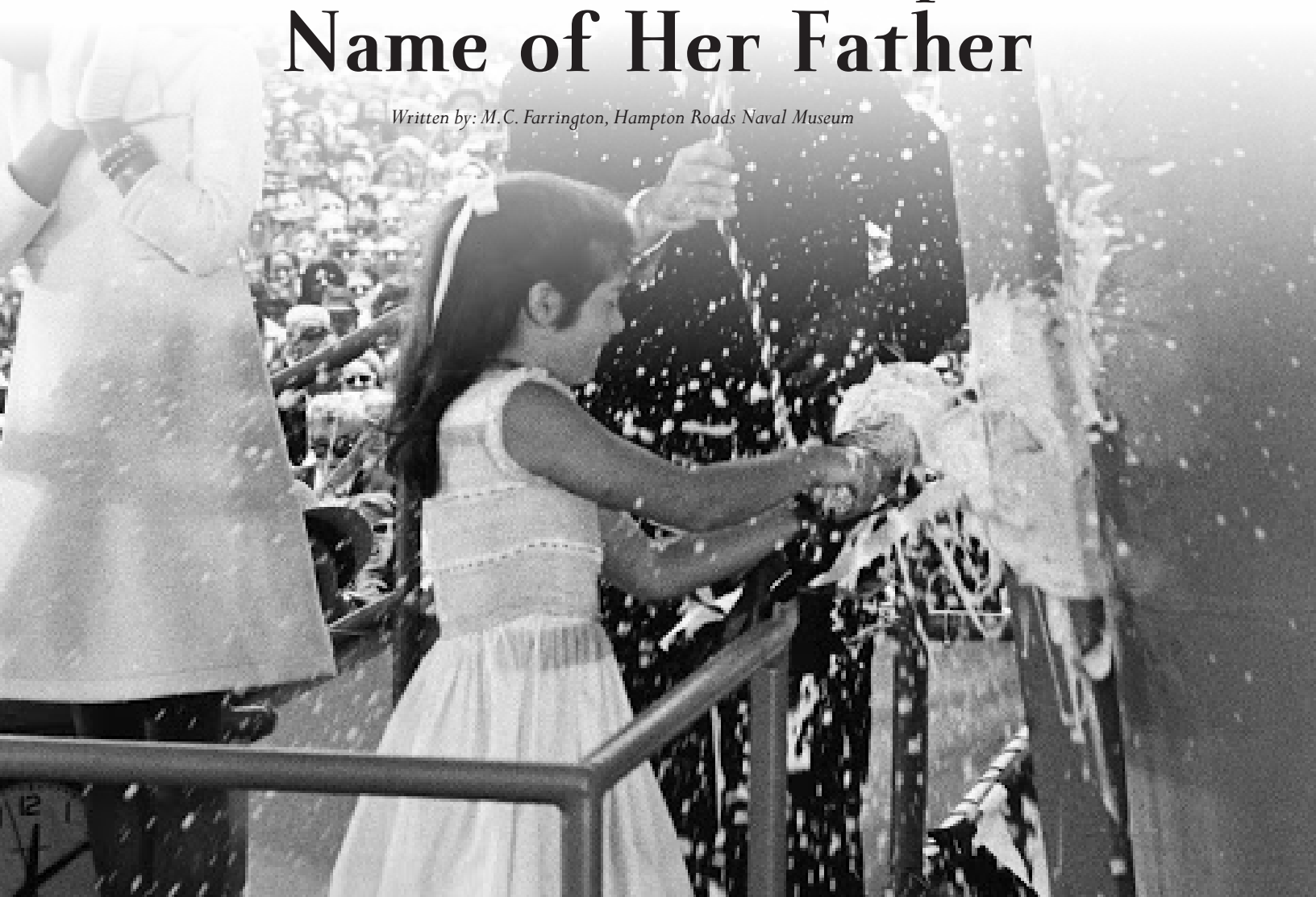
Sailors assigned to the Oak Hill observe as the Bataan conducts a replenishment-at-sea with the fleet replenishment oiler USNS Leroy Grumman (T-AO 195), Dec. 20, 2019. Photo by MC3 Griffin Kersting.

Lance Cpl. Luis Acosta Colon, assigned to combat cargo department aboard the New York, heave on a messenger line in the boat valley of the New York during a replenishment-at-sea, Dec. 20, 2019. Photo by MC2 Lyle Wilkie.



When Caroline Kennedy Last Christened a Ship in the Name of Her Father

Written by: M.C. Farrington, Hampton Roads Naval Museum



There have been a number of new aircraft carriers which bear the names of their predecessors. Names such as Yorktown (CV 5 & CV 10), Hornet (CV 8 & CV 12), Lexington (CV 2 & CV 16), Wasp (CV 7 & CV 18) and Enterprise (CV 6 & CVN 65). These were vessels named to commemorate great American victories or storied vessels of the past. As time has gone on, the names of presidents and other notable figures in naval history have been added to the list of new American flattops joining the fleet. However, no president's name has been carried forward from an old carrier to a new one until now.

On December 7, 2019, at Newport News Shipbuilding in Virginia, the United States Navy christened a new carrier with the name of a president from a previous carrier for the very first

time. Moreover, in what might be another first, the new carrier will be christened by the same person who christened the old one at the same shipyard over 52 years ago. The selection of nine-year-old Caroline Kennedy as the carrier's sponsor in May 1967 had as much to do with naval custom as it had to do with tragedy.

As a lieutenant junior grade during World War II, her father, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, fought bravely in the Pacific, sustaining serious injuries after the PT boat under his command was rammed by a Japanese destroyer in 1943. After his meteoric rise after the war as a congressman and, later, senator from the state of Massachusetts, he edged out Vice President (and fellow former naval officer), Richard Nixon for the presidency in November 1960. After a tumultuous tenure as president, during which he authorized naval

assets to secretly support Cuban exiles attempting to invade and overthrow the Communist government of Cuba, and later ordered a naval quarantine of the island, Kennedy was assassinated on November 22, 1963 in Dallas, leaving Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson (yet another former naval officer) as commander in chief.

Kennedy was unquestionably not afraid to put the Navy he led into harm's way, but he was also a strong advocate of the service. After Kennedy's death, President Johnson led the effort to name a modified Kitty Hawk-class carrier, authorized for construction during his predecessor's administration, for the fallen leader. The keel for USS John F. Kennedy (CVA 67) was laid on October 22, 1964.

As a matter of custom, as the carrier was nearing completion, a significant member of



Lieutenant John F. Kennedy, USNR, (standing, far right) with other crewmen onboard USS PT-109 at a South Pacific Naval Base, 1943.

President Kennedy's family would be invited to christen the vessel.

In February 1967, Secretary of the Navy Paul Nitze sent Jacqueline Kennedy an invitation to sponsor the new carrier. "Traditionally, a lady sponsors only one Navy ship; however, there have been exceptions to this custom," wrote Nitze. "Though you christened the Polaris submarine, USS Lafayette, I am sure that I express the sentiment of the entire Navy in urging you to christen the new carrier. Should you prefer, your daughter, Caroline, may be designated."

Indeed, Jacqueline Kennedy had christened USS Lafayette (SSBN 616) at General Dynamics Electric Boat shipyard in Groton, Connecticut, May 8, 1962. Less than two years later, however, her life, and the course of the nation's history, had been irrevocably changed by the assassination of her husband. That tragic change impacted the way she felt towards attending another such event.

In an early draft of the response Mrs. Kennedy sent Secretary Nitze, she wrote, "That type of thing [the christening], remembering my husband, is very difficult for me. "Nevertheless, she then assured Nitze that someone from President Kennedy's family would attend the christening.

Overcoming her grief, Mrs. Kennedy decided upon having her daughter Caroline sponsor the ship, and on the morning of May 27, 1967, she accompanied the little girl, her son John F. Kennedy Jr., and approximately 15 immediate family members, to the Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock company.

Caroline Kennedy was hardly the first in her family to christen a ship at the mammoth shipyard on the James River. Her paternal grandmother Rose Kennedy had sponsored the Cimarron-class fleet oiler SS Esso Richmond at Newport News Shipbuilding in September 1939 (which was commissioned USS Kaskaskia (AO 27) the following year). Her aunt Patricia Kennedy had sponsored the President Jackson-class attack transport President Polk (AP 103) in June 1941. Another aunt, Ethel Kennedy (wife of then-Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy) had sponsored the Ethan Allen-class ballistic missile submarine John Marshall (SSBN 611) in May 1961.

In a ceremony timed down to the second, three warning whistles were to sound; the first a siren scheduled for 12:25 pm, with a whistle 30 seconds afterward, and another 20 seconds later. With each siren or whistle blast, one of JFK's three initials would appear in lights on a giant board affixed to the bow. Caroline was scheduled to smash the bottle

against the bow precisely on the third whistle blast scheduled for 12:26.

"Caroline, 9, stood in front of the bow of the mammoth attack aircraft carrier John F. Kennedy like a left-handed little leaguer at home plate," wrote Virginian-Pilot reporter Shirley Bolinaga, who was among the throngs of local and national news media to cover the event.

"She held the bottle of Great Western champagne like a baseball bat and swung from the shoulder," wrote Bolinaga. "It hit with a clunk but it didn't break." After the bottle bounced off an angular rail affixed to the bow, Caroline tried again, striking home three seconds after the first attempt, sending bubbly in all directions, and sending the great ship into the James River.

"On the second try, the bottle, beribboned with red, white, and blue, shattered. Its bubbly contents splashed all over Caroline's aqua and white dress and red shoes, and splattered on her mother as Mrs. Jacqueline Kennedy clapped her gloved hands together in front of her face," wrote Bolinaga. "The mother and her children watched as the 61,450-ton ship was floated from Shipway 11 into the James River."

After her commissioning on September 7, 1968, USS John F. Kennedy, the Navy's last conventionally powered carrier, plunged headlong into the Cold War that dominated foreign policy during her namesake's administration, and those of the next four presidential administrations. Caroline Kennedy visited the ship at least once more during its active service, the first time when the carrier visited Boston in 1970.

The signing of the Paris Peace Accords in 1973

deprived Kennedy of a scheduled wartime deployment to Southeast Asia, and a place in the history of the Vietnam War. However, the carrier participated in exercises and operations through war and peace, the last being during Operation Iraqi Freedom, with frequent visits and yard periods in Hampton Roads in between, until her decommissioning in 2007.

Long after CV 67 was struck from the Naval Vessel Register in 2009, Caroline Kennedy was very much in active government service, having been appointed as ambassador to Japan by President Barack Obama, a post she held from 2013 to 2017.

Although, sadly, her mother Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, who died of cancer in 1994, and her brother John F. Kennedy Jr., who died while flying his plane to Martha's Vineyard in 1999, will not be there to witness it, Ambassador Caroline Kennedy will once again visit Hampton Roads and take her place in commissioning a vessel that will represent her family, her father, and the nation he led, far into the future.

The aircraft carrier is named after Caroline's father, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, the 35th president of the United States, who served in office from January 1961 to November 1963. This is the second U.S. aircraft carrier named for President Kennedy, with the former being the last conventionally powered carrier, CV-67, which served from 1968 to 2007.

"Christened by the hand of a child," said Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara in his remarks on the day of the original John F. Kennedy's commissioning over 52 years ago, "it will begin an odyssey whose final landfall we cannot clearly foretell."



Caroline Kennedy, sponsor of the Ford-class aircraft carrier USS John F. Kennedy (CVN 79), christens the ship on December 7, 2019.



Religious Freedom Aboard USS Bataan

Written by: Cpl. Nathan Reyes

U.S. Marines and Sailors aboard the amphibious assault ship USS Bataan (LHD 5) have the ability to practice a wide range of religious services while underway. Christian, Latter Day Saints, Jewish, Muslim, and Pagan programs are provided by the Chaplains and religious ministry teams while underway.

“We have various groups of people that get together on the Bataan to celebrate their faith,” said Lt. Cmdr. John Mabus, 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) Chaplain.

Each Marine and Sailor comes from their own unique background, but everyone is provided the opportunity to practice their faith.

“Every Marine and Sailor raised their right hand and said they will support and defend the constitution,” said Mabus. “We, in the religious ministry team, are making sure we support the right the constitution gives us to worship freely and practice our faith.”

Aboard the Bataan, it doesn’t matter if you practice your faith in a church, temple, synagogue or mosque; you’re welcomed.

“What is really cool is that even though we might be hundreds of miles from where we traditionally practice our religions, we are still able to get that same sense of community aboard the Bataan,” said Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Jackson Keeler, with the 26th MEU.

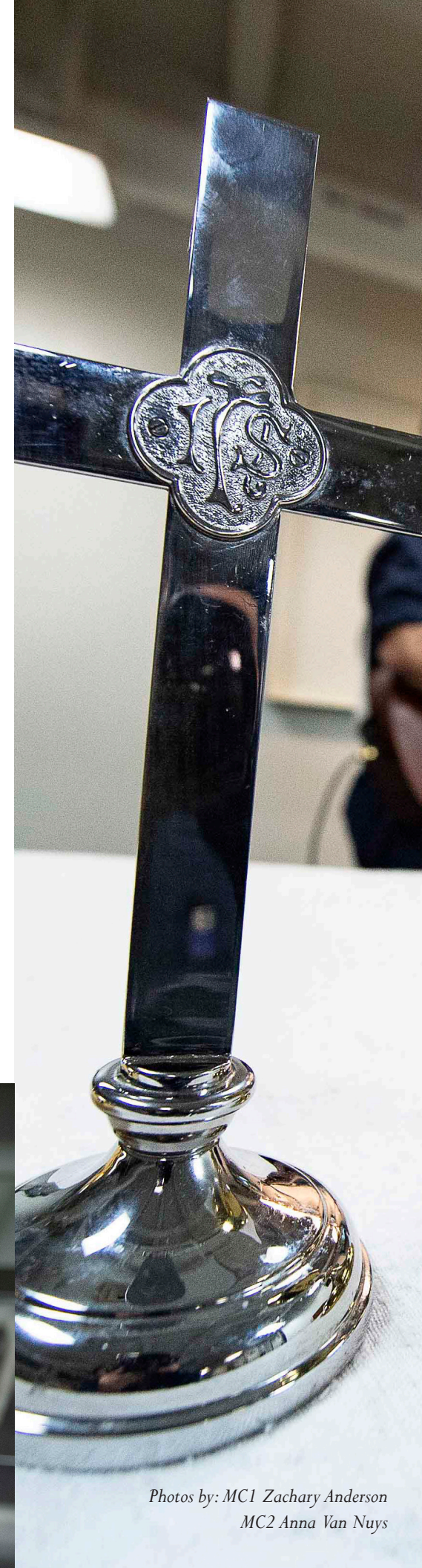
With the various schedules service members have, the chaplains and religious ministry teams go above and beyond to meet everyone’s spiritual needs.

“The Chaplains make sure every Marine and Sailor aboard the Bataan has the opportunity to practice their faith devoutly,” said Cpl. Justin Schamel, radio reconnaissance team member with the 26th MEU.

Life on a ship can be difficult, especially during the holiday season away from home. Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Kathryn Macdonald, with the Bataan, explains that spiritual services “give people an outlet and a chance to find inner peace and a break away from everyday life.”

Religious gatherings have the ability to offer a sense of comradery in unfamiliar places.

“Sometimes people feel isolated, alone, or disconnected and that impacts mission readiness,” said Mabus. “Religious services provides one opportunity for people to come out of isolation and find some support in the community.”



*Photos by: MC1 Zachary Anderson
MC2 Anna Van Nuys*



HOLIDAY CELEBRATION



Clockwise from top left:

Chief Gas Turbine System Technician (Electrical) Cassandra Hullender, assigned to Assault Craft Unit (ACU) 4, participates in a Christmas stocking decorating contest on the mess decks of the USS Bataan Dec. 21, 2019. Photo by MC2 Anna Van Nuys.

Sailors assigned to the Bataan, pose for a photo on the mess decks, Dec. 25, 2019. Photo by MC3 Alan Robertson.

Lance Cpl. Jovany Martinezdiaz, assigned to 26th MEU, sets down his gingerbread house for judging in a contest on the mess decks of the Bataan, Dec. 22, 2019. Photo by MC2 Anna Van Nuys.

Marines assigned to the 26th MEU sing Christmas songs during a Christmas Eve service aboard the Oak Hill, Dec. 24, 2019. Photo by MC3 Griffin Kersting.



Cmdr. Kathryn Wijnaldum, the executive officer of the Oak Hill, left, and Culinary Specialist 2nd Class Tristan Peters, right, also assigned to the Oak Hill, serve dessert during Christmas dinner aboard Oak Hill, Dec. 25, 2019. Photo by MC3 Griffin Kersting.

Capt. Pete Kennedy, commanding officer of the New York, right, and Cmdr. Daniel Hollingshead, executive officer of New York, left, judge a wreath-building contest on the mess decks aboard the New York, Dec. 25, 2019. Photo by MC2 Lyle Wilkie.



Brian Morgan, center, the Fun Boss assigned to the Bataan, watches Lt. j.g. Hunter Dodd, left, and Lance Cpl. Jovany Martinezdiaz, right, assigned to 26th MEU, compete in a Christmas gingerbread house contest on the ship's mess decks, Dec. 22, 2019. Photo by MC2 Anna Van Nuys.

Boatswain's Mate 2nd Class Savanna Fossler, assigned to the Bataan, participates in a Christmas stocking decorating contest on the ship's mess decks, Dec. 21, 2019. Photo by MC2 Anna Van Nuys.



Gun Shoot Qualification

Written by: MC3 Griffin Kersting

Sailors assigned to the amphibious dock landing ship USS Oak Hill (LSD 51) conducted a M9 handgun and .50-caliber machine gun qualification gun shoot on the flight deck and forecastle of the ship, Dec. 19, 2019.

Oak Hill Sailors conducted the gun shoot to qualify Sailors to stand watch and ensure the crew is ready to protect the ship in any scenario.

A qualification with a specific weapon allows a Sailor to stand different watches whether in port or out to sea.

“It’s important to qualify Sailors in different gun shoots to make sure that the ship is protected during any kind of situation,” said Gunner’s Mate 3rd Class Leandra Dominguez, a Sailor assigned to the Oak Hill. “We need to get Sailors familiar with the weapons that they haven’t had the chance to work with or fire before.”

Sailors are expected to man the .50-caliber machine guns during strait transits and man watches in port while carrying firearms.

“We need to be able to maintain a solid duty section rotation and these gun shoots help us do exactly that,” said Yeoman 2nd Class Calvin Moubrey, a Sailor assigned to the Oak Hill. “It also helps us combat anti-terrorism and maintain ship board readiness from all Sailors.”

Oak Hill is currently deployed as part of the Bataan Amphibious Ready Group (BATARG) in support of naval operations to maintain stability and security in order to ensure access, deter aggression and defend U.S., allied and partner interests. BATARG components include the Oak Hill, USS Bataan (LHD 5), USS New York (LPD 21), Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 28, the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) and the Blue Knights of Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron (VMM) 365.



Photos by: MC3 Griffin Kersting

Ceaseless Communications: New York Sailor Strives for Success

Written by: MC2 Lyle Wilkie

While most Sailors aboard the amphibious transport dock ship New York (LPD 21) are trying to start a deployment routine, Information System Technician Seaman Cole Anstice is helping the ship to keep in communications with the Bataan Amphibious Ready Group (ARG).

Anstice was picked as the Sailor of the week for setting up over 60 different communication circuits, as well as bring up three different high-frequency signals to provide New York with maximum underway communications while transiting across the Atlantic.

“I joined the Navy on March 27th, 2018,” said Anstice. “I joined because I felt that the military was something I personally had to do with my life, and at that time I felt the Navy was the best option for me.”

Anstice works onboard as a radio technician center operator, which makes him responsible for the upkeep, maintenance, and troubleshooting of over 40 line of sight and satellite communication circuits. He also works as the message center supervisor and oversees the verification and processing of over 100 daily messages that are either sent to or from the ship.

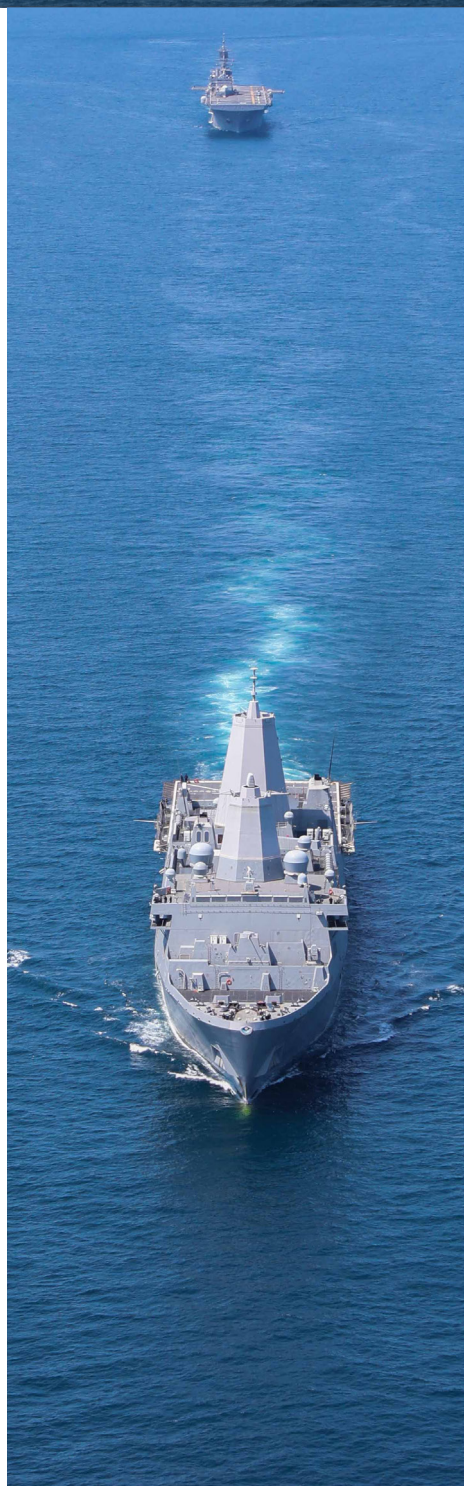
“He is truly a prime example of what every Sailor should emulate onboard USS New York,” said Information System Technician 1st Class Ermine Bulls, combat communications leading petty officer. “He is hard working, organized, and intelligent and shows great leadership potential. He is one of Combat Communication’s most reliable and technically sound technicians. He troubleshoots outages until they are resolved with enthusiasm and never complains.”

Being a junior Sailor does not stop him from diving in helping others more who are more senior to him.

“He is one of the most junior Sailors of the division, however, that doesn’t deter him from jumping right into troubleshooting and training others; traits you rarely see in junior Sailors,” said Chief Information System Technician Jason Graham, combat communications leading chief petty officer.

Anstice is planning on staying in the Navy until he retires.

“For my future in the Navy, I plan on making this life a career and doing at least 20 years, if not more,” said Anstice.



FOR MORE BATARG CONTENT



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OAK HILL

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ACUTE PAIN

A sudden sensation that alerts us to possible injury.



CHRONIC PAIN

Pain that persists—often for months or even longer.

VS



Everyone experiences and responds to pain differently. If you are experiencing pain, you and your provider can discuss and determine the best treatment plan for you.

CYBERSECURITY AND BEYOND

Protecting Your Shipmates by Protecting Yourself

Cybersecurity goes beyond individual human behavior. In fact, it takes multiple teams to defend cyberspace effectively. While cyber adversaries use more sophisticated technologies and methodologies to find their way into our networks, data breaches, phishing, and social engineering have become everyday occurrences.



BE AWARE OF YOUR CYBER FOOTPRINT

If an adversary could (re)create your dossier, using your profile information from various sites as well as your online behavior, what would it look like and how accurate would it be?

UNDERSTAND YOUR CYBER TERRAIN

Do you know all the entry points into your network, systems, or personal devices to include routers, ports, IoTs, and (public) Wi-Fi, and are they protected or secured



CHECK FOR WEEKLY UPDATES

Are you vigilant in checking vendor websites for up-to-date information on vulnerabilities and threats related to hardware (e.g. routers, firewalls), software (e.g. Microsoft, Red Hat), and applications (e.g. Outlook, web browsers) that you and your agency utilizes? And more importantly, do you implement the necessary updates?

CREATE A CYBERSECURITY CULTURE

Is cybersecurity part of your workspace culture beyond the annual cyber awareness required training? (Be honest!) Do your family members, including those with whom you may share password information or devices (e.g. children), fully understand how to protect your information and devices? Is cybersecurity an individual or a team effort at work or at home?



Cyber threats are real, and cyber warfare continues to evolve and become more complex and challenging. Personal responsibility in practicing good cyber hygiene is the first step in cybersecurity. However, we must move beyond the individual online behavior to a more collaborative and team effort in learning more about our adversaries, their tactics and methods so that the Navy and DoD can better defend against them.