Navy to Christen Littoral Combat Ship Santa Barbara

The Navy will christen the newest Independence-variant littoral combat ship, the future USS Santa Barbara (LCS 32) on Saturday, Oct. 16. *U.S. NAVY*

ARLINGTON, Va. – The U.S. Navy will christen its newest Independence-variant littoral combat ship (LCS), the future USS Santa Barbara (LCS 32), during a 10 a.m. CDT ceremony Saturday, Oct. 16 in Mobile, Alabama.

Meredith Berger, performing the duties of undersecretary of the Navy, will deliver the keynote address at the ceremony. Remarks will also be provided by Vice Adm. Jeffrey Trussler, deputy chief of naval operations for information warfare; Oscar Gutierrez, mayor pro tempore for the city of Santa Barbara, California.; and Rusty Murdaugh, president of Austal USA.

Lolita Zinke, wife of former Secretary of Interior Ryan Zinke and the ship's sponsor, will participate in a time-honored Navy tradition to christen the ship by breaking a bottle of sparkling wine across the bow.

"Tomorrow we christen the third USS Santa Barbara, named for the beautiful coastal city in central California," Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro said. "In so doing we move one step closer to welcoming a new ship to Naval service and transitioning the platform from a mere hull number to a ship with a name and spirit. There is no doubt future Sailors aboard this ship will carry on the same values of honor, courage and commitment upheld by crews from an earlier vessel that bore this name."

LCS is a fast, agile, mission-focused platform designed to operate in near-shore environments, winning against 21st-

century coastal threats. The platform is capable of supporting forward presence, maritime security, sea control and deterrence.

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

LCS 32 is the 16th Freedom-variant LCS and 32nd in the LCS class. It is the third Navy ship named in honor of the city of Santa Barbara. The first USS Santa Barbara (Id. No. 4522) was a single-screw steel freighter that was placed into commission by the Navy on April 15, 1918, in New York. The ship made four round-trip voyages to Europe during and after World War I and was decommissioned Aug. 6, 1919, and returned to her owners. Later renamed American, the ship was sunk by German submarine torpedoes off the east coast of British Honduras (modern-day Belize) on June 11, 1942. The second USS Santa Barbara (AE-28) was commissioned on July 11, 1970. The Kilauea-class ammunition ship completed deployments to the Mediterranean, the western Pacific, and the Caribbean before being decommissioned in 1998.