



SEALIFT

THE U.S. NAVY'S MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND

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Rear Adm. Philip Sobeck, Commander, Military Sealift Command, and Gen. Jacqueline Van Ovost, Commander, U.S. Transportation Command, lay a wreath in the Elizabeth River during the 2024 National Maritime Day ceremony aboard the former battleship USS Wisconsin (BB-64), May 22. National Maritime Day honors the work and contributions of past merchant seaman who endured the perils of the sea during times of war and peace, and recognizes those who proudly carry on that tradition today. (U.S. Navy photo by Ryan Carter)

U.S. TRANSPORTATION COMMAND AND MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND CELEBRATE NATIONAL MARITIME DAY IN HAMPTON ROADS

By Hendrick Dickson, Military Sealift Command Public Affairs

The commanders of U.S. Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM) and Military Sealift Command (MSC) joined hundreds of maritime industry leaders, May 22, to celebrate National Maritime Day during a ceremony hosted by The Propeller Club, Port of Norfolk, aboard the former battleship USS Wisconsin (BB-64) in downtown Norfolk, Virginia.

National Maritime Day is a time-honored tradition that recognizes one of the country's most important industries. Each year, ceremonies and celebrations throughout the country recognize National Maritime Day and the people the maritime industry depends on.

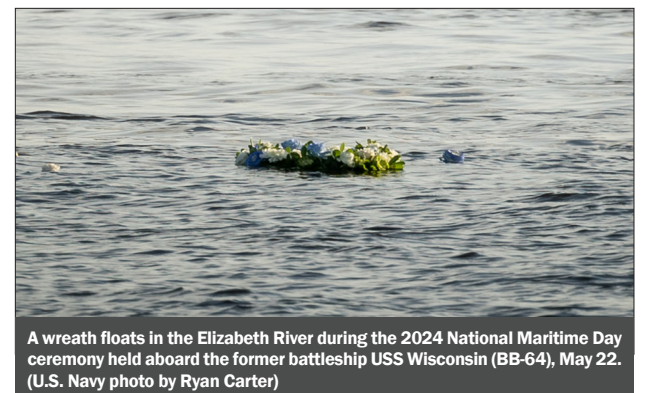
Presenting opening remarks, MSC Commander, Rear Adm. Philip Sobeck, paid tribute to the thousands of Merchant Mariners serving on vessels globally.

"Whether in peacetime or conflict, it is American merchant mariners who deliver essential goods to far-reaching corners of our globe," said Sobeck. "These seafarers bravely face threats to include combatants, pirates, disease outbreaks, and natural disasters yet they consistently heed the call to serve their fellow Americans. Today, and every day, we honor merchant mariners past and present."

This year marks the 75th anniversary of MSC. Sobeck took the opportunity to address how the partnership between the commercial and government maritime industry has been invaluable to command's longevity and success.

"MSC has been present during every major conflict since World War II, providing vital logistic and operational support to the warfighters on the front-line," said Sobeck. "Many of you and your companies share in this impressive legacy. I want to thank you for all you have done to support MSC, our Navy, and the defense of our nation over the past 75 years."

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A wreath floats in the Elizabeth River during the 2024 National Maritime Day ceremony held aboard the former battleship USS Wisconsin (BB-64), May 22. (U.S. Navy photo by Ryan Carter)

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The Tophatters Squadron, Naval Sea Cadets Corps presents the colors during the 2024 National Maritime Day ceremony, held aboard the former battleship USS Wisconsin (BB-64), May 22. (U.S. Navy photo by Ryan Carter)

2023 CULINARY WINNERS: FOUR MSC SHIPS WIN PRESTIGIOUS AWARD FOR THEIR TOP-NOTCH DISHES

By LaShawn Sykes, Military Sealift Command Atlantic Public Affairs



Pictured above are the 15 members who participated in the 2023 Captain David M. Cook Foodservice Excellence award ceremony. The participants were MSC representatives, Civil Service Mariners, made up of Captains, Chief Stewards, Cooks, and their spouses; and other members of MSC's food service teams. (U.S. Navy photo by Ryan Carter)

Military Sealift Command (MSC) provides healthy options at each meal. It is a style of eating that usually takes place in expensive restaurants, where patrons experience excellent nutritional food choices, along with quality service. While healthy meals are served, typically in high-end, expensive Michelin-star restaurants, they are also provided aboard some of MSC's finest vessels.

Recently, four MSC ships received the 2023 Captain David M. Cook Foodservice Excellence Award for their healthy meal options that offers multiple entrée choices, side dishes, and delicious desserts. The winners were honored at the National Restaurant Association Education Foundation's (NRAEF) annual Military Foodservice Awards dinner and ceremony, held at the Hilton Palmer House Hotel in Chicago, May 17.

Each year, the NRAEF honors both individuals and teams from all branches of the U.S. Armed Forces and MSC's Foodservice Civil Service Mariners (CIVMARs). NRAEF recognizes awardees for their commitment to foodservice excellence in management effectiveness, force readiness support, food quality, customer relations, resource conservation, training, and safety awareness.

MSC's Captain David M. Cook Foodservice Excellence Award recognizes the best of the best in four categories: winning in the Medium Afloat category was fleet replenishment oiler USNS Joshua Humphreys

four times in the Hybrid category in 2016, 2020, 2022, and 2023.

"With more than twelve entries submitted MSC ships were judged on the techniques used to create healthy options and how those choices were incorporated into menu cycles," said Food Service Operations Manager Jerry Holley.

Representing each ship at the awards ceremony were MSC representatives, CIVMARs, made up of Captains, Chief Stewards, Cooks, along with their spouses, and other members of MSC's food service teams. Capt. Patrick T. Christian, master of USNS Joshua Humphreys, accepted the award on behalf of his vessel, stating that he was not surprised by his ship's third win in a row. "It is a testament to the Joshua Humphreys culinary teams' skill, professionalism, and dedication to the ship's crew and MSC, as a whole."

The Captain David M. Cook Food Service Award honors MSC's former director of logistics, Capt. David M. Cook. While serving as MSC's director of Logistics from 1995 until 1998, he was instrumental in enhancing every aspect of food service operations at MSC, from training for food service staff to nutrition education for ship crews.

Winning the Captain David M. Cook Foodservice Award is a prestigious honor that exemplifies excellence year-

(T-AO 188). Dry cargo and ammunition ship USNS William McLean (T-AKE 12) won in Large Afloat, rescue and salvage ship USNS Grasp (T-ARS 51) won in Small Afloat, and USS Mount Whitney (LCC 20) won in Hybrid Afloat. While McLean is a first-time winner, Grasp took the honor four times in 2008, 2009, 2022, and 2023. Humphreys has won the last three consecutive years, in 2021, 2022, and 2023. Mount Whitney has won

round with a steadfast dedication and commitment to outstanding customer service, said MSC Food Service Director Roberta Jio stated, "Winning the award feels like winning the Super Bowl. This requires excellence from all of the food service team members in the execution of meal preparation and service on a daily basis in order to get to the big game and win it all."

There is another component to serving healthy meal options aboard MSC ships, Holley said. "Because CIVMARs are the most essential ingredient to MSC operations, serving healthy meal options helps to maintain their well-being, which helps to manage their stressors, mental alertness, and cognitive performance – all of which are essential components to mission readiness, especially when CIVMARs are at sea supporting the Navy's warfighting ships."

The MSC 35-Day Cycle Menu, with healthy options, deployed to all 58 MSC Government Owned-Government Operated ships in 2024, Jio said. The cycle menu includes a variety of healthy, reduced fat foods that help CIVMARS lower their cholesterol levels, promote weight loss, and improve overall cardiovascular health." The cycle menu is reviewed and revised on an annual basis.

Additionally, MSC has its very own culinary career program, Jio said. "The program provides culinary training to CIVMARs from Introduction to Food Service, Basic Culinary, Advanced Culinary, Baking Techniques, along with a Food Service Management course. MSC CIVMARs are required to successfully pass targeted courses, depending on their current position, to move up to greater responsibilities. Because MSC only operates ships, we can standardize our training to target afloat junior and senior positions. We also provide firsthand shipboard food production training to individual ships by certified executive chefs."

This year marks MSC's 75th anniversary. Its workforce includes approximately 6,000 CIVMARs and 1,100 contract mariners, supported by 1,500 shore staff and 1,400 active duty and reserve military personnel.

MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND TAKES DELIVERY OF NEWEST FLEET REPLENISHMENT OILER USNS EARL WARREN (T-AO 207)

By Sarah Cannon, Military Sealift Command Pacific Public Affairs



From left to right, Cmdr. Mark Ewachiw, Supervisor of Shipbuilding, Bath - San Diego Detachment, Officer-in-Charge; Lt. Elliot Collins, Project Officer; Lt. Allison Adamos, Project Officer; and Lt. Cmdr. René Martin, T-AO Program Manager Representative attend the USNS Earl Warren (T-AO 207) delivery ceremony, in San Diego, California, May 7. (U.S. Navy courtesy photo)

Military Sealift Command took delivery of its newest fleet replenishment oiler, USNS Earl Warren (T-AO 207) from shipbuilder General Dynamics NASSCO in San Diego, May 7.

The 746-foot Earl Warren is the third ship in the 20-ship John Lewis-class, previously known as the TAO(X). Following more testing and trials, the ship will be crewed and sailed by MSC, providing logistics support to Navy ships at sea. John Lewis-class oilers, such as Earl Warren, will replace the current Henry J. Kaiser-class fleet replenishment oilers as they age out of the fleet.

The ship honors Earl Warren, an American attorney, politician, and jurist who served as the 14th Chief Justice of the United States from 1953 to 1969. Warren wrote the majority opinions in landmark civil rights cases such as Brown v. Board

of Education, Reynolds v. Sims, Miranda v. Arizona and Loving v. Virginia. Warren also led the Warren Commission, a presidential commission that investigated the 1963 assassination of President John F. Kennedy. In addition, Warren also served as Governor of California from 1943 to 1953, and is the last chief justice to have served in an elected office before nomination to the Supreme Court. Warren is considered to be one of the most influential Supreme Court justices and political leaders in the history of the United States.

The John Lewis-class honors prominent civil rights leaders and activists. Several more John Lewis-class oilers are currently being built by General Dynamics NASSCO including USNS Robert F. Kennedy (T-AO 208), USNS Lucy Stone (T-AO 209), USNS Sojourner Truth (T-AO 210), USNS Thurgood Marshall (T-AO 211), USNS Ruth Bader Ginsburg (T-AO 212) and USNS Harriet Tubman (T-AO 213).



USNS Earl Warren (T-AO 207) during a testing event. The Navy accepted delivery of the new fleet replenishment oiler, May 7, following successful completion of Integrated Sea Trials. (U.S. Navy courtesy photo)

USNS YUKON CREW VISITS, SWIMS WITH THAI ELEPHANTS

By Grady Fontana, Military Sealift Command Far East Public Affairs



The crew from fleet replenishment oiler USNS Yukon (T-AO 202), Military Sealift Command Far East, and Navy League Siam Council in Pattaya, scrub an elephant at the Pattaya Elephant Sanctuary, in Sattahip, during a community outreach event, May 17. (U.S. Navy photo by Grady T. Fontana)

In a lush jungle setting at Sattahip, Thailand, about 20 miles south of Pattaya, lies a 1,000-acre field, complete with a mountain, where three elephants roam free within, just as nature intended.

Civil Service Mariners (CIVMAR) assigned to the fleet replenishment oiler USNS Yukon (T-AO 202), and Military Sealift Command Far East, in an act of goodwill and a thirst for Thai culture and education, roamed, as well, and visited the Pattaya Elephant Sanctuary to help lay a foundation that will be a source of food for these elephants; and to feed and play with the large residents.

CIVMAR Eryk Michalowski, a 3rd Mate on USNS Yukon, is on his first trip to Thailand, and second year working with MSC. He previously served aboard the hospital ship USNS Comfort (T-AH 20) during Continuing Promise 2022.

“I initially had no idea what we were going to do at the sanctuary, but I wanted to see the countryside, and to see how different it is here,” said Michalowski. “It was exciting to see these elephants. They’ll enjoy a healthier lifestyle as part of the Pattaya Elephant Sanctuary, where they are free to roam, and given food and medical care, if needed.”

During pre-industrial Thailand, elephants were used in logging and agriculture due to their strength and ability to work in forested areas where machinery could not easily operate, according to Chadchaya Chaicharn, volunteer caretaker and trainer at Pattaya Elephant Sanctuary.

As a working animal, elephants were often exposed to harsh environments, exerting long days doing strenuous labor.

Today, elephants are a major draw for tourists, and many sanctuaries and conservation projects exist in Thailand to protect and care for elephants.

At the Pattaya sanctuary, the elephants are not ridden, or made to perform hard labor. They are free to play and roam; however, feeding these large mammals is a daily challenge for the volunteers.

“Every day we are busy gathering enough food to feed the elephants,” said Chaicharn, who has been volunteering at the sanctuary for about five years. “Each elephant eats about 400 kilograms (882 lbs.) a day. If we can’t grow the food, we have to purchase it, which is expensive.”

During the community outreach event, the CIVMARs tilled a muddy portion of the land and planted vegetation that will be served as elephant food. Once this vegetation matures, in about three months, it will provide a reliable source of food and will continue to grow, even after it’s harvested.

The CIVMARs also donated about thirty watermelons, and a few large bags of squash and freshly cut vegetation that was fed to the elephants.

After about three hours of tilling and planting, the CIVMARs experienced hand-feeding the elephants, and swimming in a pond with them.

In Thailand, the elephant is a national symbol and has been featured on the Thai flag and currency. The animal represents the nation’s identity and pride.

Renu is the owner of the Pattaya Elephant Sanctuary, which she opened six years ago. The center cares for three elephants, with a fourth one arriving in about a month.

These elephants were either purchased from abusive owners, or given to the sanctuary by those who can no longer care for their elephant.

“I love elephants too much,” said Renu. “My father had an elephant that I used to walk from my home to the market every day, sometimes 100 km. (62 miles) a day. We walked in the street to transport fruits and sugar canes.”

According to Renu, one day, about 30 years ago, she saw her elephant cry from walking on the hot road, and she felt very bad. That evening, she saw a news program about the first elephant sanctuary opening up in Thailand. That report has always stayed with her, until the day she started her own sanctuary.

Outreach events like the visit by USNS Yukon help raise awareness about the sanctuary and elephants’ plight, and the importance of conservation efforts.



A Civil Service Mariner assigned to the fleet replenishment oiler USNS Yukon (T-AO 202), feeds an elephant at the Pattaya Elephant Sanctuary, in Sattahip, Thailand, during a community outreach event, May 17. (U.S. Navy photo by Grady T. Fontana)

MSCHQ MORALE WELFARE AND RECREATION TEAM GEARING UP FOR UPCOMING EVENTS

By Hendrick Dickson, Military Sealift Command Public Affairs

The Military Sealift Command (Headquarters) Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) committee is planning several exciting events throughout 2024 to promote teamwork and togetherness while celebrating MSC’s 75th Anniversary.

“Our goal is to build camaraderie between our civilian staff and military members here at MSC,” said Lt. Hanna Lee, MWR Team Member. “We have several events coming up throughout the year to give our people the opportunity to get to know each other outside of work and celebrate our 75th Anniversary.”

Recently, during an event to honor the 75th Anniversary, the MWR hosted a free screening of the 2020 film Greyhound starring Tom Hanks at Gator Theater on Joint Expeditionary Base-Little Creek giving staff and active-duty members the opportunity to reflect on the history and vital mission of MSC.

Based on the 1955 novel The Good Shepherd, Greyhound follows a U.S. Navy commander on his first assignment commanding a multi-national escort destroyer group of four, defending an Allied convoy consisting of 37 merchant and troop ships

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CIVMAR AND INFLUENCER EXPLAINS MERCHANT MARINER LIFE AT-SEA THROUGH VIRAL PLATFORM

By Grady Fontana, Military Sealift Command Far East Public Affairs

Vanessa Mongiovi is an influencer on the social media platform TikTok and has garnered almost 50,000 followers with more than 418,000 likes, as of May 30. Her biography teases visitors to ‘follow me if you are interested in being a Merchant Mariner.’

She is well qualified to give advice to would-be applicants and those with mild curiosities. In her professional life, she is a Civil Service Mariner, or CIVMAR, for Military Sealift Command.

A CIVMAR is a Federal government employee who pursues a civil service, Navy career while assigned aboard U.S. government-owned ships that support the Navy’s warfighters and warfighting platforms around the world.

Since CIVMARs account for approximately 80 percent of MSC’s workforce, CIVMARs’ service is the backbone of MSC’s mission and they play a vital role in the Navy’s ability to operate forward every day.

Mongiovi, a Yeoman Storekeeper, from Williamsburg, Virginia, is assigned to Lewis and Clark-class dry cargo ship USNS William McLean (T-AKE 12).

On her social media channel, behind her friendly demeanor and conversational tone, she tackles various topics of interest to prospective applicants, or those with propensity to become a Merchant Marine: ‘A Day at Work as a Merchant Mariner’ (1,800,000 views); ‘How is the Pay?’ (1,300,000 views); and ‘Cleaning My Stateroom Time’ (2,400,000 views).

Those are just a few examples of how she gives her visitors a sample of what it’s like to be a CIVMAR for MSC.

Her reach is not just pointed at the prospective applicants. She also addresses hot-topic items for new hires on how to navigate the administrative processes within MSC.

According to Mongiovi, one of the reasons she started the Merchant Mariner content was to create visibility on the everyday life of being a Mariner; and how they contribute to the Navy’s readiness.

“After six years of experience, I truly believe that Merchant Mariners do not receive enough recognition for what they do,” said Mongiovi. “I wanted to spread knowledge and shine the light on all that we do on a daily basis in order to supply the Navy at-sea with cargo, food, fuel, mail, and everything else.”

She started her career as a Supply Utilityman in 2018 on the Blue Ridge-class command and control ship USS Mount Whitney (LCC 20), for 10 months. She then moved on to fast combat support ship USNS Arctic (T-AOE 8) for six months, back in 2019, before settling aboard USNS William McLean, and has been there since.

She remained a Supply Utilityman until 2021 and moved to the logistic side of the Supply Department. She then became an Assistant Storekeeper until June 2023, when she became a Yeoman Storekeeper.

In the six years, MSC has taken her to many countries and cities: Dubai, Bahrain, Spain, Scotland, Germany, Djibouti, Oman, Greece, Italy, Israel, Gabon, Senegal, Portugal, France, Croatia, Lithuania, Norway, Portland, Plymouth, London, Poland, and Canada.

“If you go to the right ports, it can feel like a vacation that never ends and one that you get paid for while traveling,” said Mongiovi. “The reason I took this job was because I got to travel the world, and the money came along with it.”

Mongiovi is originally from Carini, a town in Sicily, Italy. She, along with her family, immigrated to Williamsburg, in 1999. At nine years-old, she had to adapt to a new environment that included a new school in a new country. She started in fourth grade and only knew a few words in English.

By 2015, she would earn an Associates Degree from Thomas Nelson Community College in Hampton, Virginia.

The past six years have presented Mongiovi was lasting memories, but the best experience she credits as a Mariner was returning home to her childhood town when her ship made a stop in Sicily, and she was able to visit Carini, after being away for more than 25 years.



“I can’t begin to describe the emotions I felt leading up to seeing my family, my hometown, the house I grew up in, the church I used to go to, the school I used to go to, and my grandparents’ house,” said Mongiovi. “It was bitter-sweet. I finally made it back; however, my grandparents weren’t there to see me. They both passed away years ago. Going back home has been on my bucket list for many years and with MSC I was finally able to realize it.”

The launch of Mongiovi’s career started as a mere curiosity. She always wanted a traveling job but wasn’t sure where to start, or what that occupation would entail. She thought about joining the military but didn’t like the concept of having to commit to a four-year contract.

Fortunately, Mongiovi had a family member who was a Merchant Mariner. She would often listen to his stories of the job, travel and adventure.

“Back in 2016 my niece’s dad was a Merchant Mariner, and every time he came home I got a little more curious to what his job was about,” said Mongiovi. “He was the only person I knew with that type of job. I always wanted to travel and so I would ask him about it.”

Mongiovi knew that she wanted to take a shot at being a Merchant Mariner. However, she had to fight through some stereotypes and perceptions regarding the occupation.

She thought there were predominantly men in the workforce, and everyone would be much older than she was. She thought she would be home sick, she was afraid of the ocean, or she wasn’t going to like any of the jobs that would be offered to her because she wasn’t good enough.

“I was afraid to leave my comfort zone and of everything that I thought this job was going to be,” said Mongiovi. “However, it was the complete opposite, in a positive way, and the job turned out to be all I wanted, and more.”

Now, through her social media channels, Mongiovi hopes to educate those who have some apprehensions or uncertainty. She wants to share awareness about Merchant Mariners and how anyone can join regardless of age as long as they are fit to do the job.

According to Mongiovi, her TikTok channel went from 1,000 follower, Jan. 16, 2024, to 39,000 in a month and a-half after she uploaded a video titled ‘A day at work as a Merchant Mariner’. The viral numbers are indicative of a genuine interest in the seafaring occupation.

“What drives me the most is being able to give people what I didn’t have coming into this job,” said Mongiovi. “I came into it with no knowledge on what a Merchant Mariner really was. It scared me to even come into this field not knowing what it was and what it entailed. It took me two to three years to finally convince myself to go for it.

“For example, a lot of people, including myself, wrongly believed that you had to have been in the military to have this job. I wanted to clear things up and give anyone who was willing to listen to me an opportunity to learn about the Merchant Marines and possibly joining and making a career out of it. I am willing to help anyone who is willing to listen,” she said.

Mongiovi, who goes by Nessa@vmon420 on TikTok, believes that social media is a great tool for reaching the masses and perfectly fits her personality because she is open to being vulnerable and transparent; and people can relate to her. The proof is in the hundreds of comments from people who thanked her and credited her for the inspiration that nudged them to join the merchant marines.

“I honestly do not want the ‘fear of the unknown’ surrounding this job to discourage anyone from taking a chance on this opportunity,” said Nessa. “Therefore, that’s why my content plays a part on shining the light on what we actually do.”

SHIP MASTER DROPS POUNDS, BEGINS 1ST KETO PROGRAM ABOARD AN MSC SHIP

By LaShawn Sykes, Military Sealift Command Atlantic Public Affairs



Capt. Patrick T. Christian, Ship's Master of Military Sealift Command's fleet replenishment oiler USNS Joshua Humphreys (T-AO 188) lost 62 pounds, in four months, on KETO diet. After his weight loss success, he developed a KETO program aboard the vessel to support the health and wellness of his crew. (U.S. Navy courtesy photo)

Are you like so many men and women in the world looking for the secret to weight loss? Well, join the club.

“Losing weight and keeping it off is no easy feat and requires a few lifestyle changes that include eating a healthy well-balanced diet and participating in regular physical activities; all of which is easier said than done,” said Capt. Patrick T. Christian, Ship’s Master of Military Sealift Command’s (MSC) fleet replenishment oiler USNS Joshua Humphreys (T-AO 188). “It is indeed challenging to remain consistent in any diet plan because food cravings, mood swings, hormonal imbalances, stress, and fatigue are inevitable and often sabotage one’s efforts.”

Having tried a great number of unsuccessful fad diets in years past, Christian said, he understood all too well the difficulties of losing weight and keeping it off. Not wanting to give up on his own weight loss journey, in November 2023, after struggling with his weight for several years, the 60-year-old decided to try his hand at a different program called KETO, also known as the Ketogenic Diet; used first in the 19th century to control diabetes. Christian regretfully admitted that he had been on and off KETO for the last two years but was now all-in.

His new KETO diet was a strict one that consisted of a sugar-free, low-carbohydrate, high protein eating plan. A plan that would not be easy to endure unless he made a conscious decision to make a shift, he said, in his mindset to eat only for health and not to satisfy his taste buds – not just to lose weight but also to regain his health back, which was plagued with both high blood pressure and high cholesterol.

“I basically, eat meat, vegetables and a small amount of fruit. While fruit contains both fructose and glucose, it also contains fiber, which outweighs the negative effects the natural sugars in fruit would presumably bring about,” he said.

Over the next four months, he stayed the course, and began seeing some remarkable changes, in both his physical appearance and his medical health, which has had a positive impact on his mental well-being. In just 121 days, his strong six-foot-four-inch frame went from 322-pounds down to a much slender weight of 260, just 20-pounds shy of his ideal weight of 240-pounds.

Christian’s 62-pound weight loss came with several unexpected health benefits, he said. First, with his blood sugar levels are now regulated, he is now off all medications – blood pressure, cholesterol, acid reflux, allergy, gout, and skin medications. His cholesterol level today is 116; before KETO, it was 300.

Second, because he daily consumed more healthy fats, his mental concentration and focus improved immensely.

“Today, I have more energy and stamina than I’ve had since COVID-19,” he stated.

In order to maintain his significant weight loss, he walks a minimum of 10,000 steps a day; in rain or shine.

“I have not missed achieving this goal one single day,” Christian stated. “While the journey hasn’t been easy, I could not be prouder of my weight loss success.”

In addition, he said, it is vital to stay hydrated, as it has “helped to keep me regular, my core temperature normal, my joints lubricated, which means I have less aches and pains, and my skin now maintains its natural glow.”

First KETO Program Aboard an MSC Ship

These remarkable health changes in his own life gave Christian a great idea to begin the first KETO Program aboard an MSC ship; USNS Joshua Humphreys. The motivating factor to start the program, in Dec. 2023, was the health and welfare of his Civil Service Mariners (CIVMARS), he said. “As a general rule, MSC is a workforce that has an aged demographic. In order to maintain shipboard employment, we must remain physically fit. Following a KETO diet and incorporating an exercise routine would help my CIVMARS stay fit and thusly remain in the maritime industry. Working in a shipboard environment is physically difficult and demanding; so, it is imperative that mariners maintain a reasonable weight and level of physical fitness to be productive in their capacity aboard the ship.”

Cook-Baker Glenda Harris has played a huge role in starting the KETO Program aboard USNS Joshua Humphreys. She was so excited about the new program

that she took it upon herself, with no prompting from Christian, to purchase KETO recipe books and then applied her many years of culinary experience to create magical, tasty meals.

“The meals Glenda produces are absolutely delicious and 100% KETO. You really do not feel like you are missing what you used to view as a traditional diet. Some of my favorites are: Almond Flower Biscuits and KETO Gravy, Scallops and Shrimp atop Cauliflower Rice, Beef and KETO Mushroom Gravy atop Mashed Cauliflower, Chicken atop Cauliflower Rice, Slow-cooked Beans; and the culinary list goes on and on,” Christian said.

Seeing the countless improvements in Christian’s health, Harris said, she was thrilled to be responsible for creating the hearty low carb meals for Christian and the crew. Despite having never eaten a KETO meal nor prepared one, she was happy to be a part of the first KETO program aboard an MSC ship.

She said. “I’ve never tried KETO but I know it works because I can visibly see Christian’s success, and it is wonderful to behold.”

Additionally, in an effort to raise diet and exercise awareness among the ship’s crew, Joshua Humphreys has recently begun collaborating with MSC’s Health Promotion Coordinators Ms. Stephanie Rusnak and Meghan Sullivan and MSC’s Chief Workforce Development Officer Ms. Lea Barbour. After enjoying one of Harris’s mouth-watering KETO meals, the group decided that Joshua Humphreys is the right ship to be a part of MSC’s new pilot program; one that encourages health and awareness among the CIVMAR crews, according to Christian.

In the very near future, MSC will outfit the vessel with its very own, ‘In Body,’ an advanced smart body composition machine that analyzes one’s fitness level. The ship’s Medical Services Officer (MSO) will be responsible for maintaining the machine and assisting the Mariners when using it.

“I am sure the new equipment will not only encourage more mariners to exercise but will also make a positive contribution to crew moral. Mariners, who are light on their feet and observe a good exercise regimen, tend to be employees that are more productive. The command making these aforementioned tools available, along with diet consultation is a win for both the individual CIVMARS and the MSC organization as a whole,” Christian stated.

Are you still interested in the secret to weight loss? Eating a high protein, low-carbohydrate diet with vegetables and fruits for fiber, drinking plenty of water, and adding exercise to your daily regimen can have a profound effect on you reaching your weight loss goals.

NETHERLANDS, U.S. NAVAL FORCES CONDUCT SOUTH CHINA SEA OPERATIONS

By Lt.j.g. Rebecca Moore, Command Destroyer Squadron 7



A view of the Royal Navy frigate HNLMS Tromp (F803) (foreground), USS Mobile (LSC 26) (left) and USNS Wally Schirra (T-AKE 8) at sea in the South China Sea, May 22. (U.S. Navy courtesy photo)

The Netherlands and United States’ Navies conducted bilateral operations in the South China Sea, May 22.

Participants included U.S. Navy Independence-variant littoral combat ship USS Mobile (LCS 26), Lewis and Clark-class dry cargo ammunition ship USNS Wally Schirra (T-AKE 8) and Royal Netherlands Navy De Zeven Provinciën-class frigate HNLMS Tromp (F803).

“The Netherlands is one of our oldest, continuous bilateral relationships, stemming from the 18th century. I look forward to any opportunity to work together with partners and allies, especially at sea,” said Capt. Sean Lewis, Commodore, Destroyer Squadron 7. “We share a deep commitment to maintaining stability and free use of vital sea lanes in the Indo-Pacific.”

The bilateral operation provided a valuable opportunity to improve allied interoperability and conduct complex scenarios to improve combined readiness.

“We’re fortunate to work together with allies and to have them provide replenishment to us. Operating together fortifies our existing relationship with our partners from the U.S.,” said Cmdr. Yvonne van Beusekom, Commanding Officer HNLMS Tromp. “We look to continue coordination between our nations to promote regional peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region.”

APPLICATION OF ETHICS RULES WITH REGARD TO POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

From Military Sealift Command Office of Counsel

With the upcoming presidential election cycle ramping up, it is a good time to review which political activities are permitted or prohibited for Federal employees, both in uniform and in the civil service. All Department of Defense (DOD) personnel – military and civilian – must be aware of the limitations that affect their participation in political activity.

While all personnel are encouraged to carry out the obligations of citizenship, they must be mindful of the long-standing tradition that the DOD remain apolitical.

The Hatch Act, 5 U.S.C. § 7321 et. sec., provides the governing law for Political Activities by Federal employees. Permissible activities are dictated by employment position. For purposes of the Hatch Act, political activity is defined as “an activity directed toward the success or failure of a political party, candidate for partisan political office or partisan political group.”

Because the application of the rules varies depending on an employee’s position or office, it is extremely important that employees who are engaging in political activity know which rules apply.

Please note an important update as of May 20, 2024. The Office of Special Counsel (OSC) issued an advisory opinion indicating that are withdrawing the distinction “between items supporting a political candidate worn or displayed on duty before Election Day versus the same items being worn or displayed after Election Day.”

This is a significant change as OSC previously interpreted the Hatch Act to only prohibit these items in the workplace before Election Day. Additionally, the Hatch Act does not prohibit enforcement actions against “individuals who engaged in material misconduct while a federal employee but who have since left government service.” As noted in this advisory opinion, OSC now intends to bring enforcement actions against former employees in appropriate cases.

General Rules

1. Civilian Employees. The political activity of DOD civilians is regulated by the Hatch Act (5 U.S.C. §§ 7321 – 7326), implementing regulations (5 CFR 733 and 5 CFR 734), and DOD policy.

There are two sets of restrictions for two groups of civilian employees.

The first more restrictive rules apply to individuals appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate, individuals serving in Senior Executive Service (SES) positions, and contract appeals board members.

The second and less restrictive set of rules apply to all other civilian employees. Employees in the first group may not take an active part in partisan political management or political campaigns and are referred to as “further restricted” employees.

Further restricted employees are expressly prohibited from participating in political activity. Specifically, further restricted employees are prohibited from engaging in any political activity which is “in concert” with a political party, partisan political group, or candidate for partisan political office.

“In concert” activity is any activity that is sponsored or supported by a political party, partisan political group, or candidate for partisan political office.

Prohibited activities also include soliciting, accepting, or receiving campaign or other political contributions. Further restricted employees may, however, express their personal opinions, make monetary contributions to a campaign, and attend, but not actively participate in, campaign events or fundraising functions sponsored by candidates for partisan political office or parties.

Less restricted employees, while in their personal capacities, may volunteer with a political campaign or political organization. Examples of permitted volunteer activities include organizing political rallies and meetings, making phone calls on behalf of a candidate, serving as a delegate to a party convention, and working for a political party to get out the vote. However, these employees are still prohibited from soliciting, accepting, or receiving political contributions.

Regardless of whether a civilian employee is further restricted or less restricted, a Federal employee may never engage in political activity while on-duty or in a federal building.

Specifically, an employee may not send or forward political emails, post political messages to social media, such as a Facebook account or political “tweeting” while in a Federal building (including when off-duty), even if the employee is using their personal smartphone, tablet, or computer. Employees may never use government equipment to engage in political activities.

In addition, 5 U.S.C. § 7324 prohibits Federal employees from engaging in political activity while on duty. Employees are “on duty” when they are in a pay status, other than paid leave.



Thus, employees are on duty for purposes of the Hatch Act even when they are teleworking from home or another location.

This prohibition is broad and encompasses more than displays or communications (including in-person and via email or social media) that expressly advocate for or against any candidate.

For example, while on duty or in the workplace, employees may not: wear, display, or distribute items with campaign slogans, including from the 2020 Biden/Harris or Trump/Pence campaigns or any other of President Biden’s or Former President Trump’s past campaigns, or with phrases such as, “Let’s Go Brandon” “Make America Great Again”; or use hashtags such as #IStandWithBiden, #BidenDisaster, #DumpTrump, or #lets gobrandon in social media posts or other forums.

In addition, employees generally may not wear or display items with the image of any candidate, unless it is an official or personal photograph.

However, because the incumbent President is the head of the executive branch throughout his or her candidacy for reelection, official photographs of the incumbent may be displayed in the federal workplace, including in both public and employee workspaces.

Official photographs include the traditional portrait photograph displayed in Federal buildings when obtained from an official source, such as the U.S. Government Publishing Office or the White House (i.e., not clipped from magazines or newspapers).

Official photographs also include those photographs that agencies display of the President conducting official business.

2. Military Service Members. The primary guidance concerning political activity for military members is found in DoDD 1344.10. Per longstanding DOD policy, Active Duty personnel may not engage in partisan political activities or campaign for a partisan candidate, engage in partisan fundraising activities, serve as an officer of a partisan club, or speak before a partisan gathering.

Active Duty members may, however, express their personal opinions on political candidates and issues, make monetary contributions to a political campaign or organization, and attend political events, in their personal capacity, as a spectator, when not in uniform.

All military personnel, both on Active Duty or in the Reserves should avoid the inference that their political activities imply or appear to imply DOD sponsorship, approval, or endorsement of a political candidate, campaign, or cause.

3. Application to Social Media. Civilian personnel may generally express their personal views on public issues or political candidates via personal accounts on social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, or personal blogs, in the same way they could write a letter to the editor of a newspaper. If, when expressing a personal opinion, personnel are identified by a social media site as DOD employees, the posting must clearly and prominently state that the views expressed are those of the individual only and not of the Department of Defense.

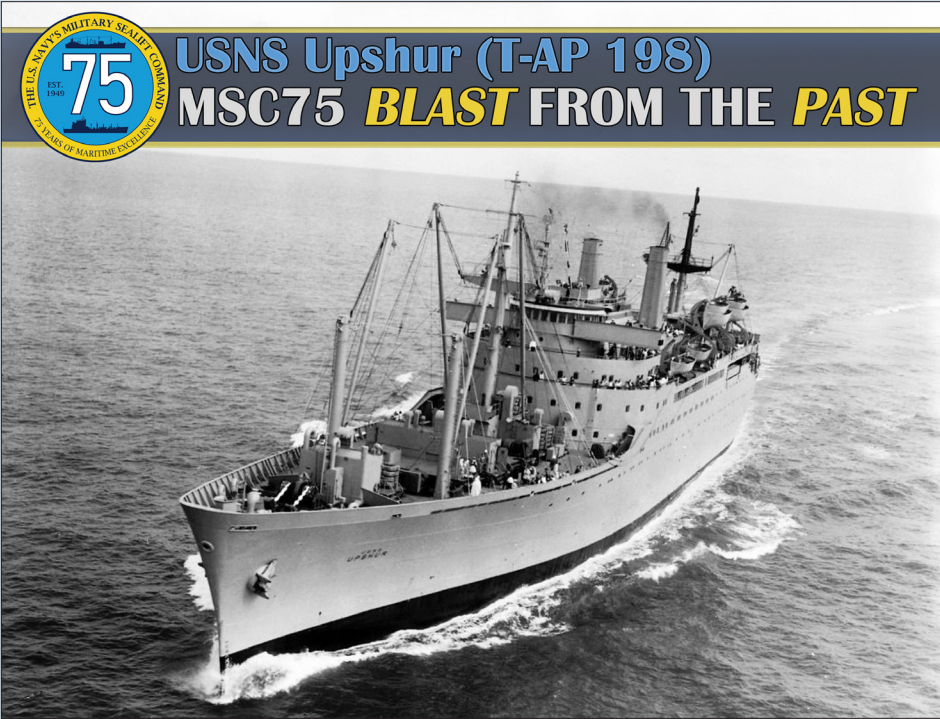
As previously noted, Active Duty military members and further restricted civilian employees are prohibited from participating in partisan political activity. Therefore, while these employees may “follow” “friend” or “like” a political party or candidate running for partisan office, they may not post links to, “share” or “re-tweet” comments or tweets from the Facebook page or twitter account of a political party or candidate running for partisan office. Such activity is deemed to constitute participation in political activities. Service members must also be careful not to comment, post, or link to material that violates the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) or Service regulation. Examples include showing contempt for public officials, releasing sensitive information, or posting unprofessional material that is prejudicial to good order and discipline or is Service discrediting under the UCMJ.

4. DOD Support to Campaigns. Any activity that may be reasonably viewed as directly or indirectly associating DOD, or any component or personnel of DOD, with a partisan political activity must be avoided. Commanders must decline requests for military personnel or Federal civilian employees to appear in or support political campaign or election events in their official capacities.

5. Use of Official DOD Seals and Emblems. Official seals of DOD and the Military Services may only be used for official purposes. Military Service marks, including those appearing on flags, “may not be licensed for use in a manner that creates a perception of DOD endorsement of any non-Federal entity or its products or services.” DOD employees authorized to participate in political activities in their personal capacities must not sanction use of the flag or otherwise create an actual or apparent endorsement of a candidate or campaign by the DOD or a branch of military service.

If you have any questions concerning this topic or any other ethics topic, please send an email to the MSC General Law Section, at MSC_N00L_General_Law@us.navy.mil.

MSC75 Blast from the Past - USNS Upshur



USNS Upshur (T-AP 198) served Military Sealift Command (formerly Military Sea Transportation Service) from 1952 to 1973. In 1962, with the U.S. and Soviet Union on the brink of a nuclear confrontation over the staging of ballistic missiles on Cuba, the 20,000-ton transport vessel, was used to evacuate 1,725 women, children and civilian employees from Guantanamo Bay.

Upshur docked in Guantanamo Bay, en-route to Panama, Oct. 18, 1962, as part of its monthly passenger service. It was announced to the crew that their departure was postponed because of engineering issues, but in reality, leaders were staging the evacuation of non-essential personnel and dependents due to a blockade of Cuba proposed by President John F. Kennedy.

On Oct. 22, Upshur, along with two other vessels, set sail to transport the families and personnel off the island and out of harm’s way.

MSC Commander at the time, Adm. Roy Alexander “Red” Gano, would use this example of MSC’s adaptability to emergent crises, writing in an article of the March 1964 issue of Proceedings magazines.

“When the Military Sea Transportation Service was established in 1949, it was directed, in part, to be able ‘to provide immediate capability in an emergency.’ Engulfed in the Korean action before it had celebrated its first birthday, MSTS learned that “immediate capability” meant keeping ships in operation, ready to answer the call when it was received. After Korea came the Suez incident, followed by the Lebanon crisis. The Berlin “build-up” of 1961 tested the reflexes of MSTS, and the Cuban crisis of 1962 offered another opportunity to demonstrate the value of a fleet in being, under direct government control.”

Upshur would continue service, making regular transports during the Vietnam War. In 1973, Upshur was placed out service and transferred to the U.S. Maritime Administration to be used as a merchant marine training ship, and renamed TS State of Maine. In 1995, the vessel was transferred to Mobile, Alabama, to be used as a platform for testing maritime firefighting technology by the U.S. Coast Guard Fire and Safety test Detachment.

JULY IS UV SAFETY MONTH

By Meghan Sullivan, Military Sealift Command Health Promotion Program

Be Safe in The Sun

With summer in full swing, it’s the perfect time to head outdoors and enjoy the sunny weather. But are you protecting yourself from potential risks?

The goal of UV (Ultraviolet) Safety Month is to spread the word about how important it is to protect everyone’s skin from the harmful effects of UV rays. What is UV Radiation?

Ultraviolet (UV) radiation are invisible rays that are part of the energy that comes from the sun. Overexposure to the sun’s UV rays can cause damage to the skin and cause different types of skin cancer. It’s always important to stay safe when your family is playing in the sun.

While it may seem like a sunburn is a temporary irritation, it can leave long-lasting damage to your skin. According to the Melanoma Research Foundation, “Just one blistering sunburn during childhood can double the chances of developing melanoma later in life.”

1. Wear Sunscreen: Everyone should use a sunscreen that is SPF 30 or higher every day, even on cloudy days (check the UV index). Make sure to reapply every two hours and, if swimming, follow the directions on the bottle.
2. Clothing: opt for clothes that provide different levels of UV protection such as long-sleeved shirts, or long pants. Colors can make a difference as well in your sun protection. Generally, the darker the color, the better the protection.
3. Shade: You can reduce your risk of skin damage and skin cancer by seeking shade under an umbrella, tree, or other shelter. Remember to use sunscreen or wear protective clothing even in the shade!
4. Hat and Sunglasses: For the most protection, wear a hat with a brim all the way around that shades your face, ears, and the back of your neck. Sunglasses protect your eyes from UV rays and reduce the risk of cataracts. They also protect the tender skin around your eyes from sun exposure.
5. Avoid Tanning Beds: Tanning beds can cause just as much harm as the sun. Tanning beds and sun lamps can emit both UVA and UVB radiation. According to the American Cancer Society, tanning bed use has been linked to an increased risk of melanoma, especially if a person started using them before the age of 30.

Increased Risk for Some

While skin cancer can affect anyone, certain factors can increase your risk.

- Your Skin: The lighter your skin, the higher the risk for melanoma. If you tend to burn easily or have a history of blistering sunburns, this could make your risk higher as well.
- Your Moles: If you have a lot of moles (atypical nevi), or your moles happen to be on the larger side, your risk of melanoma could be higher.
- Your History: A family history of melanoma or you had melanoma in the past could be a higher risk for melanoma. Also, if you have a history of blistering sunburns.

HPP is here for you! We encourage you to contact us with any questions or concerns you may have. EMAIL: stephanie.rusnak.ctr@us.navy.mil or msullivan@millenniumhealthandfitness.com



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National Maritime Day from Page 1

Delivering the event’s keynote address, USTRANSCOM Commander Gen. Jacqueline Van Ovost talked about the significance of maritime day and how mariners in past generations helped shape the current and future security environment.

“National Maritime Day marks the date in 1819 that the SS Savannah set sail on the first transoceanic voyage under steam power, and the maritime industry’s remarkable contributions to this event. From that day, the Merchant Mariners and the maritime industry have been paramount to the nation’s ability to deliver people, goods and our military anywhere around the world in support of economic prosperity and national objectives,” said Van Ovost.

Van Ovost also reflected on the sacrifice mariners of past generations have made to preserve the nation’s freedom and security for today.

“In 1944, General Dwight D. Eisenhower said, ‘When final victory is ours, there is no organization that will share its credit more deservedly than the Merchant Marine!’ This quote signifies the impact of the merchant mariners during World War II, who were critical to the Allied Victory. Merchant mariners were the first to face the enemy even before the United States officially entered the war; and were the last to return, bringing our Soldiers home,” said Van Ovost.

She continued, “Then, as now, the United States could not deliver a decisive joint force without the merchant marine to carry the troops, tanks, munitions, food, and fuel overseas. Merchant Mariners sailed across the Pacific, Atlantic, and Indian oceans, and across the Arctic Circle to Murmansk, ensuring America’s forces had what they needed to fight, and win. And this courageous lift was not without loss, as nearly one in 30 of our Merchant Marines did not return home, and over 700 United States merchant ships fell to enemy action. Despite this, Merchant Mariners have always been undaunted.”

Van Ovost concluded by thanking maritime leaders for their contributions to the maritime industry and reminded them that their efforts are vital to nation’s ability to defend itself against threats around the world.

“I am grateful for your ability to chart a course for the nation and the maritime industry on which our national prosperity and defense depends,” she said. “We are a maritime nation, we sailed the oceans to global prominence, and it is imperative that we maintain our strength as a maritime nation, today and in the future.”

The ceremony ended with a reading of the National Maritime Day proclamation, and a wreath laying from the CROMO, a local historic dive vessel, in remembrance of mariners who died in service to the nation.

MWR from Page 3

from U-boats during the Battle of the Atlantic. Merchant Mariners in World War II depended on armed Allied naval forces to protect them.

“It really shows how the Naval fleet and merchant marine fleet are able to come together and fight adversary and accomplish this mission and about the tireless efforts by the men who came before us,” said Lee.

Prior to the screening, MSC Command Master Chief, Force Master Chief Steven W. Bosco talked with those in attendance and emphasized the importance of building a strong community at the command and commended to MWR for their work planning events that focuses on that goal.

On July 3, the command will celebrate the nation’s independence with a picnic at headquarters that will be free for the command and feature the traditional Fourth of July festivities.

“We’re going to have it at the picnic area at SP-64,” said Lee. “Everyone can come, grab a burger or a hot dog and just enjoy the day. We’re going to have a bounce house for anyone who wants to bring their kids. We’re going have outdoor games like corn hole and horseshoes. All people have to do is show up.”

MWR will also host the first of two events to honor MSC’s 75 years of maritime

history on July 25 with MSC Day at the Ball Park to watch the Minor League Baseball teams Norfolk Tides and Jacksonville Jumbo Shrimp square off at Harbor Park. Tickets for this event is \$31.50 for adults and \$29.50 for kids ages 2-12. Kids under 2-years-old get in free. The ticket includes lunch during the game from a menu that features hamburgers, hot dogs, potato salad and more.

In December, MSC’s annual holiday party returns, but this year the command will cap off its yearlong 75th Anniversary Celebration. More details for this extravagant event will be announced this fall.

The MWR committee routinely holds fundraisers such as food and memorabilia sales at the command to help make all of these events memorable. This year, features sales of commemorative 75th Anniversary items including polo shirts, coffee mugs and patches featuring the official anniversary logo.

“We’re really trying to have fun events to celebrate the 75th anniversary of an institution that has accomplished so much and we should all be proud of that,” she said. “To do that, we need support from the command. We have some awesome merchandise the MWR team has worked really hard to order. At the end of the year when its time to shrug off the uniform and put on our dancing shoes we really want to have an excellence event for the Sailors and civilians can come out, enjoy each other’s company.”

“Our goal is to build camaraderie between our civilian staff and military members here at MSC,” said Lt. Hanna Lee, MWR Team Member.

FALLEN MSC TEAMMATE



Wiper Sheryl Anstead
MSC Service 2021-2024

The Lord is my Pilot;
I shall not drift.
He leadeth me across the dark waters
and steereth me in the deep channels.
He keepeth my Log
and guideth me by the star of holiness
for His Name’s sake.
Yea, though I sail amid
the thunders and tempests of life,
I shall dread no danger,
For Thou art with me;
Thy love and Thy care, they shelter me.
Thou preparest a harbor before me
in the homeland of eternity;
Thou anointest the waves with oil,
and my ship rideth calmly,
Surely sunlight and starlight
shall favor me all the days of my voyaging,
and I will rest in the port of my Lord forever.



Military Sealift Command

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