Keel Authenticated for Future USS George M. Neal

Release from Naval Sea Systems Command

*****

Dec. 15, 2023

By Team Ships Public Affairs

The keel for the future USS George M. Neal (DDG 131), a Flight III Arleigh Burke-class destroyer, was ceremonially laid at HII's Ingalls Shipbuilding division, December 15.

The ship is named for the late Aviation Machinist's Mate 3rd Class George M. Neal, who was awarded the Navy Cross for his heroic actions during the Korean War. As a volunteer crewman on a helicopter mission, Neal flew deep into the North Korean mountains to attempt the rescue of a Marine aviator. After his rescue helicopter was disabled and crashed, he assisted his helicopter's pilot and rescued Marine aviator in evading enemy forces for nine days before being captured and held as a prisoner of war.

The contemporary keel laying ceremony represents the joining together of a ship's major modular components at the land level and is a significant milestone in the production of a ship. The keel is authenticated with the ship sponsors' initials etched into a ceremonial keel plate that is later incorporated into the ship. Kelley Grey, the daughter of Aviation Machinist's Mate Third Class Neal, participated in the ceremony.

"The late George M. Neal inspired his fellow servicemen, and we are honored to have his daughter with us as we marked this important milestone in the life of the ship, " said Capt. Seth

Miller, DDG 51-class program manager, Program Executive Office (PEO) Ships. “The future USS George M. Neal will provide our Sailors with the latest air and missile defense capability.”

The DDG 51 Flight III upgrade centers on the AN/SPY-6(V)1 Air and Missile Defense Radar and incorporates upgrades to the electrical power and cooling capacity plus additional associated changes to provide greatly enhanced warfighting capability to the fleet. Flight III is the latest Flight upgrade in the more than 30-year history of the class, building on the proud legacy of Flight I, II and IIA ships before it.

Ingalls Shipbuilding division is also in production on future destroyers USS Ted Stevens (DDG 128), USS Jeremiah Denton (DDG 129), USS Sam Nunn (DDG 133), and USS Thad Cochran (DDG 135).

As one of the Defense Department’s largest acquisition organizations, PEO Ships is responsible for executing the development and procurement of all destroyers, amphibious ships, sealift ships, support ships, boats and craft.

The Aegis Ashore Missile Defense System in Naval Support Facility Redizkowo, Poland, Transfers Ownership from Missile Defense Agency

to the U.S. Navy

Release from U.S. Naval Forces Europe/U.S. 6th Fleet Public Affairs

*****

Dec. 15, 2023

By U.S. Naval Forces Europe/U.S. 6th Fleet Public Affairs

NAPLES, Italy – The Aegis Ashore Missile Defense System (AAMDS) located in Redzikowo, Poland, will be accepted by the U.S. Navy on Dec. 15, 2023, where AAMDS will enter a planned maintenance period to upgrade the network and computer systems. Once finalized, AAMDS Poland will be a fully integrated and tested element of the U.S. Ballistic Missile Defense System, and made ready to operate under NATO command and control. The official transfer to NATO is scheduled to occur spring to summer of 2024.

The acceptance of the Aegis Ashore site in Poland, like its sister site in Romania, is an important step in our efforts to get AAMDS ready to protect against the growing threat posed by ballistic missiles launched from Iran. The addition of this site in Poland will help provide enhanced coverage and expand protection for all NATO European populations, territories and forces against potential threats to the Euro-Atlantic area.

The Aegis Ashore is defensive in nature and designed to shoot down threats posed to U.S. forward deployed forces, or the security of our European allies. The defensive focus of Aegis Ashore is confirmed in the U.S. commitments to NATO and standing NATO policy.

Aegis Ashore in NSF Redzikowo is a critical part of the European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA). EPAA protects European Allies and partners against ballistic missile threats

emanating from outside the Euro-Atlantic area. EPAA integrates the missile defense systems of forward deployed U.S. Navy destroyers in Rota, Spain with the Aegis capabilities at NSF Deveselu, Romania and, once fully operational, AAMDS Poland at NSF Redzikowo to provide comprehensive ballistic missile defense across Europe.

NSF Redzikowo is a tangible demonstration of the U.S. commitment to collective security in Europe. Poland is a vital ally, partner, and friend of the United States. Our alliance is based on shared values, including democratic governance, free markets, and individual liberty. Security is a fundamental pillar of the U.S.-Poland bilateral relationship.

For over 80 years, U.S. Naval Forces Europe-U.S. Naval Forces Africa (NAVEUR-NAVAF) has forged strategic relationships with our Allies and Partners, leveraging a foundation of shared values to preserve security and stability.

Headquartered in Naples, Italy, NAVEUR-NAVAF operates U.S. naval forces in the U.S. European Command (USEUCOM) and USAFRICOM areas of responsibility. U.S. Sixth Fleet is permanently assigned to NAVEUR-NAVAF, and employs maritime forces through the full spectrum of joint and naval operations.

SECDEF Announces Nominations for Marine Corps Reserve Generals

*****

ARLINGTON, Va. – Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III announced Dec. 15, 2023, that the president has made the following nominations:

Marine Corps Reserve Brig. Gen. Douglas K. Clark for appointment to the grade of major general. Clark is currently serving as commanding general, 4th Marine Division, U.S. Marine Forces Reserve, New Orleans, Louisiana.

Marine Corps Reserve Brig. Gen. Sean N. Day for appointment to the grade of major general. Day is currently serving as mobilization assistant to the deputy commander, U.S. Space Command, Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Marine Corps Reserve Col. Thomas M. Armas for appointment to the grade of brigadier general. Armas is currently serving as deputy director, Reserve Affairs, Reserve Affairs Division, Manpower & Reserve Affairs, Headquarters Marine Corps, Quantico, Virginia.

Marine Corps Reserve Col Daniel B. Taylor for appointment to the grade of brigadier general. Taylor is currently serving as liaison officer to the commander, Third Fleet, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, California.

Marine Corps Reserve Col. Patrick F. Tiernan for appointment to the grade of brigadier general. Tiernan is currently serving as assistant wing commander, 4th Marine Aircraft Wing, U.S. Marine Forces Reserve, New Orleans, Louisiana.

Marine Corps Col. William T. Wilburn Jr. for appointment to the grade of brigadier general. Wilburn is currently serving as director of Plans and Strategy, Joint Task Force – ARES, Marine Corps Forces Cyberspace Command, Fort Meade, Maryland.

NAVAL SPECIAL WARFARE ENHANCES ALLIED DEFENSE WITH ROMANIAN SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES

Release from U.S. Fleet Forces Command

*****

BY LT. J.G. MARTIN CAREY

13 December 2023

CONTANTA, Romania – East-Coast based Naval Special Warfare Operators (SEALs) and the 164th Romanian Naval Special Operations Forces (ROUSOF) conducted training on maritime interdiction operations, special reconnaissance, and special operations tactics to enhance allied defense throughout the

European region. The joint effort was conducted November 4-17, and enhanced maritime expertise and strengthened the capacity to respond to maritime crises in the Black Sea region.

“Our partnership with the Romanian Naval Special Operations Forces is in direct alignment with the U.S. National Defense Strategy’s emphasis on strengthening alliances and partnerships. Together, we prepare for the challenges posed by the unique operational environment here as we work in tandem to preserve security during this critical time,” said Maj. Gen. Steven G. Edwards, Commander of Special Operations Command Europe.

During the evolution, SEALs and ROUSOF conducted a multitude of interoperability and training iterations including close quarters combat techniques, urban patrol movements, breacher training and integrated visit, board, search and seizure tactics. The ability for U.S. and NATO special operations forces to integrate seamlessly across multiple operating areas further refines their capabilities to deploy in support of real-world operations in the area.

“Working alongside our allied Romanian special operators provides us the ability to further enhance our capabilities in order to meet operational demands,” said the senior Naval Special Warfare Operator on site. “These opportunities are not only invaluable for the SEALs, but also the numerous support personnel who enable us to complete our mission in a joint environment.”

In the spirit of solidarity and shared commitment to regional security, the collaboration between SEALs and ROUSOF serves as a testament to the vital importance of international partnerships within the European Command Area of Responsibility. Strengthening alliances through joint training initiatives bolsters the capabilities of both nations’ special operations forces and underscores the collective dedication to

preserve peace and security in the Black Sea region.

The 164th Romanian Naval Special Operations Forces are a highly specialized unit of the Romanian Navy who conduct direct action missions, special reconnaissance, and maritime operations to safeguard the interests of Romania and promote regional security.

Naval Special Warfare Group TWO produces, supports, and deploys the world’s premier maritime special operations forces to conduct full-spectrum operations and integrated deterrence in support of U.S. national objectives. For more information, visit https://www.nsw.navy.mil/

Coast Guard Cutter Diligence returns to Pensacola after interdicting $20.3 million in illicit drugs, six smugglers

[Release from U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area]

*****

Dec. 14, 2023

PENSACOLA, Fla. – The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Diligence (WMEC 616) returned to homeport in Pensacola on Thursday after a 52-day counterdrug patrol in the Caribbean Sea.

During the patrol, Diligence's crew worked in support of Joint Interagency Task Force South (JIATF-South) within the Coast Guard Seventh District's area of responsibility to interdict and deter the smuggling of illicit narcotics. Diligence's crew disrupted approximately 700 kilograms of cocaine with an estimated street value of over $20.3 million dollars and apprehended six suspected smugglers.

Diligence also conducted a joint training exercise with the Army's 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (SOAR). During the exercise, the Diligence crew and pilots from SOAR completed daytime and nighttime helicopter landing evolutions.

This exercise strengthened the interoperability of the Coast Guard and the U.S. Army.

“Stopping the flow of drugs to the United States is a challenging mission that requires a significant amount of teamwork,” said Cmdr. Nolan Cain, Diligence’s commanding officer. “The Diligence crew had the opportunity to work alongside our Department of Defense and international partners in this unified effort. The dedication and hard work of the Diligence crew and our partners is incredibly inspiring.”

Detecting and interdicting illegal drug traffickers on the high seas involves significant interagency and international coordination. JIATF-South in Key West, Florida, conducts detection and monitoring of aerial and maritime transit of illegal drugs. Once interdiction becomes imminent, the law enforcement phase of the operation begins, and control of the operation shifts to the U.S. Coast Guard throughout the interdiction and apprehension process. Interdictions in the Caribbean Sea are performed by members of the U.S. Coast Guard under the authority and control of the Coast Guard’s Seventh District, headquartered in Miami.

Diligence is a 210-foot medium endurance cutter with 78 crewmembers. The cutter’s primary missions are counterdrug operations, migrant interdiction, enforcing federal fishery laws, and search and rescue in support of Coast Guard operations throughout the Western Hemisphere.

For information on how to join the U.S. Coast Guard, visit GoCoastGuard.com to learn about active duty, reserve, officer and enlisted opportunities. Information on how to apply to the U.S. Coast Guard Academy can be found here.

U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Harriet Lane arrives at new homeport in Pearl Harbor

Release from U.S. Coast Guard Pacific Area

*****

Dec. 13, 2023

HONOLULU – U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Harriet Lane (WMEC 903) and crew arrived at its new homeport at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Wednesday, after transiting more than 8,000 nautical miles over 36-days from Portsmouth, Virginia.

The Harriet Lane is U.S. Coast Guard Pacific Area's newest Indo-Pacific support cutter and spent more than 15 months in a Service Life Extension Program (SLEP) in Baltimore, Maryland, to prepare for the transition in missions and operations.

Following reconstitution of the crew in July and returning to Portsmouth in August, the crew went through an extensive dockside period, ensuring the cutter was ready for the transit from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean.

“Re-homeporting U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Harriet Lane is indicative of the Coast Guard’s commitment to the Indo-Pacific – the most dynamic region in the world,” said Rear Admiral Brendan McPherson, deputy commander, U.S. Coast Guard Pacific Area. “Harriet Lane will work by, with, and through allies and partners within the Indo-Pacific region to promote capacity building and model good maritime governance.”

“The crew and I look forward to building partnerships in Oceania to enhance our capabilities, strengthen maritime governance and security while promoting individual sovereignty,” said Cmdr. Nicole Tesoniero, commanding officer of the Harriet Lane. “We plan to build upon many decades of enduring support, operating in concert with the needs of our partners.”

Harriet Lane and crew departed Coast Guard Base Portsmouth, November 2023, and during the transit, the crew conducted trainings for upcoming operations along with professional development for crewmembers. Harriet Lane transited through the Panama Canal, and had port calls in Golfito, Costa Rica and San Diego.

Harriet Lane, commissioned in 1984, is a 270-foot medium endurance cutter now homeported in Honolulu to support Coast Guard missions in the Pacific region. The service’s medium endurance cutter fleet supports a variety of Coast Guard missions including search and rescue, law enforcement, maritime defense, and protection of the marine environment.

SECNAV Del Toro Calls on Industry and Academia to Help Restore the Nation's Competitive Shipbuilding and Repair Landscape

Release from SECNAV Public Affairs

*****

14 December 2023

Calling it a strategic imperative, Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro urged industry and academia to join efforts to restore the Nation's competitive shipbuilding and repair landscape. Secretary Del Toro delivered the remarks at the NDIA Delaware Valley Chapter (NDIA-DVC) Naval Nuclear Submarine and Aircraft Carrier Suppliers' Conference at Drexel University in Philadelphia, Dec. 14.

"I'm here at this conference today because I believe in the potential of our joint efforts to get shipbuilding and maintenance right. It is my number one priority," said Secretary Del Toro. "While the vision is ambitious, it is achievable. We are a nation accustomed to taking on ambitious endeavors, and restoring our maritime strength is no exception."

To do so, requires a multi-pronged approach, Secretary Del Toro stated, including investing in the revitalization of our shipbuilding industry and merchant marine fleet, developing innovative technologies to maintain our naval edge, strengthening partnerships with key allies to counter China's growing influence, and promoting fair competition.

Call to Action

The Department of the Navy's commitment to innovation and rapid technology development presents an attractive opportunity for industry participation, stated Secretary Del Toro. For example,

Pennsylvania alone boasts more than 570 vital submarine industrial base suppliers, 39 of which are classified as critical. In the past five years, the Department of the Navy (DON)invested more than $250 million to build capacity, increase capability, and add resiliency to these suppliers.

The Department of the Navy added 1,000 new small businesses by investing nearly $2 billion dollars through initiatives led by the Office of Small Business Programs to the Navy-industry team.

"Now, the key is to help find and train the right people, and our Talent Pipeline Initiative has been instrumental in addressing workforce shortages," said Secretary Del Toro.

Philadelphia, for instance, was the first location for the DON's pilot program, which it has since expanded to Pittsburgh and other locations. Since its launch in 2021, this initiative has placed more than 1,200 skilled workers with Pennsylvania suppliers, with over 698 placed in fiscal year 2023 alone.

"We are also committed to expanding apprenticeship programs, as evidenced by the recent reinstatement of the Philadelphia Shipyard's program—previously suspended since 2017—currently training over 100 workers," said Secretary Del Toro.

High-paying, high-skilled "new-collar" jobs that restore America's manufacturing prowess are a priority of this Administration, added Secretary Del Toro, combining traditionally blue-collar trades with cutting-edge technologies.

“We must establish programs that build capacity in fields like naval architecture, engineering, and lifecycle management, as well as technical expertise in nuclear welding, robotics, software management, and additive manufacturing,” said Secretary Del Toro. “Your work on these programs will be invaluable to developing and rebuilding our nation’s shipbuilding landscape. Everyone here has a part to play in these efforts—and it is a strategic imperative that we rise to the occasion.”

U.S. Navy And Lockheed Martin Successfully Test Key Capabilities Of Advanced Off-Board Electronic Warfare System

Release from Lockheed Martin

*****

BETHESDA, Md. Dec. 12, 2023 – Lockheed Martin (NYSE: LMT) supported a successful government test of the Advanced Off-Board Electronic Warfare (AOEW) system's electronic attack capabilities while installed on a U.S. Navy MH-60R helicopter. This marked the first time in the program's development the system was able to perform engagement testing, demonstrate the ability to deter threats, and quantify system performance, while integrated and controlled by the target platform.

In partnership with the U.S. Navy at Naval Air Station Patuxent River in Maryland, this integration event tested the capabilities of the system and operability on the MH-60R helicopter platform. While the system is designed for both the MH-60R and MR-60S host platforms, only the MH-60R was used for this test.

Strategic Perspectives

“The AOEW system is one of the most advanced, complex electronic warfare systems ever developed,” said Deon Viergutz, vice president of Spectrum Convergence at Lockheed Martin. “AOEW is a force multiplier for our Sailors that will help them dominate and control the battlespace without ever firing a single shot. It is designed with evolutionary capabilities, set up to be completely programmable so that it can develop, deliver and deploy new techniques as the threat landscape changes.”

Dive Deeper

AOEW is a pod-based electronic warfare missile defense system that will provide U.S. Navy with enhanced electronic surveillance and attack capabilities against anti-ship missile threats. To date, the system has successfully undergone a series of incremental developmental and operational tests at Lockheed Martin’s facility in Syracuse, New York.

AOEW can be fully integrated with Aegis Baseline 9C.2+ and the Surface Warfare Electronic Warfare Improvement Program Block II.

The system can work independently or with other systems onboard ships and other assets.

AOEW leverages open-systems architected solutions, allowing for rapid upgrades, interoperability, reduced lifecycle costs and prompt insertion of new hardware.

The architecture and technologies of AOEW lay the groundwork to deliver similar capabilities on other assets such as small ships or unmanned aerial and surface vehicles.

What’s Next

More tests and demonstrations of the AOEW pod on host platforms are planned in 2024. The team will use the results to continue to refine system performance. Currently, AOEW is

under a low-rate initial production contract and deliveries of the first AOEW units are expected in the next year.

SERMC 3D Lab produces another AM win for Navy

Release from Naval Sea Systems Command

*****

Dec. 12, 2023

By SERMC Public Affairs

NAVAL STATION MAYPORT, Fla. – Additive Manufacturing (AM) 3D printers continue to enable sailors across the Navy with continuity of operations of the fleet's warships. New high-

resolution 3D printers at Southeast Regional Maintenance Center (SERMC) are adding the capability to manufacture intricate replacement parts on-site, directly impacting the command's ability to meet established availability deadlines and increase a naval ship's presence at sea.

Recently, USS Farragut (DDG 99) was nearing completion of a maintenance period at SERMC, when the ship's personnel discovered an irregularity with a radar system. LTJG Anton Tyree, USS Farragut Electronics Material Officer and ship's personnel identified a malfunctioning part, and as the solution, decided to consult with SERMC to produce a replacement part.

"I felt this part was a great candidate for my first 3D print design for SERMC, said Tyree. "I went to work providing as much detail as possible on the form about the part."

SERMC's Additive Manufacturing coordinator Chief Machinist Mate Nicholas Heinrich reverse-engineered the part in about 40 minutes and added the data into a computer aided design program for printing. A replacement part was produced from conception to completion in a total of 3.5 hours.

"The original part was injection molded and the 3D printed version was made with more rigidity than the original," said Heinrich, who also printed an additional replacement part so the ship would have an extra while at sea.

"If any ship on the waterfront needs the same part, we can manufacture a new one in about two hours," added Heinrich.

"This accomplishment is another historical first for our 3D Lab here," said Capt. Justin Dowd, SERMC commanding officer. "Today we demonstrated that if a customer on the waterfront needs something quickly, they can rely on SERMC's talented workforce and new printers to deliver a high-quality solution to the warfighter in a short period of time."

This new part has been underway for several weeks and is proving its ability to stand up to the demands of naval ships operating at sea.

AEROVIRONMENT AWARDED $16 MILLION U.S. NAVY CONTRACT FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF VIDEO ANALYTICS AND COMPUTER VISION RESEARCH TO SUPPORT MULTI-DOMAIN ROBOTICS INITIATIVES

Release from AeroVironment Inc.

*****

ARLINGTON, Va., December 12, 2023 – AeroVironment, Inc. today announced it received a $16,098,922 cost-plus-fixed-fee contract from the U.S. Navy for the advancement of video analytics and computer vision research to support multi-domain robotics initiatives. This contract is in support of the Small Business Innovation Research Phase III "Automated Entity Classification in Video Using Soft Biometrics" and will be managed by the Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division in Lakehurst, New Jersey.

AeroVironment's focus is on developing a video analytics software ecosystem for the government that can be used across platforms (both internal and external to AeroVironment) to provide enhanced situational awareness and capabilities for

the warfighter in a wide range of mission areas.

“This is a multi-year effort that will allow us to explore and implement new research initiatives and provide critical processing capabilities to AeroVironment products, integration partners, and other research organizations,” said Jeff Rodrian, senior vice president and general manager for the MacCready Works Segment. “This investment will allow us to optimize how current Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance (ISR) and Targeting are performed throughout the United States DoD.”

Building on 50 years of innovation, AeroVironment draws from a legacy in multi-domain robotic systems; its pioneering autonomy and advanced perception capabilities serve as a force multiplier for warfighters today and tomorrow.