

SOCIETY OF SPONSORS OF THE UNITED STATES NAVY
President's Report - May 2012 – April 2013

USNS *CESAR CHAVEZ* (T-AKE 14)

On May 5, 2012, I attended the christening of USNS *CESAR CHAVEZ* (T-AKE 14) at General Dynamics NASSCO Shipyard. USNS *CESAR CHAVEZ* is the final ship of a class of 14 T-AKE dry cargo-ammunition ships for the Navy. Chavez served in the Navy from 1944-1946 and became a civil rights activist and a leader in the American labor movement. Coincidentally, the tides were right for the launch to take place on Cinco de Mayo. Cesar Chavez' widow, Helen Fabela Chavez, is the Sponsor. Nearly 500 members of the Chavez family attended the ceremony. I enjoyed meeting Helen and many members of her family. Helen was very sweet, and at 84 years young, she was capably supported by her four daughters who were her Matrons of Honor. The event was an emotional celebration of the accomplishments of Cesar Chavez. Juan M. Garcia III, Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Manpower and Reserve Affairs, was the principal speaker; I enjoyed his powerful remarks very much. He said "This is a great night for the US Navy and the Marine Corps. The christening of a naval vessel in the name of Cesar Chavez reminds us just how far our Navy and Marine Corps have come. When Chavez enlisted in the Navy as a 17 year old... he served in the Pacific on this ship's ancestor, looking for opportunity and training, he found a Navy in which Mexican-Americans and all minorities were restricted to service in kitchen duty, as deck hands, or chipping paint... Today in our all-volunteer force, we strive to be a Navy where anyone can earn a place at the American table, through service to this country. It's America at its best. This is the Navy Cesar Chavez was looking for when he enlisted. With the christening of the USNS *CESAR CHAVEZ*, this is a great night for the US Navy and the Marine Corps. This is a great night for the Nation." Helen capably broke the traditional bottle of champagne against the bow of her ship. It was an evening launch and the ship slid down into the water with fireworks going off overhead and streamers flowing down from the railing; it was very exciting!

USS *SAN DIEGO* (LPD 22)

On May 19, 2012, I attended the commissioning of USS *SAN DIEGO* (LPD 22). The Sponsor is SOS Life Member Linda Winter (Mrs. Donald C. Winter), spouse of the former Secretary of the Navy. LPD 22 is named for the city of San Diego, the principal homeport of the Pacific fleet, and honors the people of "America's Finest City" and its leaders for their continuous support of the military. *SAN DIEGO* is an amphibious transport dock ship, the sixth ship of the LPD 17 San Antonio class, and is designed to carry Marines, landing craft, vehicles, and aircraft. She is the fourth Navy ship to be named for San Diego but the first to be stationed there. It was an outstanding commissioning! The speakers were interesting, informative, and inspirational. ADM Mark Ferguson, Vice Chief of Naval Operations, delivered the ceremony's

principal address. He said "SAN DIEGO and her crew are coming into the Navy at an important time and our expectations for this ship are very high." VADM Richard Hunt, Commander, Naval Surface Forces, said *SAN DIEGO* is the fourth ship to bear the name and was the only ship in the US fleet to be homeported in its namesake city. MajGen Ronald Bailey, Commanding General of the 1st Marine Division, said *SAN DIEGO* could carry 699 Marines, with a surge capacity of 800. He said "That's 800 rifles, ladies and gentlemen. Every Marine is a rifleman who will carry a machine gun, and every enemy of our nation becomes a target." Linda included some thoughtful, personal remarks as she issued the order to "Man our ship and bring her to life!" As always, it was lots of fun to be part of the crowd attending the commissioning. We were thrilled when the officers and crew manned their ship! If that wasn't enough, Marines from the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force, based at Camp Pendleton, CA, soon joined the Sailors to man the rails of the ship to remind us that the Navy/Marine Corps team will serve aboard. It was a great Navy/Marine Corps day! Several days later, as I was heading to catch my flight back east, I saw *SAN DIEGO* underway in San Diego Bay, most likely heading out on her first mission.

United States Naval Academy Prizes and Awards Ceremony

On May 24, 2012, I attended the United States Naval Academy Prizes and Awards Ceremony to present the Society's annual award for proficiency in the art of practical shiphandling. This year, we presented a check for \$150.00. The recipient was Midshipman First Class Daniel J. Watts who will join the Navy as a Submarine (Nuclear) Officer. He wrote a grateful letter thanking the Society for the award.

USS MISSISSIPPI (SSN 782)

On June 2, 2012, I attended the commissioning of USS *MISSISSIPPI* (SSN 782), the ninth Virginia-class attack submarine, at Ingalls Shipbuilding in Pascagoula, MS. The Chairman's Reception was held on Friday night at the Biloxi Civic Center; it was a fantastic event that was unlike any previous reception I had attended. Apparently, Governor Phil Bryant had encouraged the Commissioning Committee to make the commissioning "the signature event of the year for the state of Mississippi" and I think they succeeded! There were over 25 separate serving stations manned by Mississippians from various restaurants throughout the state featuring food from all around the state. *MISSISSIPPI* was built under a teaming agreement between General Dynamics Electric Boat and Huntington Ingalls Industries - Newport News. The ship was delivered to the Navy a year early and under budget, in just over 62 months, making her the fastest delivery yet for a Virginia class submarine. The ship's Sponsor was SOS Life Member Allison Stiller, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Ships). The principal speaker at the commissioning ceremony was Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus. He said "The long history of naming ships Mississippi is a testament to the state's history in shipbuilding and to the resilience, the patriotism, and the strength of the people of Mississippi." The state motto, "*Virtute et Armis*" is Latin for "By Valor and Arms" and it is now the ship's motto as well.

VADM John Richardson, Commander, Submarine Force, US Atlantic Fleet and Commander, Allied Submarine Command, Norfolk, pointed out that this is "a true warrior salutation; something said before going into battle." In the time-honored tradition, Allison enthusiastically issued the order to "Man our ship and bring her to life!" and *MISSISSIPPI*'s crew ran aboard. It was a great Navy day!

SOMERSET (LPD 25)

On July 28, 2012, I attended the christening of *SOMERSET* (LPD 25) at the Huntington Ingalls Industries shipyard in Avondale, LA. The Sponsor was Mary Jo Myers (Mrs. Richard Myers), spouse of the former Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff. Her Matrons of Honor were their lovely daughters, Erin and Nicole. LPD 25 is a San Antonio-class amphibious transport dock named in honor of the courageous passengers and crew of United Airlines Flight 93 whose actions prevented terrorist hijackers from reaching their destination. Their airplane crashed near Shanksville in Somerset County, PA, on September 11, 2001. The principal speaker was Patrick White, president of Families of Flight 93. He said "We thank our nation for honoring and remembering those 40 aboard Flight 93 with this extraordinary tribute, the Somerset," White's cousin died on board the flight. He said "These passengers prevented additional tragedy on September 11th through their selfless actions. The *SOMERSET* and her steadfast crew - now and in the future - are both a living tribute and vigilant reminder of sacrifice made to protect the lives of unknown others." Rear Adm. David H. Lewis, the Navy's Program Executive Officer (Ships), said "This ship is named to honor that indomitable fighting spirit - the timeless American who will fight for the most basic human rights. This ship will sail until the year 2050 and beyond. Tens of thousands of sailors will serve aboard her, and thousands more will sail in company with her. Millions of people throughout the world will see her, visit her, and read about her exploits. They will wonder why the name Somerset was given to such a great and fine warship. They will read, they will see, they will learn, and they will be amazed." Mary Jo enthusiastically broke the traditional bottle of champagne against the bow of her ship and the crowd cheered. It was a great Navy/Marine Corps day!

USNS CHOCTAW COUNTY (JHSV 2)

On September 15, 2012, I attended the christening of *USNS CHOCTAW COUNTY* (JHSV 2) at Austal USA Shipyard in Mobile, Alabama. The ceremony was held in Austal's final assembly bay underneath the ship! Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus was the principal speaker at the event. The Secretary had named the ship after three counties in the United States that share the name; they are located in Mississippi, Alabama, and Oklahoma. He had named the 29 women from his 1966 graduating class at Ackerman High School to serve as the ship's sponsors. Ackerman High School is in Ackerman, Mississippi, the county seat of Choctaw County. Mabus said "I chose to name this joint high speed vessel after Choctaw County where core American values of hard work, putting family first, and giving back to your community are on constant display. I could think of no better representatives of these values

than the women of Ackerman High School's class of 1966. Each represents the best of the American spirit and our enduring American values. I am honored they accepted the invitation to serve as sponsors for this fine ship." Mabus named retired teacher Theresa Gilliam Pitts as the Lead Sponsor. In her remarks, Theresa said "The ladies of the Class of '66 are from the smallest county in population of the 3 Choctaw Counties, Choctaw County Mississippi. Even though we were small in population, with less than 9,000 residents, the community we grew up in was and continues to be a leader in contributions to the state and nation. Having produced two governors, a Miss America, and of course a Secretary of Navy, Choctaw County Mississippi has demonstrated caring and nurturing citizens. As sponsors of the Choctaw County, the ladies of the class of '66 pledge to serve as a link between the ship's namesake and her crew. For all crews who serve the *CHOCTAW COUNTY* in years to come, we as sponsors pledge to continue a lasting relationship with you that extends beyond this christening." Of the 29 named sponsors, only 18 were able to participate in the ceremony. Theresa Pitts said "May God bless this ship and all who sail with her" in unison with 17 of her classmates. Then Theresa broke the traditional bottle of champagne against the bow of her ship. Red, white, and blue streamers filled the air as the crowd cheered. It was a wonderful Navy day!

USS FORT WORTH (LCS 3)

On September 22, 2012, I attended the commissioning of USS *FORT WORTH* (LCS 3) at the Port of Galveston in Galveston, Texas. The Honorable Kay Granger, U. S. Representative, Texas, is the ship's Sponsor. The littoral combat ship is specifically designed to defeat "anti-access" threats in shallow, coastal water regions, including fast surface craft, quiet diesel submarines, and mines. *FORT WORTH* will be manned by one of two rotational crews (similar in concept to the blue and gold rotational crews assigned to Trident submarines). Each Sailor must maintain high levels of proficiency in multiple fields to optimize ship operability with multiple crews. Former Deputy Defense Secretary Gordon England, who conceived the idea for the littoral combat ships as a way to combat new threats like piracy and terrorism, was the principal speaker. He said the LCS is "one of the most advanced ships at sea. Despots and pirates will not find new lines of work simply because the USS *FORT WORTH* finds her place in our fleet. Along with the rest of our military, she will be a vital asset, backing many other facets of national power. She will respond to international events—and she will help shape to them." Vice Chief of Naval Operations (VCNO), Adm. Mark E. Ferguson III, officially placed the ship in service and said "Our expectations for you and the ship are high. The ship arrives at a time when nearly half of our ships in the U.S. Navy are underway on any given day and we are faced with increasing challenges around the globe. We will be a stronger Navy as *FORT WORTH* takes her place among the ships of the line." Kay Granger said "For a city that was founded by the military, having a ship that bears our name is a special honor. I have the pleasure of standing before you today as a member of the Fort Worth community and the privilege to stand here as the sponsor of USS *FORT WORTH*. As we hand this powerful

weapon to the U.S. Navy, we are welcoming these Sailors into the Fort Worth family. These brave crews will guarantee the USS *FORT WORTH* will overcome challenges, and in doing so, will guarantee our freedom we so often take for granted.” Kay gave the order to the crew to "man our ship and bring her to life!" The crowd cheered enthusiastically. It was a great Navy/Marine Corps day!

USS *MICHAEL MURPHY* (DDG 112)

On October 6, 2012, I attended the commissioning of USS *MICHAEL MURPHY* (DDG 112) at Pier 88 in New York City, New York. SOS Life Member Mrs. Maureen Murphy, mother of the ship’s namesake, was the ship’s Sponsor. The ship honors Navy SEAL Lt. Michael P. Murphy, a Long Island native, who became the first American awarded the Medal of Honor during the Afghanistan War when he was killed during an ambush in 2005. At the beginning of the ceremony, several members of the U.S. Navy Parachute Team (the Leap Frogs) jumped out of a helicopter, floated down through the sky, and descended into the commissioning ceremony; one of them was carrying the American flag and another was carrying the SEAL Trident flag. Secretary of the Navy Mabus said “This ship honors the courage, service and sacrifice of Lt. Michael Murphy, his Red Wings brothers, fellow SEALs, special operators, and service members around the world who answer the call of duty every day.” He also said the ship would guarantee that Murphy’s story would be retold. Chief of Naval Operations, ADM Jonathan W. Greenert also spoke. Greenert reflected on the ship’s massive power and ability to protect our nation’s freedom. He said “USS *MICHAEL MURPHY*, the most flexible, lethal and multi-mission capable ship of its kind, represents the backbone of our surface combatant fleet. It is one of the best destroyers in the world. This ship will operate forward around the globe, assuring allies, projecting power and defending our nation and like its namesake, Lt. Michael Murphy, this ship will serve to protect, influence, and win in an era of uncertainty.” Maureen smiled broadly as she stepped away from behind the podium, spoke into the microphone, and joyfully said "man our ship and bring her to life!" The crowd was cheering as the crew manned the rails. A military helicopter performed a fly-over maneuver at the conclusion of the ceremony. It was a great Navy day!

***AMERICA* (LHA 6)**

On October 20, 2012, I attended the christening of the newest amphibious assault ship *AMERICA* (LHA 6) at Ingalls Shipbuilding in Pascagoula, Mississippi. Mrs. Lynne Pace (spouse of the former Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff), was the ship’s Sponsor. This is the fourth ship in Navy history to be named America. Amphibious warships are designed to support the Marine Corps which will maintain the aviation elements onboard the ship. Amphibious ships are also called upon to support humanitarian and other contingency missions. The 844-foot ship will be a flexible, multi-mission platform necessary to quickly respond to incidents worldwide and provide forward presence and project power as part of joint, interagency, and multinational maritime expeditionary forces. *AMERICA* will be

homeported in San Diego. The keynote speaker was Gen. James F. Amos, commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps. He said "Know that your Navy and Marine Corps team will put *AMERICA* to good use. As we celebrate this moment, rest assured that this ship will play an important role in keeping our nation secure and its liberty and interests secure for decades to come." During the ceremony Vice Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mark Ferguson said "When *AMERICA* joins the fleet, we'll be a stronger, more flexible, and a better Marine Corps team. We need this ship." Lynne Pace said "It's kind of like a mini-aircraft carrier... Thank you for building such a magnificent ship. You have put love, care and incredible craftsmanship into it. You are Americans working on an American ship that will carry Americans defending the American lifestyle." Lynne broke the traditional bottle of champagne against the bow of her ship to the cheers of an enthusiastic crowd. It was a great Navy/Marine Corps day!

MINNESOTA (SSN 783)

On October 27, 2012, I attended the christening of *MINNESOTA* (SSN 783) at Huntington Ingalls Industries - Newport News in Newport News, VA. Ellen Roughead, a Minnesota native and the wife of former Chief of Naval Operations ADM Gary Roughead, is the ship's Sponsor. Minnesota, the "land of 10,000 lakes" is a land of diverse, natural beauty. It is the 12th largest and 21st most populous state in the U.S. As the first submarine ever to be named for the state, *MINNESOTA* honors both the spirit of America and the people of the North Star State. The ship's motto is "*Ex Septentrio, Virtus*" (From the North, Power) referencing the "North Star State" and the tremendous endurance and war fighting capabilities of the Virginia Class Submarine. *MINNESOTA* is the 10th ship of the Virginia class and is on track to deliver to the Navy in well ahead of the contract delivery date. Because of their inherent stealth, endurance, mobility, and firepower, Virginia class submarines are designed to dominate the world's littoral and deep waters while conducting anti-submarine warfare; anti-surface ship warfare; strike warfare; special operation forces support; intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance; irregular warfare; and mine warfare missions. RADM Dave Johnson, Program Executive Officer, Submarines, was the principal speaker. Ellen, a tireless supporter of military families and continuing education initiatives for Navy spouses, broke the traditional bottle of champagne against the bow of her ship to a rousing cheer and red, white, and blue balloons filled the air. It was a great Navy day!

USS ENTERPRISE (CVN 65)

On December 1, 2012, I attended the Inactivation Ceremony for *ENTERPRISE* (CVN 65) in Norfolk, VA. She was the world's first nuclear-powered aircraft carrier and one of the most decorated ships in the Navy. The ceremony at her home port, Naval Station Norfolk, retired *ENTERPRISE* from active service after an illustrious 51-year career. *ENTERPRISE* was launched at Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Co. in 1960. Her sponsor was Mrs. William B. Franke, wife of the Secretary of the Navy. The sponsor's descendants were included in the inactivation ceremony. Thousands of former crew members, ship builders, and

their families lined the pier to bid farewell. Chief of Naval Operations, ADM Jonathan W. Greenert, USN, was the principal speaker. *ENTERPRISE* was the eighth U.S. ship to bear the name. Current and former crew members had lobbied heavily to the name so the legacy would live on. During a pre-recorded video message, Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus announced that a future aircraft carrier (CVN 80) would be named USS *ENTERPRISE*. The announcement drew a standing ovation. During the ceremony, a 200-pound time capsule filled with *ENTERPRISE* memorabilia was delivered to ADM Greenert for safekeeping. The capsule contains notes from sailors, insignia, and small pieces of the ship. When the future USS *ENTERPRISE* joins the fleet, the time capsule will be delivered to the commanding officer.

USNS *MONTFORD POINT* (MLP 1)

On March 2, 2013, I attended the christening of USNS *MONTFORD POINT* (MLP 1) at the General Dynamics NASSCO shipyard in San Diego, CA. The Sponsor is Alexis "Jackie" Bolden, spouse of Major General Charles Bolden, USMC (Ret.), the current NASA Administrator. *MONTFORD POINT* is operated by Military Sealift Command (MSC) and is the first ship of its class. This new mobile landing platform (MLP) will serve as a floating pier to allow an amphibious force to offload heavy combat vehicles and bulk supplies at sea, without having to fight a potentially bloody battle to capture a major seaport. The name Montford Point honors the 20,000 African-American Marine Corps recruits who trained at Camp Montford Point, NC. from 1942 to 1949. Thirty-five of the original Montford Point Marines attended the christening. Those men had to "fight for the right to fight." The Montford Point Marine Association (MPMA) is a non-profit Veteran organization established to perpetuate their legacy and they were well represented by the MPMA membership who attended the christening. GEN James F. Amos, Commandant of the Marine Corps, delivered the ceremony's principal address. GEN Amos put on a MPMA hat to drive home the point that he was the Commandant of all Marines including those who at one time were forced to be separate. GEN Amos also said "Because of sequestration, I am cutting my speech by 10 per cent and will only speak for 9 minutes rather than 10." He got the desired response when the crowd laughed. RADM Mark H. Buzby, commander of MSC, also spoke on behalf of the ship and crew. RADM Buzby said "Wherever the call, whatever the need, USNS *MONTFORD POINT* will be part of the Navy's global force for good." When Jackie was ready to break the bottle against the bow of her ship to bestow the name, she broke the bottle with her first swing. The crowd cheered. It was a great Navy/Marine Corps day!

USNS *MAURY* (T-AGS 66)

On March 27, 2013, I attended the christening of USNS *MAURY* (T-AGS 66) at the VT Halter Marine shipyard in Moss Point, MS. The Sponsor is the Honorable Lisa P. Jackson, former Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), who as Administrator focused much of her efforts on the BP oil spill that ravaged the Gulf Coast area. VT Halter Marine is

the leading designer and builder of specialized oceanographic ships for the U.S. Navy with experience in building the previous six ships of the T-AGS 60 Class. *MAURY* is an enhanced version of the T-AGS 60 Class oceanographic survey ship with an additional 24 feet in length added to the previous design which will accommodate a moon pool for deployment and retrieval of autonomous underwater vehicles. The vessel will be operating under the Military Sealift Command. *MAURY* is designed to perform acoustic, biological, physical, and geophysical surveys. *MAURY* will provide the U.S. military with essential information on the ocean environment. *MAURY* is named in honor of CDR Matthew Fontaine Maury, nicknamed "Pathfinder of the Seas," and also known as the "Father of Modern Oceanography." Lisa swung the bottle to bestow the name of her ship and broke it on her first swing. It took a while after that for the launch to occur. This was the first sideways launch I had attended and it was very exciting. The ship finally slid down into the water, made a huge splash, and then righted herself. It was a wonderful Navy day!

USS ARLINGTON (LPD 24)

On April 6, 2013, I attended the commissioning of USS *ARLINGTON* (LPD 24) in Norfolk, VA along with an estimated crowd of more than 5,000. The Sponsor is Mrs. Joyce Rumsfeld, spouse of Donald Rumsfeld, the former Secretary of Defense. *ARLINGTON* was built by Huntington-Ingalls Industries shipyard in Pascagoula, MS and her primary mission will be to embark, transport, and land U.S. Marine Corps landing forces. *ARLINGTON* is the eighth ship in the LPD 17 class and the third ship named for Arlington County, Va., home of the Pentagon. *Arlington* is one of three ships that honors the heroes of 9-11, along with USS *New York* (LPD 21) and *Somerset* (LPD 25). LPD 24 honors the first responders and the 184 victims who died when American Airlines Flight 77 crashed into the Pentagon Sept. 11, 2001. The keynote speaker was Commandant of the Marine Corps GEN James Amos. He said "LPD 24 will forever represent the courage, devotion and teamwork that characterized our military and first responders on that modern day of infamy." The ship is capable of transporting nearly 1,200 Sailors and Marines into harm's way. During the ceremony and the follow-on tours, a Marine MV-22 Osprey, UH-1 Huey, AH-1 Cobra, and CH-53 Sea Stallion were on display on the ship's flight deck. The highlight of the commissioning was when Joyce Rumsfeld ordered the Sailors and Marines to "Man this ship and bring her to life!" They roared "Aye, aye, Ma'am!" As the Navy Band played *Anchors Aweigh*, the Sailors ran single file up the brow to man the rails. They were followed by the Marines as the Navy Band played the Marines' Hymn. All of the Sailors and Marines rendered a salute to America and to all the attendees at the ceremony. It was a great Navy/Marine Corps day!

USNS MILLINOCKET (JHSV 3)

On April 20, 2013, I attended the christening of USNS *MILLINOCKET* (JHSV 3) at Austal USA Shipyard in Mobile, AL. *MILLINOCKET* was named by Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus after the Maine towns of East Millinocket and Millinocket. Mabus chose the name because

Millinocket to honor American values of community and ingenuity at their best. *MILLINOCKET* is a 338-foot catamaran vessel. The ceremony was held underneath the ship, between her twin hulls, known as the “aluminum cathedral.” Over 600 naval and shipyard guests attended the ceremony. VADM William R. Burke, USN, Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Warfare Systems, was the principal speaker at the event. The Sponsor is the Honorable Karen Gordon Mills, a Maine resident. She was sworn in as Administrator of the Small Business Administration in April 2009 and she served in the President’s Cabinet since January 2012. In her remarks she discussed the important role that small businesses and entrepreneurs play in our nation’s long-term economic growth and prosperity. Austal USA President, Craig Perciavalle said “Administrator Mills was a particularly appropriate sponsor for this Navy ship, it is a wonderful way to honor the more than 200 small businesses nationwide that support the JHSV program.” The crowd cheered and red, white, and blue streamers filled the air when Karen smashed the bottle on the hull to bestow the name. It was a wonderful Navy day!

Very respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rosalie J. Calhoun". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the left of the typed name.

Rosalie J. Calhoun
President