

THE

WINTER 2023/2024

# BRIDGE

The Official Magazine of the Naval War College Foundation



NAVAL WAR COLLEGE  
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**NAVAL WAR COLLEGE**

F O U N D A T I O N

*FRONT COVER: Naval War College Foundation special guests aboard the USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71) in November 2023. U.S. Navy photo.*



*This photo appeared in The Newport Daily News on November 20, 1969. The caption reads, "During a break in the four-day Naval War College Seapower Symposium this week, three of 70 participants discuss the symposium topic informally in the College's Mahan Library. They are from left: Commodore Alexander Desta, Commander of Imperial Ethiopian Navy; Adm. Feng Chi-tsung, Commander in Chief, Chinese Navy; and Rear Adm. Ko Tun-hwa, Commander of Service Force, Chinese Navy. The naval leaders are from about 37 maritime nations." Photo courtesy of Gigi Orchard. For more on the International Seapower Symposium, turn to page 23.*

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NOTE: The views expressed by authors herein are solely those of the individual authors and do not reflect the position of the Naval War College Foundation, U.S. Naval War College, the U.S. Navy, or the Department of Defense.

# At the Helm



It is my honor to be writing to you as the Chairman of the Naval War College Foundation (NWCF). I have been involved with the Foundation since 2013 and have served on the Board of Trustees since 2015. I served as Treasurer and Vice Chairman under Chairman Emeritus Philip M. Bilden and helped him significantly strengthen the financial foundation of the organization. I look forward to continuing the success and momentum of the Foundation as we continue to increase our impact across the nation and around the world. My relationship with the U.S. Naval War College (USNWC) began in the late 1980s when, following my active-duty service as a Surface Warfare officer in the Navy, I served as a Reserve Intelligence officer in the Naval Reserves at a unit in Newport that supported war gaming at the

College. In my first week as Chairman, I celebrated my son, CDR-Select Ryan Holland's, graduation from the U.S. Naval War College. As the proud parent of a USNWC alumnus, I have seen the critical impact of this organization first-hand.

Foundation members like you enable the NWCF to support real-time national security priorities at the College. As we continue to face escalating geopolitical challenges around the globe, the research conducted at the USNWC provides our Naval and national leadership with critical information to assist in the formulation of their strategic and tactical responses to these growing threats.

Integrated deterrence was a key theme in the 2022 National Defense Strategy, the Nuclear Posture Review, and Missile Defense Review. If you attended a NWCF event this year, you know that deterrence was a central theme for many of our discussions as well. With the launch of the Israel-Hamas War and increased military conflict in the Red Sea, we have seen deterrence in action as the USS Gerald R. Ford carrier strike group continues to knock down drones and intercept missiles from the Houthis in Yemen. As we collectively mourn the recent deaths of U.S. servicemen and women killed in action in that conflict, we understand the risks and costs when deterrence fails.

Freedom begins on the seas, and international trade depends on open sea lines of communication. Persistent challenges from China, Russia, and the Middle East threaten our national security and economic prosperity. As we continue to monitor these situations very closely, we look forward to providing our members with the most current information the USNWC makes available to the public. Every day, USNWC faculty members are featured as experts in prestigious military and national security publications, and they share their valuable insights with the next generation of national security operators and thought leaders.

Through your generosity, the NWCF supports vital research initiatives for faculty and students. In addition to this research, the College also convenes national security experts from around the world to engage in discussions regarding some of the most important issues of our time. In 2023, the NWCF supported the gathering of thought leaders at the USNWC, including the China Maritime Studies Institute Conference on Chinese Undersea Warfare, the 9th Annual Women, Peace, and Security Symposium, and the 5th Annual Alexander C. Cushing International Law Conference.

Your membership in the Foundation exemplifies your continued dedication to providing not just excellence in joint professional military education but to the lifelong learning of our national security leaders, strategists, and operators. I am grateful to all of you for your generous support of the great institution that is the USNWC.

I hope to see many of you at our major events in 2024, and I wish you and your family a prosperous new year.

Respectfully,

Daniel E. Holland III  
 Chairman  
 Naval War College Foundation



*Trustees Michael Coulter, Howard Morgan, Vice Chairman RDML A.B. Cruz III, USN (Ret.), Chairman Daniel E. Holland III, CAPT David Hunter, USN (Ret.), RADM Julius S. Caesar, USN (Ret.), and Philip Dunmire. Photo courtesy of Nasdaq. For more on the NWCF's visit to the Nasdaq MarketSite, turn to page 13.*



*Dr. Stephen J. Mariano, USNWC Provost; Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield, U.S. Representative to the United Nations; RADM Shoshana S. Chatfield, USN, former USNWC President; Professor Ronald J. Oard; and NWCF Chairman Daniel E. Holland III at the June 2023 USNWC graduation. U.S. Navy photo by Kristopher Burris.*

# From the Quarterdeck

Dear Trustees, Members, Alumni, and Friends:

With the end of 2023, I am reflecting on a year of change for both the Naval War College Foundation (NWCF) and the U.S. Naval War College (USNWC). First, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to Philip M. Bilden, who concluded his term as Chairman of the NWCF Board of Trustees in June. We are eternally grateful for his leadership and the expertise he has shared with the NWCF for more than a decade and appreciate his continued patriotic service as Chairman Emeritus. It gives me great pleasure to warmly welcome Daniel E. Holland III as NWCF Chairman. Dan worked in lockstep with Philip over many years as Vice Chairman and Treasurer, and we look forward to the work ahead with Dan at the helm.

Finally, I would like to thank RADM Shoshana S. Chatfield, USN, who concluded her term as President of the USNWC in June. RADM Chatfield was a wonderful partner during her tenure, and the NWCF wishes her continued success. RADM Peter A. Garvin, USN, whom you will hear from directly in this issue, assumed the position as 58th President of the USNWC. RADM Garvin has served in numerous capacities over his 34 years of service to our great nation. As a flag officer, he served as the 22nd Commander of Navy Recruiting Command, Commander, Patrol and Reconnaissance Group and Patrol and Reconnaissance Group Pacific, and most recently as the 20th Commander, Naval Education and Training Command, from July 2020 to June 2023. Welcome Aboard, RADM Garvin!

During the Change of Command Ceremony for RADM Garvin and RADM Chatfield, the 78th Secretary of the

Navy, the Honorable Carlos Del Toro, unveiled his 2023 Naval Education Strategy. The document includes three lines of effort: 1) implement a continuum of learning for the entire force; 2) integrate education into talent management frameworks for more precise and agile talent management; and 3) strengthen the Naval University System. The NWCF looks forward to working with the USNWC to support these efforts, bolstered by our many individual and corporate members, sponsors, and friends.



In 2023, the NWCF has continued our work to promote and advance the USNWC's impact on national security. We hosted several national events, some of which are highlighted in this issue. The latter half of the year included the

following:

- The USNWC's Center on Irregular Warfare and Armed Groups Symposium, *Exploring Our Maritime Strategies*, in Middletown, RI;
- The Newport National Security Symposium, *Integrated Deterrence in A Multi-Polar World: Is the United States at Risk? (Part 1)*, held on the USNWC campus in Newport, RI;
- *The Sentinel of the Sea Award Gala*, celebrating the Honorable John Francis Lehman, Jr., 65th U.S. Secretary of the Navy, in New York City; and
- The 2nd Annual America's Future Fleet Symposium, *Maintaining Peace and Deterring China*, held in partnership with the Center for Maritime Strategy in Arlington, VA.

Additionally, the NWCF engaged in several outreach activities this year, including the 6th Annual Cardine's Classic, a WWI-era baseball game held at the historic Cardine's Field in downtown Newport, and our inaugural Newport Open and Clay Shoot. We look forward to hosting more of these events in 2024. You can find a



Mohammed Soliman, Anand Toprani, Ph.D., Joseph "Rich" Baich, the Honorable Mike Rogers, and moderator Olivia Gazis at the Newport National Security Symposium. Photo by Jessica Pohl.

preliminary calendar at the end of this issue.

If you attended any of these events, you know China and Russia continue to pose threats to our national security and economy. With the recent escalations in the Middle East, the topic of integrated deterrence is more prevalent than ever. In providing resources to the USNWC to maintain its competitive advantage in a challenging national security environment, the NWCF is working to fully endow two critically important Chairs:

- **TCSass Chair in Maritime Irregular Warfare and Maritime Special Operations.** This Chair was created to provide support for efforts that inform and shape national strategies, operational recommendations, and policies, as well as promotion and support of research and teaching of irregular warfare and armed groups.
- **Arctic Studies Chair.** The Arctic is a frequent topic in national security discussions, prompting the need for expanded research of the area. With this in mind, the NWCF has set out to fund an Arctic Studies Chair. And, with a generous contribution from the Pritzker Military Foundation, on behalf of the Pritzker Military Museum & Library, your contribution will be matched

dollar for dollar. By endowing the Arctic Studies Chair, we can attract top-tier scholars and experts with a deep understanding of the Arctic's complexities and implications for national security. More information on these priorities can be found on our website at [nwcfoundation.org](http://nwcfoundation.org).

As always, we seek to increase our membership in the NWCF. We invite you to join us in this challenge by considering a gift of membership for family and friends. We look forward to another exciting year in 2024, and I thank you for your continued support and advocacy of the USNWC and NWCF. You are the backbone of our organization, and I am eternally grateful for your generous investment in our national security through the education of tomorrow's leaders.

With my utmost respect and admiration,

CAPT George E. Lang, Jr., USN (Ret.)  
 President & Chief Executive Officer  
 Naval War College Foundation

# From the President, U.S. Naval War College

It is a distinct honor and privilege to serve as the 58th President of the U.S. Naval War College (USNWC) and I'm grateful for this opportunity to make my first entry in *The Bridge*. Since 1884, this indispensable institution has been informing the decision-makers of the day and educating the leaders of tomorrow. For my part, walking the halls of the college remains a humbling and inspiring experience. We are quite literally surrounded by the tremendous legacy and history of the college and its impact upon the Navy and our nation. The Naval War College is where "The Influence of Sea Power Upon History" was written, where War Plan Orange was developed, and where thousands of leaders have learned their craft and expanded their minds. It is not lost on me that the next Mahan, Nimitz, or Zumwalt could be attending a seminar, participating in a wargame, or teaching a class here today. Moreover, the importance of the Naval War College to today's Navy, Marine Corps, and Joint Force has never been greater. Through every offering, our objective remains to create and sustain warfighting advantage through rigorous, relevant, and relational educational instruction, academic research, and wargaming.

Having completed my first six months as President, I have come to more fully appreciate just how critical the support from the Foundation is to the success of the College in meeting its mission through the three lines of effort outlined in the Naval War College's strategic plan: education, research, and outreach.

The Foundation truly provides our "margin of excellence." Your support during 2023 highlights the importance of the Foundation's \$1.4 million in donations to numerous programs and initiatives.

Highlights include:

Our 20th Regional Alumni Symposium, held in April 2023 in Chile, brought together nearly 100 participants representing 19 nations, including 14 international flag officers and four foreign heads of navies, coast guards or other national military services. We are in final coordination regarding the location of the next iteration of the Regional Alumni Symposium, which I look forward to announcing shortly.

In the same month, the 9th Annual Women, Peace and Security Symposium brought together 150 U.S. and international scholars as well as civilian and military practitioners and leaders to share their warfighting and conflict resolution knowledge.

In May 2023, the Stockton Center for International Law held its 5th Annual Alexander C. Cushing International Law Conference. In addition to supporting our research and analysis of emerging legal issues associated with the future naval warfare, the conference brought together military judge advocates, civilian attorneys, scholars, and other legal practitioners from more than 25 countries, including representatives from the Korea Institute of Ocean Science and Technology, the Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force Command and Staff College and the University of Basel in Switzerland.

In June 2023, SECNAV's Current Strategy Forum examined the relationship between U.S. leadership on the world stage and American prosperity. The event allowed a cross-section of America's civilian and military leaders to debate national and international security issues across diverse topics.

This academic year, the Foundation facilitated our Future Warfighting Symposium in August, the Cyber Warfare and Emerging Technologies Workshop in







RADM Peter A. Garvin, USN, RADM Shoshana S. Chatfield, USN, and the Honorable Carlos Del Toro, 78th Secretary of the Navy, at the June 2023 Change of Command Ceremony at the U.S. Naval War College. U.S. Navy Photo by Kristopher Burris.

October and the CNO's 25th International Seapower Symposium (ISS) in September. ISS provided a forum for dialogue between nearly 100 international navies and coast guards to bolster maritime security by providing opportunities to collaborate, develop trust, and further navy-to-navy training. I cannot overstate how crucial these relationships with partners and allies are to our nation and global maritime security.

Looking forward to the year ahead, the Naval War College will maintain alignment with the Secretary of the Navy's Education Strategy; we will continue to adapt our curriculum and instruction to meet the dynamic requirements of the fleet; we will continue to invest in infrastructure improvements through renovations to Mahan Hall, Conolly Hall, and across the campus; and we will sustain improvements to our academic and organizational excellence. Finally, we will continue to build on the strong relationships vital to providing our Navy, Joint, partner and allied forces with unmatched

competitive advantage and warfighting capability.

Thank you again for all you have done to support the Naval War College, our Navy, and our nation. Please let me add my thanks to those of former Presidents' and explicitly thank you for the Foundation's steadfast generosity over more than 50 years. I look forward to a fantastic 2024 and working together as we build upon our successes and continue to move the College forward!

Sincerely,

Rear Adm. Pete Garvin, USN  
President, U.S. Naval War College

# The Honorable John Francis Lehman, Jr. Receives 2023 Sentinel of the Sea Award



*Daniel E. Holland III, NWCF Chairman, the Honorable John Francis Lehman, Jr., 65th U.S. Secretary of the Navy, RADM Peter A. Garvin, USN, USNWC President, the Honorable Sean J. Stackley, and CAPT George E. Lang, Jr., USN (Ret.), NWCF President & Chief Executive Officer. Photo by Hechler Photographers.*

The Honorable John Francis Lehman, Jr., 65th U.S. Secretary of the Navy, was the 2023 recipient of the Naval War College Foundation's (NWCF) Sentinel of the Sea Award. The award was presented by Chairman Daniel E. Holland III on November 3 at the New York Yacht Club in New York City.

In his remarks, Chairman Holland recalled his own memory of Secretary Lehman, who spoke at his June 1981 Officer Candidate School commissioning. "Your words of inspiration carried me through four years at sea, my tours of duty serving in the Reserves in Naval Intelligence, and compelled my interest in geopolitics that continues to this day," said Holland. "I thank you for your leadership and inspiration."

The Honorable Sean J. Stackley, who served as Assistant

Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, and Acquisition from 2008 to 2017, and as Acting Secretary of the Navy in 2017, provided a tribute to Lehman ahead of the award presentation. "In our third century, one name, one man stands above all others... His bold vision for the 600-ship Navy is now recognized as one of the pivotal factors leading to the collapse of the Soviet Union, and I can assure you it continues to serve as the benchmark by which our Navy and every Secretary since is measured to this day," said Stackley. "As a former Naval Officer and Acting Secretary, I am proud to have served in Lehman's Navy. He is most deserving of the Sentinel of the Sea Award."

Secretary Lehman gave a rousing and encouraging acceptance speech, infusing humor and leaving the

audience motivated to continue the mission to support the U.S. Naval War College (USNWC). “If you read American history... you will find at least eight other periods as bitter or more bitter than what we are currently experiencing... So, we’ve been through this before, and we always produce leaders of the quality and the resonance that are needed,” said Lehman. “That is why it’s so essential what the War College is doing and what the Foundation has been keeping the War College focused on.” He concluded his speech by saying, “Please continue to keep the flame going and to keep supporting the Foundation, which is what keeps the War College leadership able to do what they know needs to be done.”

Secretary Lehman served six years as Secretary of the Navy and 25 years in the Naval Reserve. He was a staff member to Dr. Henry Kissinger on the National Security Council, a delegate to the Force Reductions Negotiations in Vienna, and Deputy Director of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. Lehman was a member of the 9/11 Commission and the National Defense Commission. He holds a B.S. from St. Joseph’s University, a B.A. and M.A. from Cambridge University, and a Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania. He is currently a Fellow of

Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge University. In addition to his career in public service, Lehman has written several books, including *Where are the Carriers? U.S. National Strategy and the Choices Ahead*; *Oceans Ventured*; *On Seas of Glory*; *Command of the Seas*; and *Making War*.

Secretary Lehman joins ranks with previous Sentinel of the Sea recipients for their dutiful service: General James N. Mattis, USMC (Ret.), 26th U.S. Secretary of Defense; Secretaries of the Navy, the Honorable Paul R. Ignatius and Ambassador J. William Middendorf II; veteran advocates Gary Sinise and Tom Brokaw; Medal of Honor Recipients Chief Warrant Officer Four Hershel “Woody” Williams, USMC (Ret.), Staff Sergeant Hiroshi “Hershey” Miyamura, USA (Ret.), First Sergeant Allen J. Lynch, USA (Ret.), Staff Sergeant David G. Bellavia, USA, and Lieutenant Michael P. Murphy, USN (posthumously); ADM James “Jim” Hogg, USN (Ret.); and GEN Michael V. Hayden, USAF (Ret.).



**Left:** The Honorable John Francis Lehman, Jr., provides acceptance remarks. **Right:** The Sentinel of the Sea medallion. Photos by Hechler Photographers.

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# Aboard the USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT (CVN 71)

The USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT (CVN 71) is the fourth Nimitz-class nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, named in honor of the 26th President of the United States. Weighing 97,000 tons and spanning 4.5 acres, the USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT is a city on the sea with 5,500 professional sailors on board.

In early November, eight Naval War College Foundation (NWCF) special guests, including Chief Development Officer Cathleen Coyle, participated in the Commander, Naval Air Force, Pacific, U.S. Aircraft Carrier (CVN) Distinguished Visitor Embark Program. The immersive experience provided guests with the rare opportunity to witness the men and women who serve our country in their daily life and to gain an understanding of life at sea. Representatives from A1 Global Holdings LLC, Booz Allen Hamilton, Cornerstone Building Brands, Kempenaar Real Estates, Inc., SAIC, the U.S. Naval War College's (USNWC) College of Distance Education, and Weismann Consulting joined Cathleen on board the ROOSEVELT. Following the excursion, she shared her account of the embark with us.

## **NWCF: How did your day begin?**

**CC:** I stayed in a hotel between two military bases in San Diego, so even before we boarded the aircraft to head out to the USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT, I saw a flurry of activity. The bases were operating all day, and there was no quiet. We met at Naval Air Station North Island at around 6 a.m. and were greeted by CAPT George E. Lang Jr. USN (Ret.) (NWCF President & CEO) with coffee and donuts. George gave a quick overview of what guests could expect, and we took a group photo. From there, we were taken to a 1.5-hour safety briefing. That also provided an intensive but quick explanation of the armed strike group. From that overview, I was really able to understand how the group works and that when a carrier deploys, it's not alone. The briefing walked us through what type of aircraft we would see on the carrier. When we landed, we were able to identify an F-18, an F-35, a Growler, an Osprey, and a Helo. That was extremely helpful because we were only on board for about 36 hours, and it was like drinking from

a fire hose. There's an incredible amount of information and military jargon used, so the briefing was extremely important to understand what we were seeing.



*Kajsa Kempenaar, Joshua Meeks, John Herring, Adam Weiner, James Metcalf, Cathleen Coyle, Jennifer Roberts, and Paul Weismann before departing on the embark.*

## **NWCF: How did you get to the carrier?**

**CC:** We flew to the USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT on a CMV-22B Osprey tilt-rotor aircraft. The flight was about a half hour long, and the back of the aircraft was open the entire time. The view was amazing. When we took off from San Diego, we could see the beautiful coastline and then we were out on the open ocean.

I showed my kids the pictures of the Osprey, and they were impressed by all the wires. It is so unlike a commercial aircraft because it's primarily used to transport service members, mail, and supplies.

I actually think the aircraft carriers look far bigger in the movies. When you land, you can see every single spot on the flight deck that is used. They park F-18s - massive planes - as if they are Mini Coopers in the tightest parking lot you could imagine. It's truly fascinating how efficient and effective the carrier crew is with the use of both time and space. The leadership at all levels was off the charts.



The view from the CMV-22B Osprey.

**NWCF: What was the ship doing while you were there?**

**CC:** When visitors are on board, the ship is practicing and is in readiness mode. Readiness mode lasts for two months. They are readying the ship for deployment. The reason the ship is out at sea - we were 100 miles off of Tijuana - is to pressure test the ship and the crew to be ready to be deployed. Deployment is nine months. Turning back to San Diego is nothing, but if you are somewhere else, getting back to land is not going to happen quickly. They work out all the kinks as much as possible.

**NWCF: What happened once you were on board?**

**CC:** We met with the public affairs team to learn more about the itinerary for our visit. We each were handed a card with the full schedule of what we were going to do, all in military time. There is a code on the ship that looks like a telephone or social security number. The first number is the level you are on (0-4), the middle number is the front of the ship (0-220), and the last two numbers indicate where you are from left to right. You can hand that card to anyone on the ship at any time, and they can tell you how to get back home.

The public affairs team guided us throughout our stay, with a team member at the front and back of the line. This was primarily because you can get lost very fast, and there are a lot of dangerous things around you.

On the flight deck, there was a lot of activity. You can't drop anything as small as a pen because it can be blown into the jet engines and cause major mechanical problems. The ground is covered in wires, and you have

to navigate through tight spaces and climb very steep ladders. You can see why there are such stringent physical requirements for the trip.

In the 36 hours, the only time we sat down was to eat or go to bed. We started at 6 a.m. the first day and went to about 10:30 p.m. The next day we were up at 6 a.m. and went until 2 p.m. when we landed back in San Diego.

**NWCF: What were the accommodations like on the ship?**

**CC:** There were seven total guest rooms for distinguished visitors. Two people were assigned to a room, and each room was named for something significant in President Roosevelt's life. Mine was the Harvard Room. My room had a sink and a television and was pretty large. To climb into my bunk, I had to step on my roommate's bed.

The enlisted are 60 men in one room, with four bunks stacked on each other. There are 20 women in one room. Those tight living quarters require a lot of cooperation and humility.

Even though we were only about 100 miles offshore, you could feel the ship going back and forth. You're moving quickly while the ship is moving. You could be at dinner and have to stop for a minute to make sure you don't fall over. It's mind-boggling, especially considering how large the ship is. Despite the constant action on the ship - planes landing continuously, the ship moving, and loud noises from maintenance activities, I still slept soundly. The rocking put me right to sleep.

**NWCF: Did you interact with service members while on the carrier?**

**CC:** They did a fantastic job of letting us have access to everyone on board, from the CO to enlisted sailors who had only been in the Navy for about six months. We had the opportunity to interact with them at lunch. We also had a tour of the weapons room and met with the individuals who assembled weapons. We got to go to Command Central, where they figure out when the planes can come in and take off and where they can park. The system they use looks like an Ouija board, and the individual who runs that Command Central still relies on old-school technology because some of the technology is spotty where the boat is located. The sailors on the USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT do not have internet access. The entire time we were on the ship, we couldn't access the internet. For us as guests, it was nice, but for the sailors on board, I think they miss that connection to the outside world. When they have downtime, they either go to the gym or choose from about 2,000 movies on board. The Commanding Officer said he

was working on that.

**NWCF: What other parts of the carrier did you see?**

**CC:** The second level of the ship is where they repair the planes and helicopters. The only elevator on the ship is used to transport the aircraft up and down for repairs. The elevator looks like a massive garage with huge open windows. And again, they use every single space. There are probably 12-14 planes and helicopters being worked on at a time. There's a whole team of mechanics working on that level. And in the middle of it, there's a very small space where they have exercise classes. All of these mechanics are fixing things, and then there are people doing calisthenics. It goes back to that absolutely efficient use of space.

On the flight deck, people referred to it as Skittle colors. There were five colors of shirts - red, yellow, green, white, and brown. When you see each color, you immediately know what that person does on the ship (ex. fuel, safety). This is especially important because you cannot hear for the most part while on the flight deck. You are wearing heavy-duty headphones, and when the fighter jets come in, it's like an earthquake. It's super loud and shaky. So that color system is a quick way to know who is who. They are masters of hand signals.

**NWCF: What aspects of daily life on the ship did you find most interesting?**

**CC:** They spend \$100,000 on food a day. I don't remember the number of meals they produce, but they are served buffet-style. The enlisted officers' mess hall looks like a 1950s diner, complete with red chairs. The officers' mess hall is a little more fancy, but everyone basically eats the same food and has to wait in line. Your food waste has to be sorted because of where it goes. All paper is burned, plastic is crushed, and food scraps are tied in a bundle in a paper bag and sunk to the bottom of the ocean. Our group had a lot of questions about how daily life works when you are out at sea for nine months, from the trash to the food.

No matter where we were on the ship, the staff was constantly cleaning. At first, I thought it was to keep people busy, but an officer told us that if one person gets sick, it goes through the entire ship. So they need to constantly disinfect. You saw Clorox wipes anywhere and everywhere.

There's a hospital and a dentist on board. They have a minimal amount of services available and hope sailors seek other health services while on land. If they are in confrontations and take on casualties, they have the ability to transform different parts of the ship to care for

individuals. They were doing blood banking on the ship, a relatively new technology for them. Four to five donors are required to have enough blood for a transfusion, so this was a significant breakthrough to allow the collection and storage of blood on the ship.

I think the other most impressive part is that you have service members on the ship as young as 18 with an enormous amount of responsibility. People, for the most part, seem to work very well together, probably because there's no time for disagreements. I was in a number of areas on the ship where the most senior leader allowed the junior members to give presentations and let them talk to us. Even though it is a hierarchical organization, it was fascinating to see how they empower young people to lead and be part of the operation.



James Metcalf gives a thumbs up during day flight operations. U.S. Navy photo.



*A fighter jet recovery on the flight deck during night flight operations.*

**NWCF: *The group got to observe night flight operations while on the ship. Tell us what that was like.***

**CC:** They have “events” six times a day. Events are when they are practicing with fighter jets and can last anywhere from two hours. The event is basically the takeoff, and the landing is called recovery. We got to observe them during the day and evening. When the jets come for landing, they are traveling at about 200 miles per hour and landing on a surface that is maybe two football fields long. They come in one minute apart. That requires an unimaginable level of precision. There are four massive cables that catch the jets, and pilots are scored on their landings. The objective is to hit the third cable. If you hit the third cable, you get an A+. If you hit any of the others, your score decreases. They want you to hit that third cable to enable them to park you most efficiently. If you land further back, you’re delaying the landing for the next plane.

During night flights, they practice without any use of communications or lights to simulate operations in a true engagement. When you come out of your guest room, all you see are very small red lights. The night flights are all done using wands to communicate with pilots, and the

pilots have to use hand signals to indicate how much fuel they have left and other pertinent information.

**NWCF: *What was the general impression of the trip?***

**CC:** I think everyone on the trip was blown away. A lot of my fellow attendees were business people, so they were very impressed with the level of efficiency on board. For myself, as a parent, I was amazed to witness what these individuals can do at such a young age. A 19-year-old was explaining the bombs and missiles he assembled to us. He could tell us how every piece works and how the missiles are loaded. Of the approximately 5,000 people on the ship, the average age was 21.

For many people on the ship, they indicated that their careers provided them with structure, leadership and family. The military is quintessential with leadership - but we got to witness it at all levels.



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