Commandant Honors Cutter John Midgett as Decommissioning Approaches



The John Midgett is the 12th and last high-endurance cutter to be built. U.S. Coast Guard

WASHINGTON – The commandant of the Coast Guard saluted the cutter John Midgett as the ship heads for decommissioning after 48 years of service.

In a June 23 message to the Coast Guard, Adm. Karl L. Schultz commended the John Midgett crew as having embodied the cutter's motto – dedication, service, excellence.

"The John Midgett was named in honor of Chief Warrant Officer John Allen Midgett Jr., who served for nearly 40 years with the U.S. Lifesaving Service and the Coast Guard," the commandant said.

"He was one of five Midgett family members awarded the Gold Lifesaving Medal for heroic action during the rescue of 36 crewmen from the torpedoed British tanker Mirlo in 1918."

The high-endurance cutter – the 12th and final of the Hamilton class – is in an "In-Commission Special" status as it is prepared for transfer to another nation. It was named simply "Midgett" until a new Legend-class national security cutter, the Midgett, was commissioned, upon which the older Midgett's name was changed to John Midgett.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eu5cP3E1EIE

The John Midgett was built by Avondale Shipyard in Louisiana and commissioned on March 17, 1972. The cutter was homeported in Alameda, California, until it was temporarily decommissioned in 1991 to undergo fleet renovation

and modernization (FRAM). Upon completion of FRAM in 1992, the cutter changed its homeport to Seattle.

“Throughout the cutter’s distinguished career, John Midgett served in domestic and international theaters, from the Bering Sea to the South China Sea, and from the eastern Pacific Ocean to the Arabian Gulf,” the commandant’s message said.

Schultz said that the John Midgett’s “proud legacy of honorable service to the nation spanned nearly five decades.” He noted some highlights of that service:

- On Christmas Day 1996, the cutter’s crew conducted a “power rudder” tandem tow of the disabled M/V Banasea to Adak, Alaska, with the tug Agnes Foss.
- In 1999, John Midgett became the first Coast Guard cutter to deploy to the Arabian Gulf with a U.S. Navy battle group, helping to enforce U.N. Security Council sanctions against Iraq.
- From September 2006 to March 2007, the cutter deployed as part of Expeditionary Strike Group 5 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, circumnavigating the globe and transiting the Suez and Panama canals.
- While deployed to the eastern Pacific in support of Joint Interagency Task Force South from December 2016 to March 2017, John Midgett’s crew seized more than three tons of cocaine.
- During the cutter’s last year of service, it patrolled the Bering Sea and Gulf of Alaska for more than 200 days, boarding 67 fishing vessels and prosecuting 16 search-and-rescue cases, ultimately assisting 20 mariners and four vessels in distress.