

# US Coast Guard Cutter Thetis nabs \$70 million in illegal narcotics during 55-day patrol

[Release From USCG News](#)

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KEY WEST, Fla. – The crew of U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Thetis (WMEC 910) returned home to Key West, Friday, following a 55-day patrol in the Western Caribbean Sea and Eastern Pacific Ocean.

Patrolling in support of Joint Interagency Task Force South, Thetis worked alongside other Coast Guard cutters and U.S. partners to conduct counterdrug operations and fight transnational criminal organizations with the assistance of an embarked aviation detachment from the Coast Guard Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron.

While underway, Thetis seized approximately \$70 million worth of illegal narcotics over the course of two counterdrug operations. During one case, Thetis crew members apprehended three suspected drug traffickers. In another case, collaboration with a U.S. Customs and Border Protection maritime patrol aircraft led to the recovery of approximately 5,325 pounds of illegal narcotics by the Thetis' pursuit team.

“These cases highlight the need for Coast Guard presence in these regions to combat the illegal trafficking of drugs and emphasizes the operational capabilities of our platform and crew,” said Cmdr. Gavin Garcia, the commanding officer of Thetis. “I am extremely proud of our crew's dedication and

operational achievements during this patrol.”

Thetis is a 270-foot, Famous-class medium-endurance cutter. The cutter’s primary missions are counterdrug operations, migrant interdiction, enforcement of federal fishery laws as well as search and rescue.

Medium-endurance cutters fall under the command of the U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area in Portsmouth, Virginia. Coast Guard Atlantic Area oversees all Coast Guard operations east of the Rocky Mountains to the Arabian Gulf. In addition to surge operations, Atlantic Area also allocates ships to deploy to the Caribbean and Eastern Pacific to combat transnational organized crime and illicit maritime activity.

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**JB Charleston, MCAS Beaufort  
search-and-recovery team  
locates F-35B debris field**



[Release from 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing](#)

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JOINT BASE CHARLESTON, S.C. – Personnel from Joint Base Charleston and Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort, in close coordination with local authorities, have located a debris field in Williamsburg County.

The debris was discovered two hours northeast of Joint Base Charleston.

Teams from Joint Base Charleston, Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort, the 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing out of MCAS Cherry Point, Navy Region Southeast, the FAA, the Civil Air Patrol, as well as local, county, and state law enforcement across South Carolina have been working together to locate the U.S. Marine Corps F-35B.

Members of the community should avoid the area as the recovery team secures the debris field.

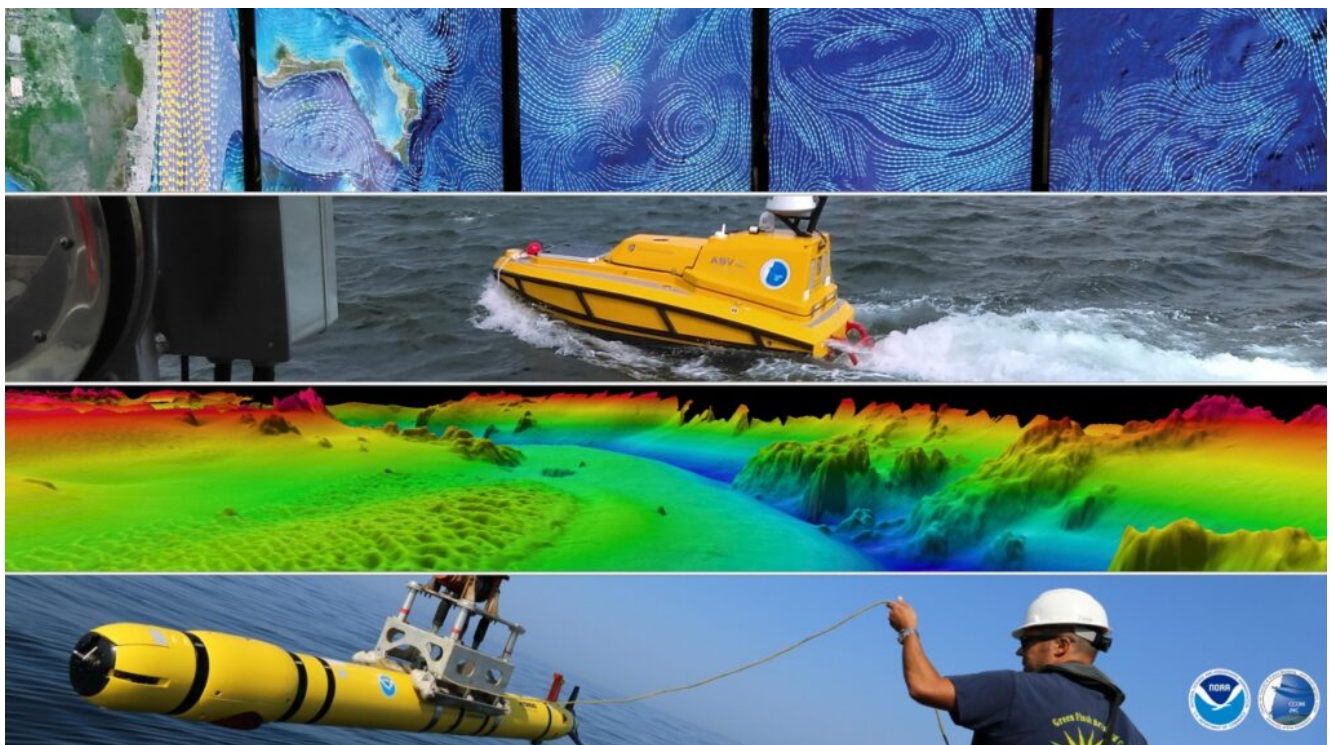
JB Charleston transferred the incident command to the U.S. Marine Corps on the evening on Sept. 19, as they began the recovery process.

The mishap is currently under investigation, and we are unable to provide additional details to preserve the integrity of the investigative process.

We would like to thank all of our mission partners, as well as local, county, and state authorities, for their dedication and support throughout the search and as we transition to the recovery phase.

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## **New ocean mapping center expands NOAA, University of New Hampshire partnership**



By NOAA Communications, September 19, 2023

NOAA and the University of New Hampshire (UNH) are expanding a 24-year ocean and Great Lakes mapping partnership through the creation of a new Center of Excellence for Operational Ocean and Great Lakes Mapping.

“NOAA and UNH have a long history of collaborating to advance the latest technologies and tools to map our ocean, coasts and Great Lakes – a cornerstone of the blue economy,” said Rick Spinrad, Ph.D., NOAA Administrator. “Our continued partnership on the Center of Excellence will help build a workforce ready to tackle the mapping challenges of the future, and further our understanding of our changing ocean and coasts.”

“The University of New Hampshire’s world-class Center for Coastal and Ocean Mapping and Joint Hydrographic Center has led the way for more than two decades in ocean mapping, helping ensure safe marine transportation and understanding coastal hazards. This leadership is affirmed by NOAA locating a new Center of Excellence for Operational Ocean and Great Lakes Mapping on UNH’s campus. With this \$8 million NOAA grant I helped secure, New Hampshire’s ongoing research and training programs will remain ahead of the curve in this leading field,” said Senator Jeanne Shaheen, chair of the Senate Appropriations subcommittee that funds NOAA.

The Center of Excellence is funded through \$10 million in NOAA’s FY 2023 budget, and will complement existing research, technical expertise and advanced educational programs at the [NOAA-UNH Joint Hydrographic Center and UNH’s Center for Coastal Ocean Mapping](#). The Center of Excellence will focus on the following priorities:

- Delivering practical hydrographic training and fostering workforce development for ocean mapping operations.
- Providing technical expertise and systems support for NOAA’s mapping operations on an increasingly diverse set

of platforms, including new ships and uncrewed survey vessels.

- Partnering with academia and industry to transition ocean mapping research to operations.

“Accurate and up-to-date maps of our ocean, coasts and Great Lakes are critical to maritime commerce, transportation and recreation, and directly support resilient coastal communities,” said Nicole LeBoeuf, director of NOAA’s National Ocean Service. “This new Center of Excellence will build on existing collaboration with UNH as we implement cutting-edge mapping technology and train the next generation of ocean and coastal mapping professionals.”

“NOAA’s Office of Coast Survey is excited to work with the University of New Hampshire as we develop and operate the Center of Excellence for Operational Ocean and Great Lakes Mapping,” said RDML Ben Evans, director of NOAA’s Office of Coast Survey. “This Center will amplify our efforts to transition research to operations, provide technical support to our fleet, and generate, develop and diversify our mapping workforce, all in collaboration with our academic, public and private sector partners.”

A portion of the funding will be used by UNH to construct a new, state-of-the-art ocean mapping facility that will serve as the focal point of a campus innovation hub to bring together academia, industry and government. The new facility will include office and instructional space, as well as a large, high-ceiling area with overhead cranes – known as a high bay – for storing, outfitting and staging bulky equipment and small vessels. Upon completion, the facility would provide a shared space for collaboration between NOAA staff from the Joint Hydrographic Center and Center of Excellence, UNH faculty and staff and ocean industry partners.

“The Center of Excellence will build upon our decades-long partnership with NOAA, as well as grow the critical research field of ocean and Great Lakes mapping, where we can engage with industry leaders to develop and train the next generation of mappers,” said Marian McCord, senior vice provost for research, economic engagement and outreach at the University of New Hampshire. “NOAA will anchor UNH’s new mixed-use complex, The Edge, which will be the core of activity for faculty, students, industry and government to come together, share ideas and execute cutting-edge concepts. This breeding ground for innovation and invention will be a key player in providing economic growth for the town of Durham and growing the workforce in the state of New Hampshire.”

Ocean mapping data is the basis for researching, exploring and characterizing our nation’s ocean, coasts and Great Lakes in order to support maritime commerce, transportation and emergency response activities. Ocean and Great Lakes mapping provides foundational data for a wide range of key NOAA priorities, including modeling and forecasting water levels, currents, storm surge and tsunami inundation; fisheries habitat identification; marine protected area site selection and management; and environmentally sound offshore energy development. Learn more about NOAA’s mapping responsibilities through the [Office of Coast Survey](#).

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# F-35B Loss is the Fourth for the Marine Corps



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ARLINGTON, Va. – The pilot of a Marine Corps F-35B Lightning II strike fighter ejected safely near Charleston, South Carolina, on September 17, but search-and-recovery efforts for the aircraft are ongoing, a Marine Corps official said.

“The search-and-recovery efforts for the aircraft are ongoing, and we are thankful to the agencies assisting in this effort,” said Major Kevin Stephensen, a Marine Corps spokesperson in the Communication Directorate of Headquarters, Marine Corps, in a Sept. 18 update. “The mishap is currently under investigation. The Department of the Navy has a well-defined process for investigating aircraft mishaps. We are unable to provide additional details to preserve the integrity of the investigatory process.”

The pilot and aircraft were assigned to Marine Fighter Attack Training Squadron 501 (VMFAT-501) at Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort, South Carolina. The squadron is the East Coast fleet replacement squadron for the F-35B pilots and maintenance personnel.

The loss of the F-35B is the third for VMFAT-501. On Oct. 16, 2016, one of its F-35Bs caught fire and landed safely, but the aircraft was a write-off. On Sept. 2, 2018, the squadron lost an aircraft because of an engine failure.

On Sept. 29, 2020, an F-35B from another squadron collided with a KC-130J and crashed in southern California.

Another F-35B crashed on Dec. 15, 2022, at Naval Air Station-Joint Reservation Base Fort Worth, Texas, but the aircraft had not yet been delivered to the Marine Corps and was flown at the time by an Air Force pilot.

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## **USS Marinette (LCS 25) Commissions the Wright Way**



[Release from Littoral Combat Ship Squadron Two \(LCSRON 2\) Public Affairs](#)

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Menominee, Michigan. – The U.S. Navy commissioned its newest Freedom-variant littoral combat ship USS Marinette (LCS 25) September 16, 2023, in Menominee, Michigan.

“It is a day filled with pride for many many men and women who spent countless hours building this great Navy ship right here in Marinette. It is an honor and a privilege to stand before you on this momentous occasion as we welcome this remarkable ship into the proud and historic lineage of the nation’s fleet.” said the Honorable Steve Genisot, Mayor of Marinette, Wisconsin. “On behalf of the city of Marinette, you are the heart and soul of this ship. We’re privileged to look forward to this distinct moment, may she sail proudly and return home safely.”

Guest speakers for the event also included the Honorable Mike

Gallagher, U.S. Representative, Wisconsin's 8th District, who delivered the commissioning ceremony's principal address. Remarks were also provided by the Honorable Jennifer Granholm, ship's sponsor, the Honorable Russell Rumbaugh, Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Financial Management and Comptroller; Vice Adm. Darse E. Crandall, Jr., Judge Advocate General of the Navy; the Honorable Jean Stegeman, Mayor of Menominee, Michigan; the Honorable Steve Genisot, Mayor of Marinette, Wisconsin; and Mr. Chauncey McIntosh, Vice President and General Manager, Lockheed Martin Integrated Warfare Systems and Sensors.

"We remain steadfast and committed to dedicate this LCS platform and our continued partnership with the United States Navy to innovate for the future and to improve and evolve this warfighting capability," said McIntosh. "I know that it is her crew that will bring her to life and carry on the spirit of Marinette and Menominee."

The ship sponsor, The Honorable Jennifer Granholm, Secretary, U.S. Department of Energy, gave the first order to "man our ship and bring her to life."

"I am honored to be one of her many parents and I was very humbled when I was asked to be her sponsor. I am particularly proud that she is named after a great city," Granholm reflected. "May the USS Marinette join the mighty Navy American fleet! Thank you to those of you out here to crafted our warrior, who laid our keel, who welded her to precision. May she carry with her on her missions around the globe the spirit of her namesake."

USS Marinette (LCS 25) was built by the Lockheed Martin and Fincantieri Marinette Marine in Marinette, Wisconsin, the ship was authorized on March 31, 2016, and named on Sept. 22, 2016. It was christened Nov. 20, 2021, and completed acceptance trials the following year. The ship was delivered to the U.S.

Navy on Feb. 6, 2023.

“These men and women aboard USS Marinette are the absolute best and brightest and truly represent the thousands of Sailors standing watch around the world today.” said Cmdr. Shane Brewer, Marinette’s commanding officer. “This crew has truly embodied our motto Freedom Done Right and have embraced our namesake city; I couldn’t be prouder of them.”

The ceremony featured early successes, cap milestones, fair wishes and following seas while showcasing a weeklong series of events celebrating the ship, its crew, community and namesake city.

USS Marinette is the first U.S. Navy ship to bear and honor Marinette, Wisconsin. USS Marinette is the only Navy vessel that has been built christened and commissioned in its namesake city.

LCS is a fast, agile, mission-focused platform designed for operation in near-shore environments yet capable of open-ocean operation. It is designed to defeat asymmetric “anti-access” threats such as mines, quiet diesel submarines and fast surface craft. They are capable of supporting forward presence, maritime security, sea control, and deterrence.

USS Marinette will be homeported at Naval Station Mayport, Florida.

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**USS SAN JACINTO (CG-56)**

# DECOMMISSIONS, HONORING 35 YEARS OF SERVICE



[Release from U.S. Fleet Forces Command](#)

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16 September 2023

NORFOLK, Virginia – USS San Jacinto (CG-56) honored more than three decades of naval service during a decommissioning ceremony at Naval Station Norfolk, Sept. 15.

Vice Adm. Jim Kilby, deputy commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command, who previously served two tours aboard San Jacinto, presided over the ceremony and provided keynote remarks.

“When we serve on a ship, it becomes part of us, I mean who we are, how we think, and how we conduct ourselves.” said Vice

Adm. Kilby. "San Jacinto is the most formative and significant ship I have ever served on. I worked for five consecutive commanding officers, as Operations Officers and Executive Officer. I owe San Jacinto and many of you an unpayable debt of gratitude."

Capt. Christopher E. Marvin, who served as the twentieth and final commanding officer of San Jacinto, oversaw a crew of 30 officers and 300 enlisted members, and led the warship during their final deployment in the Mediterranean Sea as part of the Harry S. Truman Carrier Strike Group in support of U.S. 6th Fleet and NATO exercises in 2022.

"The professionalism and warfighting excellence San Jacinto has imparted on those that have served aboard over 35 years will provide an enduring legacy and serve the Navy and nation for years to come."

San Jacinto is the tenth Ticonderoga-Class cruiser, and the third warship in the Navy named for the Battle of San Jacinto. The first San Jacinto was a frigate built in 1851, fought in the Civil War for the Union, and was sold in 1871. The second San Jacinto (CVL 30) was an aircraft carrier that was commissioned Nov. 15, 1943, fought in WWII and was decommissioned March 1, 1947.

The San Jacinto's construction began Oct. 5, 1984, at Ingalls Shipbuilding in Pascagoula, Mississippi. Her keel was laid July 24, 1985. She was launched on Nov. 14, 1986, and christened Jan. 24, 1987 by the warship's sponsor, Dr. Wendy Lee Gramm, wife of United States Senator from Texas, Phil Gramm.

San Jacinto was commissioned on Jan. 23, 1988, in Houston, Texas, by then-Vice President George H.W. Bush, who himself served aboard the second San Jacinto (CVL 30) during World War II.

Since her maiden deployment in 1989, the warship has demonstrated the combat credibility of our Navy and has served as an exemplar for the Navy's mission to defend freedom, preserve economic prosperity, and keep the seas open and free.

In August 1990, she executed short-fused deployment in support of Operation Desert Shield, where she served as Red Sea Battle Force Anti-Air Warfare Commander and launched the first Tomahawk Cruise missiles ever fired in combat during the opening salvos of Operation Desert Storm.

Other operation highlights include: directly supporting Operations Southern Watch, Inherent Resolve, and Iraqi Freedom; counter terrorism operations following the September 11 attacks; various maritime interdiction and interception operations; humanitarian assistance and disaster relief efforts as well as a sustained focus on partnership building during multi-national, Joint, and NATO exercises.

In January 2020, she deployed as a part of the Dwight D. Eisenhower strike group to the Arabian Sea, breaking the U.S. Navy record for consecutive days at sea at 206.

The name San Jacinto honors the April 21, 1836 battle by the San Jacinto River in Texas, where Gen. Sam Houston and his greatly outnumbered Texas soldiers won independence for the Republic of Texas, decisively defeating Gen. Santa Anna and his 1,200-1,500 man Mexican Army. Houston made an eloquent speech to his troops, closing with inspiring words, "Victory is certain! ... Remember the Alamo!"

Embodying that same toughness, grit, and tenacity, San Jacinto Sailors adopted this same mantra.

"Throughout her service, San Jacinto executed 16 deployments,

many availabilities, and as many training cycles. She was upgraded with the latest combat systems, her crew professionally trained over her life to continue to be a true lynchpin in our Fleet,” said Kilby. “By my rough estimates she has had over 6,000 Sailors serve on her and steamed over 500,000 nautical miles during deployments. She earned 15 Battle E’s as a testament to her sustained excellence. San Jacinto’s legacy is a tribute to her crews, all of us, she certainly lived up to her motto, “Victory is Certain.”

In the warship’s storied 35 years of service, her crew has been awarded the Chief of Naval Operations Commendation, Humanitarian Service Medal, Southwest Asia Service Medal, Joint Meritorious Unit Commendation, Secretary of the Navy Letter of Commendation, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Armed Forces Service Medal, Navy Unit Commendation, Presidential Unit Citation, Meritorious Unit Commendation, and Navy E Ribbon.

San Jacinto will be inactivated and towed to the Navy’s Inactive Ship Maintenance Facility in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania where they will be in a Logistic Support Asset (LSA) status.

For more news from Commander, Naval Surface Force Atlantic, visit [www.navy.mil/local/cnsp/](http://www.navy.mil/local/cnsp/), <https://www.dvidshub.net/unit/COMNAVSURFLANT>, and <https://www.surflant.usff.navy.mil/>.

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**SECNAV      Names      Ship      After**

# American Abolitionist, Social Activist Harriet Tubman



CHURCH CREEK, MD, UNITED STATES

09.17.2023

## [Office of the Secretary of the Navy](#)

Secretary of the Navy (SECNAV) Carlos Del Toro announced today that he named a U.S. Navy ship after American abolitionist and social activist Harriet Tubman, Sept. 17.

SECNAV Del Toro made the announcement during an Emancipation Celebration at Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Visitor Center in Church Creek, Md. National Park Service Director Chuck Sams, who is also a U.S. Navy veteran, joined Secretary Del Toro for the announcement at the park.

The future USNS Harriet Tubman (T-AO 213) follows the tradition of naming John Lewis-class oilers after civil rights

leaders and is the second vessel to bear her name. The first was a Liberty ship built in the United States during World War II.

“It’s an honor to maintain the naming tradition for our John Lewis-class oilers, and Harriet Tubman is more than deserving of this recognition,” said Del Toro. “She was born into unimaginable circumstances, but she dedicated her life to facing great danger and adversity, becoming a ‘conductor of freedom’, helping others escape slavery. In addition, during the Civil War, Tubman was the first African American woman to serve formally in the military. Her legacy deserves our nation’s continued recognition, and our fleet benefits from having her name emblazoned on the hull of one of our great ships.”

Born into slavery on Maryland’s Eastern Shore, in 1822, Tubman was named Araminta by her enslaved parents, Ben and Rit Ross. She changed her name to Harriet after marrying freeman John Tubman in 1844. Tubman escaped slavery in 1849, when her enslaver died and she was to be sold. Sept. 17, 1849, marks the day Harriet Tubman made the important decision to self-liberate. It was this date that she and her brothers Ben and Henry ran away; however, after a couple of weeks into their journey her brothers “disagreed with her about directions” and succumbed to the fear of being captured and convinced her to return with them. Tubman left a second time later that fall (exact date unknown) and reached freedom in Philadelphia.

In the ensuing years, she undertook numerous missions south to help at least 70 men, women, and children escape slavery. Known as “Moses,” Tubman became an iconic figure during the American Civil War, serving as a Union spy, scout, nurse and cook. In June 1863, she helped plan and execute a successful raid on Combahee Ferry near Port Royal, South Carolina, guiding Union naval steamships carrying 300 Black troops of the 2nd Carolina Volunteer Infantry Regiment (Colored). The

raid resulted in the liberation of more than 750 enslaved people. After the war, she continued to advocate for the rights of African Americans and women, speaking at a number of women's suffrage events alongside Susan B. Anthony. Tubman died in 1913 and was buried at Fort Hill Cemetery in Auburn, New York.

"This tribute commemorates the powerful legacy of one of our country's most selfless heroes," said National Park Service Director Chuck Sams. "The Underground Railroad's most famous conductor was devoted to the cause of ensuring freedom for all despite personal sacrifice and risk. A true role model for the sailors who will serve on the USNS Harriet Tubman, her passion, courage and intelligence empowered her to overcome extreme obstacles for the benefit of others."

Along with the ship's name, Del Toro also announced that the ship's sponsor will be Tina Wyatt, the great, great, great grandniece of Harriet Tubman. The ship's sponsor represents a lifelong relationship with the ship and crew. Wyatt has spent her life helping others as a nurse and also educating and sharing the legacy of Harriet Tubman.

"Harriet Ross Tubman is a symbol of faith, freedom, family, democracy and love. Aunt Harriet's legacy is an inspiration to a higher calling within us all, and overall, how we are enabled by sharing love for others and self. It is her supply from God that she had been able to supply others throughout her lifetime and still, her footprint lives on and supplies us now. Such a strong and dazzling example of symbolism in her honor, the naming of an oiler, a ship that supplies other ships with fuel and cargo to function at its highest level, is an example of what she gave in life and continues to give," said Wyatt.

The future USNS Harriet Tubman is the ninth ship of the John Lewis-class. The class and lead ship are named in honor of the

late civil rights icon Rep. John Lewis from Georgia.

The ships are designed to supply fuel to the Navy's operating carrier strike groups. The oilers have the ability to carry a load of 162,000 barrels of oil and maintain significant dry cargo capacity

Find more information about Fleet Replenishment Oilers online:

<https://www.navy.mil/Resources/Fact-Files/Display-FactFiles/Article/2222909/fleet-replenishment-oilers-t-ao/>

Find more information about Harriet Tubman at the following:

- Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park

<https://www.nps.gov/hatu/index.htm>

- Harriet Tubman UGRR

<https://dnr.maryland.gov/publiclands/pages/eastern/tubman.aspx>

- Harriet Tubman Byway

<https://harriettubmanbyway.org/>

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**Navy to Commission Future  
Littoral Combat Ship  
Marinette**



[Release from the U.S. Department of Defense](#)

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Sept. 15, 2023

The Navy will commission the future USS Marinette (LCS 25) as the newest Freedom-variant littoral combat ship (LCS) during a 10:00 a.m. CST ceremony on Saturday, Sept. 16, in Menominee, Michigan.

The Honorable Mike Gallagher, U.S. Representative, Wisconsin's 8th District, will deliver the commissioning ceremony's principal address. Remarks will also be provided by the Honorable Russell Rumbaugh, Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Financial Management and Comptroller; Vice Admiral Darse E. Crandall, Jr., Judge Advocate General of the Navy; the Honorable Jean Stegeman, Mayor of Menominee, Michigan; the Honorable Steve Genisot, Mayor of Marinette, Wisconsin; and Mr. Chauncey McIntosh, Vice President and General Manager, Lockheed Martin Integrated Warfare Systems and Sensors. The

ship's sponsor is the Honorable Jennifer Granholm, Secretary, U.S. Department of Energy.

LCS 25 is the 13th Freedom-variant LCS, the 25th in the class. She is the first naval warship to bear the name of Marinette, Michigan and the third naval vessel. Marinette (YTB-791) and Marinette County (LST 953) were previously named for the community. Marinette received its name on Sept. 22, 2016. The name recognizes the contributions of her namesake town and the great shipbuilders who bring these ships to life, ensuring they are ready to accomplish mission tasking in support our nation's maritime strategy.

The LCS class consists of two variants, the Freedom and the Independence, designed and built by two industry teams. Lockheed Martin leads the Freedom-variant team, the odd-numbered hulls, in Marinette, Wisconsin. Austal USA leads the Independence-variant team in Mobile, Alabama, for LCS 6 and the subsequent even-numbered hulls.

Littoral combat ships are fast, optimally-manned, mission-tailored surface combatants that operate in near-shore and open-ocean environments, winning against 21st-century coastal threats. LCS integrate with joint, combined, manned and unmanned teams to support forward-presence, maritime security, sea control and deterrence missions around the globe.

The ceremony will be live streamed at: [www.dvidshub.net/webcast/31728](http://www.dvidshub.net/webcast/31728). The link becomes active approximately ten minutes prior to the event (9:50 a.m. CST).

Media may direct queries to the Navy Office of Information at (703) 697-5342. More information on the littoral combat ship program can be found at: <https://www.navy.mil/Resources/Fact-Files/Display-FactFiles/Article/2171607/littoral-combat-ship-class-lcs/>

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# U.S. Naval Forces Europe and Danish Defense Forces Train on SM-6 Missile Launcher Together



ATLANTIC OCEAN (May 26, 2021) The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Paul Ignatius (DDG 117) launches an SM-3 missile during exercise At-Sea Demo/Formidable Shield, May 26, 2021. Exercise At-Sea Demo/Formidable Shield, conducted by Naval Striking and Support Forces NATO on behalf of U.S. 6th Fleet, is a live-fire integrated air and missile defense (IAMD) exercise that improves Allied interoperability using NATO command and control reporting structures. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Nathan T. Beard)

[Release from U.S. Naval Forces Europe and Africa / U.S. Sixth Fleet Public Affairs](#)

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Sept. 15, 2023

BORNHOLM, Denmark –

In a demonstration of ongoing commitment to transatlantic security and defense interoperability, U.S. Naval Forces Europe, in conjunction with the Danish Defense Forces, will be conducting advanced convoy protection drills using the state-of-the-art, modular SM-6 missile launcher beginning the week of Sept. 18 in Bornholm, Denmark.

The SM-6 missile system stands as a testament to advanced defense technology. It possesses the capability to intercept airborne threats, including the critical interception of ballistic missiles during their terminal phase of flight. The missile's dual-capability design ensures precision engagement of both stationary terrestrial targets and dynamic maritime adversaries. The containerized configuration of the SM-6 launcher augments the U.S. Navy's operational flexibility, facilitating rapid deployment and utilization in diverse theaters of operation, thereby underlining the commitment of the United States to ensure the security interests of itself and its allies.

By conducting these operations from Danish soil, the United States reaffirms the strategic importance of Denmark as a key ally in ensuring regional stability. This exercise further solidifies the enduring defense partnership between the U.S. and Denmark, emphasizing our joint dedication to mutual security objectives and cooperative defense efforts.

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# **USS Canberra Commissioning Touched Hearts**

USS CANBERRA LCS 30  
Keel Laid 10 March 2020  
Christened 5 June 2021  
Commissioned 22 July 2023  
Sydney, Australia



Honorary Plank Owner  
Ron Spence









***The rare commissioning abroad brought people together from across the globe.***

It's always a special occasion when a new ship is commissioned and brought to life with crew, family, and friends, but the [recent commissioning of the USS Canberra](#) (LCS 30) was particularly meaningful. [Seapower](#) recently got the scuttlebutt from Ron Spence, Commissioning Committee Gift Coordinator and learned a little more about how this particular commissioning was celebrated.

While nearly every commissioning involves recognition of those [designated as plank owners](#), the individuals honored with that title for the *Canberra* received something extra special. "The plank owners' plaques were made by a gentleman names Joseph Nolin, a native citizen from Australia who now lives in Portland, Oregon," said Spence. "His company, Lumberjack Wood Products, custom made these plaques from authentic Australian

Beech wood that Mr. Nolin brought from Australia.”

Spence said, “I felt having them made from Australian wood, by a native from Australia in the shape of the continent of Australia was very special and a great way to honor the commissioning.”

“I have seen many plank owners’ plaques, but nothing as unique as this one,” he said.

The Commissioning Committee also hosted a watch party in San Diego, attended by friends, families, and supporters of the of the new LCS, including many members of the [United States Navy League](#), which has a long history of supporting and ship commissionings. “It was a wonderful experience,” said Spence, “especially when we heard family members say, ‘there is my daddy on TV.’”

“All of the events and gifts were put together by the women and men of the Commissioning Committee,” said Spence. Many of the members responsible had never met in person, “but they came together from across the globe to help make this a most memorable event,” he said.

“Something such as this had never been done before, but it was done, and done right,” Spence said.