



ABRAHAM LINCOLN CARRIER STRIKE GROUP PENNY PRESS

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Frocking Frenzy

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PACIFIC OCEAN — In an extraordinary display of recognition and achievement, 341 Sailors aboard the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72) were frocked to their next paygrade, Dec. 5. The ship was a hub of celebration as these deserving individuals embarked on the next chapter of their careers.

Capt. Pete Riebe, commanding officer of Abraham Lincoln, and Command Master Chief Robert Stumm, senior enlisted leader of Abraham Lincoln, both reflected on the significance of the abundance of promoted Sailors and their pride in their hard work and dedication.

“I’ve advanced as far as I can, so it makes me proud to see so many Sailors advance this cycle,” said Stumm. “Everything I do is for you guys and it’s impressive to see each of your smiling faces as you move up in ranks.”

Frocking ceremonies hold a special place in naval traditions and are a significant milestone in the career of any Sailor. The term ‘frock’ was coined from a frock coat, the early undress uniform for a lieutenant. When a midshipman was appointed to act in the capacity of a lieutenant, he would wear a frock coat.

As early as 1802, there has been documentation showing that Sailors assume the uniform and duties of the next higher ranking Sailors before getting the pay raise that comes with getting promoted. The position held was often temporary due to the necessity of higher ranks during the Civil War. In other instances, a Commander would need to fill a rank slot due to an unforeseen vacancy when there was no one of equal rank. In this case, a junior Sailor who was qualified for promotion would assume the uniform and duties pending approval by the naval department. Today, we carry forward the tradition of frocking with our enlisted ranks being frocked and having the authority and responsibility of the next highest paygrade until they are paid in that rank.

Onboard Abraham Lincoln the frocking ceremony served not only as a testament to the commitment and hard work exhibited by these outstanding Sailors, but as a tie to a cherished tradition.

“Words can’t begin to describe how happy I am to make 3rd Class,” said Aviation Boatswain’s Mate (Fuel) 3rd Class Kyle Whitmer. “I hope I can live up to the standard of excellence set by those before me. It’s an honor to join the ranks of my fellow petty officers.”

As they are adorned with their newly earned ranks, they stand as beacons of inspiration for their fellow shipmates, showcasing the Navy's unwavering commitment to excellence and career advancement.