Navy to Christen Guided-Missile Destroyer Lyndon B. Johnson



WASHINGTON (April 16, 2012) An artist rendering of the Zumwalt-class guided-missile destroyer USS Lyndon B. Johnson (DDG 1002). (U.S. Navy photo illustration by Lt. Shawn Eklund/Released)

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Navy will christen its newest Zumwalt-class guided missile destroyer, the future USS Lyndon B. Johnson (DDG 1002), during a 10 a.m. EST ceremony Saturday, April 27, at General Dynamics-Bath Iron Works shipyard in Bath, Maine, the Navy's Office of Information said in a release.

The third ship in the Zumwalt class, DDG 1002 is named in honor of late President Lyndon B. Johnson, who served in office from 1963 to 1969 and will be the first ship to bear his name.

Lynda Johnson Robb and Luci Johnson, the two daughters of the former president, will serve as the ship's sponsors. In a time-honored Navy tradition, the sisters will christen the ship by breaking a bottle of sparkling wine across the bow. Robb will also serve as the principal speaker.

"The future USS Lyndon B. Johnson will serve for decades as a reminder of President Johnson's service to our nation and support of a strong Navy and Marine Corps team," Navy Secretary Richard V. Spencer said. "This ship honors not only President Johnson's service, but also the service of our industry partners who are vital in making the Navy the nation needs."

Johnson served as a U.S. Navy Reserve officer before being

called to active duty after the attack on Pearl Harbor. He requested a combat assignment and served in the Pacific theater. After returning from active duty, Johnson reported to Navy leaders and Congress what he believed were deplorable living conditions for the warfighters. He continued to fight for better standards for all military members.

Johnson’s time as president was marked by the passage of programs that greatly influenced and affected education, health care and civil rights for generations to come. He signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 into law, enacting comprehensive provisions protecting the right to vote and prohibiting racial discrimination by employers. His work on civil rights continued with the passage of the Voting Rights Act, which guaranteed voting rights for all people, regardless of race.

The multimission Zumwalt-class destroyers will be capable of performing a range of deterrence, power projection, sea control, and command and control missions while allowing the Navy to evolve with new systems and missions. Zumwalt ships are 610 feet long, have a beam of 80.7 feet, displace almost 16,000 tons and can reach 30 knots.