

THE WOLVERINE

DECEMBER 2022

FORD RETURNS HOME

GET A BREAKDOWN OF FORD'S FIRST DEPLOYMENT

FIRST EUROPEAN PORT CALL

COMPLETING CYCLIC OPERATIONS AND EXECUTING EXERCISE
SILENT WOLVERINE, FORD DROPS ANCHOR ONCE MORE

PHOTOS OF THE MONTH INSIDE!



THE WOLVERINE

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FRONT COVER PHOTO

The crew of the first-in-class aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) man the rails as the ship returns to Naval Station Norfolk, Nov. 26, 2022. (Photo by MC2 Jackson Adkins)

USS Gerald R. Ford celebrates Thanksgiving at sea

Story by MCC Julie Matyascik

Being away from home for the holidays can be challenging, but the first-in-class aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford's (CVN 78) crew came together with their Navy family to make Thanksgiving special and memorable, Nov. 24, during Ford's maiden deployment.

The smell of turkey and hearty sides filled the air within the skin of the ship as Ford's culinary specialists worked hard to make the holiday special for the crew.

"The holidays are a tough time to be away from family, friends, and loved ones," said Lt. Cmdr. Phillip Jones, Ford's assistant supply officer. "We created a memorable experience this Thanksgiving full of fun, food, and football for everyone onboard."

Culinary specialists aboard Ford worked together to make their largest meal of the year. The star of the show was 1,000 pounds of turkey, 900 pounds of prime rib and 400 pounds of honey-baked ham. Overall, more than 5000 pounds of meats, sides, and desserts were served from 2-6 p.m.

Cooking this feast is an all-hands effort and can be very demanding. In total, a small army of 176 culinary specialists and food service attendants are dedicated to bringing a small portion of a 'home for the holidays' feeling to thousands of crew members.

Along with the supply division's hard work and dedication, more than 200 volunteers from the chief's mess and the first class petty officer association offered their time to prep, serve and clean up dinner for the crew.

"This is our chance as leaders to give back to our Sailors - we want to thank them for all their efforts," said Ford's chief petty officer mess president Senior Chief Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Handling) James Frost, from Las Cruces, New Mexico, assigned to Ford's air department. "We want them to know we appreciate their hard work and all the long



Culinary Specialist Seaman Laquwan Jefferson, from Baltimore, Maryland, assigned to supply department, pulls a turkey out of an oven for thanksgiving in the galley, Nov. 23, 2022. (Photo by MC3 Trenton Edly)

hours they've contributed to the team. For many Sailors, this is their first Thanksgiving away from home. We are family out here and this is a small token of our appreciation for our crew."

With the busy operation tempo, training schedules and time zone changes, a day of relaxation, food, and celebration is well-deserved for the crew. MWR closed out the holiday with a health fair, corn hole, row competition and more football.

"As our time at sea nears completion, Thanksgiving serves as a great time to reflect on the success our mighty warship saw in 2022 as a result of the crew's hard work and dedication," said Capt. Paul Lanzilotta, Ford's commanding officer. "Once again, we 'crushed it' and met the standard for safe execution at sea. I also want to extend gratitude to our teammates in Carrier Air Wing Eight (CVW-8), Destroyer Squadron Two, Carrier Strike Group Twelve, and our friends' and families' continued support on the homefront. Our loved ones keep us going."



Capt. Paul Lanzilotta, commanding officer of the first-in-class aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78), serves Sailors Thanksgiving dinner in the aft galley, Nov. 24, 2022. (Photo by MCC Gary Prill)

Gerald R. Ford Carrier Strike Group returns to homeport concluding inaugural deployment

Story by MC3 Adonica Muñoz

The first-in-class aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78), flagship of the Gerald R. Ford Carrier Strike Group (GRFCSG), returned to its homeport at Naval Station Norfolk, Nov. 26, after successfully completing its inaugural deployment to the U.S. 2nd Fleet and 6th Fleet areas of responsibility.

During the scheduled deployment, Ford operated with eight NATO Allies and partners to strengthen interoperability and interchangeability, conducting a range of maritime operations and exercises.

"This deployment brought together an incredible group of Allies and partners with one single focus – to contribute to a peaceful, stable, and conflict-free Atlantic region through our combined naval power," said Vice Adm. Dan Dwyer, commander, U.S. 2nd Fleet and Joint Force Command, Norfolk. "Opportunities to interoperate and integrate make our nations, our navies, and the NATO Alliance stronger."

While deployed, GRFCSG participated in Exercise Silent Wolverine, demonstrating high-end naval warfare and integrated NATO interoperability in the maritime approaches to Europe. Silent Wolverine was an opportunity for Ford to train and test capabilities under deployment conditions for the first time, while demonstrating the U.S. commitment to Allies and partners through seamless integration.

"We sailed with our Allies and partners and trained together, tirelessly, day and night, and we are stronger for it," said Capt. Paul Lanzilotta, Ford's commanding officer. "Through integrated and combined operations such as live and inert ordnance expenditure by Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 8, anti-submarine warfare, anti-surface warfare, and air defense, we set the stage for operating with Ford-class technologies in a deployed environment. We completed more than 1,250 sorties, expended 78.3 tons of ordnance and completed 13 underway replenishments – and we accomplished this because of what Ford-class aircraft carriers bring to the fight."

The Sailors participating in Ford's first deployment integrated multiple foreign

nations' ships into the strike group to operate together efficiently.

"Leading the men and women of the Gerald R. Ford Strike Group has been awe-inspiring. Every day these Sailors committed themselves 100% to a safe and successful inaugural deployment of Ford and the strike group," said Rear Adm. Greg Huffman, commander, Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 12. "This deployment laid a strong foundation for the strike group, created momentum to carry us forward for future operations, and has prepared us to answer our nation's call when needed."

Ford made its first international port visit in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and its first European port visit in Portsmouth, U.K. For Ford Sailors, these port visits offered a long-awaited opportunity to explore a foreign culture.

Boatswain's Mate 3rd Class Selena Penaloza, from Orlando, Florida, assigned to Ford's deck department, has been stationed on Ford for three years before deploying for the first time.

"It was amazing getting to see the [ship's] first deployment and my first port visit. This deployment has been a new experience for everyone onboard. We've been working more than on other underways and standing more watch, and it's all for a great cause."

Ford is the first new U.S. aircraft carrier designed in more than 40 years, introducing 23 new technologies that offer impressive advances to its aircraft launch system, propulsion, power generation, ordnance handling and more. Ford's advanced technologies reduce the amount of personnel required to maintain and operate the ship's systems compared to Nimitz-class carriers.

The Sailors of Ford are shaping the



The crew of the USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) man the rails as the ship returns to Naval Station Norfolk, Nov. 26, following the inaugural deployment. (Photo by MC3 Adonica Munoz)

future of naval aviation.

"On our ship, you don't hear Sailors saying, 'that's the way we've always done it' because we're using new gear, new technologies," said Lanzilotta. "Our Sailors are the ones who make all of these new technologies real. The Sailors make it come to life. I am so proud of all their hard work and dedication that made Ford operational and allowed the Gerald R. Ford Carrier Strike Group to conduct a successful first deployment."

While operating in the Atlantic, Ford hosted 215 distinguished visitors, 175 foreign dignitaries, 46 NATO flag officers and senior enlisted leaders, and more than 60 U.S. and international reporters aboard.

The flagship set sail from Norfolk, Virginia, Oct. 4, and traveled more than 9,275 nautical miles with the strike group.

The nine nations that participated in Ford's deployment were: U.S., Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, and Sweden.

The U.S. commands and units that participated in the GRFCSG deployment include: CSG 12, CVW 8, Destroyer Squadron 2, Ticonderoga-class guided-



Partner Nations Operated With:

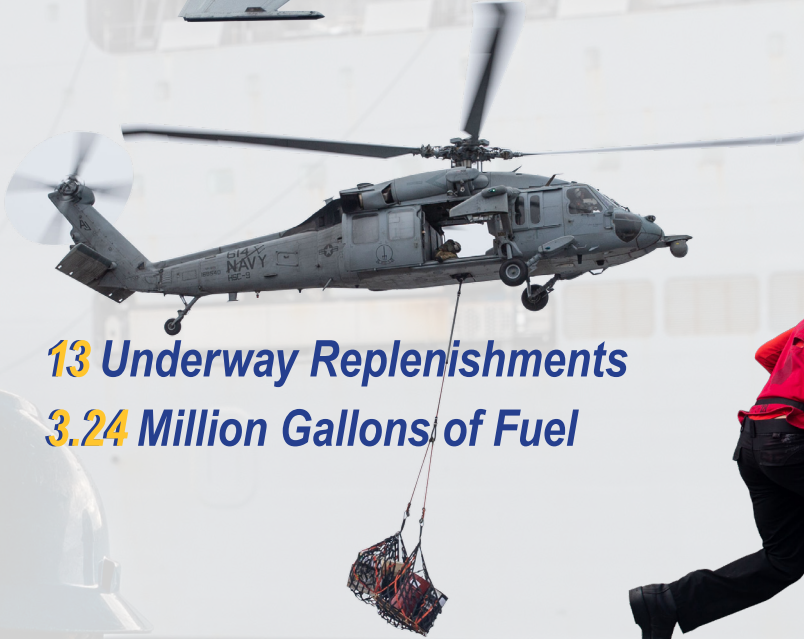


2,396 Flight Hours

≈1,250 Sorties

Meals served onboard:

≈950,000



13 Underway Replenishments

3.24 Million Gallons of Fuel

78.3 tons of ordnance expended

158 live bombs

23,699 rounds



missile cruiser USS Normandy (CG 60), Arleigh Burke-class guided missile destroyers USS McFaul (DDG 74), USS Thomas Hudner (DDG 116), and USS Ramage (DDG 61).

The nine U.S. aircraft squadrons assigned to CVW-8 that embarked Ford for this deployment were strike fighter squadrons VFA-213, VFA-31, VFA-37 and VFA-87; tactical electronics warfare squadron VAQ-142; carrier airborne early warning squadron VAW-124; fleet logistics support squadron VRC-40; helicopter maritime strike squadron HSM-70; and helicopter sea combat squadron HSC-9.

Distinguished Visitors & Dignitaries Hosted: 400+



Distance Traveled:

9,275 Nautical Miles





USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) steams in the Atlantic Ocean in formation with the Spanish Armada frigate Álvaro de Bazán (F 101), the German frigate FGS Hessen (F 221), the Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Normandy (CG 60), the Danish frigate HDMS Peter Willemoes (F 362), the Canadian frigate HMCS Montreal (FFH 336), and the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Thomas Hudner (DDG 116), Nov. 7, 2022. (Photo by MC2 Jackson Adkins)





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PHOTOS OF THE MONTH

DECEMBER 2022

1. Sailors assigned to deck department prepare for a replenishment-at-sea, Nov. 2, 2022. (Photo by MC3 Grant Gorzocoski)

2. Sailors assigned to air department prepare an F/A-18E Super Hornet, attached to the "Golden Warriors" of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 87, to launch from Ford's flight deck, Nov. 9, 2022. (Photo by MC2 Zack Guth)

3. Aviation Structural Mechanic 2nd Class Ashley Farrow, from Lake Ridge, Virginia, assigned to the "Spartans" of Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 70, preforms routine maintenance on an MH-60R Sea Hawk in the hangar bay, Nov. 8, 2022. (Photo by MCSA Daniel Perez)

4. Cmdr. Robert Kurrle, the commanding officer of the "Golden Warriors" of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 87, exits an F/A-18E Super Hornet after his last carrier landing, Nov. 12, 2022. (Photo by MC2 Zack Guth)

5. Machinery Repairman Fireman Prisila Simpson, from Houston, assigned to engineering department, mills a bolt, Nov. 3, 2022. (Photo by MC3 Grant Gorzocoski)

6. An MH-60S Knighthawk, attached to the "Tridents" of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 9, transports supplies to the USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) during a vertical replenishment-at-sea with dry cargo and ammunition ship USNS Medgar Evers (T-AKE 13), Nov. 4, 2022. (Photo by MC3 Trenton Edly)

7. Sailors assigned to weapons and combat systems departments, man a watch station during a sea and anchor evolution, Nov. 18, 2022. (Photo by MC3 Grant Gorzocoski)

8. Master-at-Arms 2nd Class David Campbell, from Callaway, Maryland, assigned to security department, performs routine maintenance on an M4A1 rifle, Nov. 9, 2022. (Photo by MC3 Grant Gorzocoski)

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Ford Strengthening Relations with the Royal Canadian Navy

Story and photos by MC2 Jackson Adkins



Sailors assigned to the first-in-class aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) and Royal Canadian Sailors gather at Porteous Field in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Oct. 30, 2022.

Visiting ports is not just about sightseeing and adventuring. It's about building relations and helping the community. During their first international port visit, Sailors assigned to the first-in-class aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) not only played in a soccer match against their Royal Canadian counterparts, but strengthened a bond with an ally.

During the Halifax, Nova Scotia port visit, Ford Sailors competed against Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) Sailors in a soccer match at Porteous Field, Halifax.

"I think it's great we can both come together and play a friendly game and get competitive while everyone has fun," said Master Sailor Andrew Sanfer, from Halifax, Nova Scotia, assigned to the RCN. "As soon as I sent out the message that Americans wanted to play, instantly I had 16 responding to me willing to play."

It all started with an email sent out to the command by Retail Services Specialist 1st Class Giovanni Adjeli from Long Island, New York, asking if anyone was interested playing in a soccer match against the Canadians. Shortly thereafter, a full roster was assembled and the match was set to take place on Nov. 30, 2022.

"The game was very important as it was our first official game as Team Ford," said Adjeli. "I knew once we deployed we would have an opportunity to showcase our talent against international opponents. That opportunity came with our port visit to Halifax."

As far as the match went, Ford took the lead with an early goal only minutes into the game. The RCN retaliated soon after with four goals before the first half was over.

"After a few tactical changes, Team Ford went back to the field more

motivated than ever," said Adjeli. "The rest of the story is one which the Canadians will never forget."

Once the whistle sounded to start the second half, Ford scored one goal after another until the score was 5-4 in Ford's favor. The RCN Sailors matched Ford's energy and scored two more goals to bring the score to 6-5. However, Ford managed to tie the game right before the final whistle blew.

Both teams had to resort to a penalty shoot-out to determine the final winner.

"Once again Team Ford came out triumphant and defeated Team Canada by four goals to two," said Adjeli. "I was very happy for my players and was proud of their performance. We are Team Ford!"

Once the match was over both teams celebrated with each other and shook hands, marking the first time Ford's soccer team competed against the RCN.

The friendly sportsmanship and competitive nature of the game represented the powerful partnership that the United States and Canada share.

"The game is not only important as it fosters comradery, but it humanizes our sisters and brothers in arms," said Senior Chief Cryptologic Technician (Technical) Jonathan Cox, from Desoto, Missouri, assigned to Ford's intelligence department. "They are people putting their lives on the line with you. You get to see and hear their stories and that bridges your perspective for the fight to come. It's not just about playing a sport, but unifying a front."



Electrician's Mate (Nuclear) 3rd Class Tyler Crandall, from San Diego, participates in a soccer match against Royal Canadian Sailors at Porteous Field in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Oct. 30, 2022.

Rear Adm. John Meier, Commander, Naval Air Forces Atlantic, returns a salute to rainbow sideboys as he is piped aboard for a visit on USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78), Nov. 10, 2022. (Photo by MCSA Tyrell Lovewine)



Ford's First CO returns for Ford's First Deployment

Story by MC2 Adonica Munóz

Rear Adm. John F. Meier, the first-in-class aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford's (CVN 78) first commanding officer and current commander of Naval Air Force Atlantic, visited Ford during the ship's first deployment, Nov. 10-11, 2022.

Meier met with Capt. Paul Lanzilotta, Ford's current commanding officer, in the CO's in port cabin before seeing Ford's advanced weapons elevators in action, observing flight operations and speaking to the crew at an all hands call.

"When I started here on Ford, about seven years ago, it was probably the hardest job I ever left in my life," said Meier. "I put my heart and soul in Gerald R. Ford. I remember distinctly walking around this ship with a roll of blueprints, going into a space, rolling out the blue prints and trying to figure out exactly what the space was going to look like and what it was going to become. Now coming back six-and-a-half years later to see you all at sea, operating all aspects of the ship is truly impressive. I'm in awe to have the opportunity to be back here."

Meier served as precommissioned Ford's first commanding officer from July 2013 to April 2016. Ford saw many milestones during Meier's time as commanding officer.

In the years since, Ford has undergone post-delivery tests and trials, full ship shock trials, planned incremental availability, and carrier qualifications, leading up to the ship's first deployment.

"Ford's inaugural deployment represents a generational leap in our Navy's capacity to project power on a global scale," said Meier. "It is extraordinary to witness first-hand how our Sailors are using the advanced technology and capabilities inherent to the Ford-class alongside our allies and partners to not only shape Navy warfighting, but high-end warfare for decades to come."

The Gerald R. Ford Carrier Strike Group is deployed in the Atlantic Ocean, conducting exercise Silent Wolverine is a U.S.-led, combined training exercise that tests Ford-class aircraft carrier capabilities through integrated high-end naval warfare scenarios alongside participating allies in the Eastern Atlantic Ocean.



Rear Adm. John Meier, while acting as the Ford's First commanding officer, July 21, 2014. (Photo by MC1 Joshua Wahl)





An F/A-18F Super Hornet, attached to the "Blacklions" of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 213, is chocked and chained to the flight deck of the Ford, Nov. 18, 2022. (Photo by MC2 Nolan Pennington)



USS Gerald R. Ford departs Portsmouth

Story by Interior Communications Electrician 3rd Class Maria Blaz

Sailors assigned to Ford observe as the ship transits to Portsmouth, England, for the ship's second international port visit, Nov. 14, 2022. (Photo by MC2 Zack Guth)

The first-in-class aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) departed Portsmouth, United Kingdom, Nov. 18, concluding its second international port visit and first in Europe.

"We were honored to visit the United Kingdom, a nation with rich cultural heritage and strong ties to the U.S. Navy, during Ford's first deployment," said Capt. Paul Lanzilotta, Ford's commanding officer. "Our Sailors were incredibly excited to explore Portsmouth and its naval history. The community extended us a genuinely warm welcome, and we truly enjoyed taking a few days to recharge and explore local sights as well as London and other national treasures before returning to sea."

During the four-day port visit, Ford Sailors participated in community relations (COMREL) projects organized by the ship's Command Religious Ministries Department. Sailors dedicated their free time to We Shine Portsmouth by setting up a four-day art and light festival in various locations around the city. Portsmouth Creates sponsored the program, which aims to enhance the availability of the arts to the community.

"Giving back to the community who hosts us is a priority for us," said Cmdr. Genevieve Clark, Ford's command chaplain. "We are appreciative of Portsmouth for hosting our Sailors and supporting the ship's visit to the city. Community relations projects provide our Sailors the opportunity to be involved on a personal level with a community they are visiting through individual connections that strengthen our partnerships."

In conjunction with COMRELs, Sailors had the opportunity to experience local sites, including Stonehenge, Bath, Hampton Court, Windsor, and London. The tours were organized by Ford's Morale, Welfare and Recreation office and were arranged to provide Sailors opportunities to sightsee and explore many of the area's cultural and historic attractions.

Interior Communications Electrician 3rd Class Colin Priestino, from Blair, Nebraska, attached to combat systems department, joined several Sailors who explored Bath and Stonehenge.

"To visit Stonehenge, one of the Seven Wonders of the World, was awesome, and to have experienced the historical Roman Baths was amazing," said Priestino. "Being from a small town in Nebraska and given this chance to see other countries with the Navy and experience London, a city I have only seen on television and social media, was overwhelming in the best possible way."

Ford also hosted a number of distinguished visitors while anchored off the coast of Portsmouth.

Gen. Sir Tim Radford, Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe, visited Ford as part of a two-day commanders' conference. More than 45 attendees and guests enjoyed lunch and received a carrier strike group capabilities brief and tour aboard Ford.

The Honorable Jane Hartley, U.S. Ambassador to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and Rear Adm. Robert Pedre, Commander, U.K. Strike Force, Royal Navy, embarked the ship to meet with strike group leadership, interact with service members, and learn about the strike group's capabilities and recent operations.

"It's been an honor to be here," Hartley said during a ship visit, "and the fact that the USS Gerald R. Ford has stopped in Portsmouth on its maiden voyage is a powerful example of the strong relationship and cooperation we have with our trusted ally- the United Kingdom."



Capt. Paul Lanzilotta, Ford's commanding officer, speaks with attendees of the Supreme Allied Commander Europe Commanders' conference, Nov. 16, 2022, while at anchor in Portsmouth, U.K. (Photo by MC3 Jacob Mattingly)

French, German, and Dutch Military Leaders visit U.S. Navy's Newest Aircraft Carrier

Story by MC2 Zack Guth



Chief Warrant Officer 2 Jeff Towry, right, Ford's weapons engineer, briefs military leaders from Germany, the Netherlands and France on the advanced weapons elevator. (Photo by MC3 Trenton Edly)

Capt. Paul Lanzilotta, Ford's commanding officer, presents Gen. Eberhard Horn, Chief of Defence, Vice Adm. Rene Tas and Rear Adm. Jean-Marín D'Hebrail a certificate in Ford's in port cabin. (Photo by MC3 Jacob Mattingly)

Military leaders and government officials from France, Germany, and the Netherlands visited the first-in-class aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78), during exercise Silent Wolverine, Nov. 11, 2022.

Rear Adm. Jean-Marín D'Hebrail, deputy commander, French Navy's Atlantic Fleet Command, Marie-Agnes Strack-Zimmermann, a chairperson of German Parliament, Gen. Eberhard Zorn, German Chief of Defence, Vice Adm. Rene Tas, head of the Royal Netherlands Navy, and other France, Germany, and the Netherlands military leaders arrived aboard the ship to observe everything that Ford has to offer to the future of Naval aviation.

"It was the first deck landing in my life," said Maj. Gen. Andre Steur, director, Operational Policy and Plans, Royal Netherlands Navy. "Such a wonderful experience. But more importantly, it's great to be here with Allies because of the situation in the world. The threats that are proliferating all around us require us to work together and operate together. And it's wonderful to be here – to be on one of the newest and biggest battleships in the world, and see it work together with Allies all around. It's an honor."

The group landed on the ship's flight deck in a C-2A greyhound from the "Rawhides" of Fleet Logistics Support Squadron (VRC) 40.

After arriving aboard, the leaders were greeted by Rear Adm. John Meier, commander, Naval Air Force Atlantic (AIRLANT), Rear Adm. Greg Huffman, commander, Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 12, and Capt. Paul Lanzilotta, Ford's commanding officer.

Vice Adm. Jan Kaack, Commander of the German Fleet and Chief of the German Navy has been on carriers in the past but like Maj. Gen. Steur, he has never had the experience of the trap landing onto an aircraft carrier.

"I have been on a carrier early on, several years ago, but this was my first landing," said Kaack. "It was a great experience. I'm so glad that my frigate Hessen can provide some coverage for the carrier. Just a great visit and opportunity [to be here]."

While aboard, they observed flight operations of F/A-18 Super Hornets and E-2D Hawkeyes, which are aircraft embarked as part of Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 8. The group also visited the pilot house, flight deck control, hangar bay, observed a demonstration of the ship's advanced weapons elevators, and discussed integrated training exercises.

French Navy Rear Adm. D'Hebrail said the U.S. Navy and French Navy have worked together and trained together every day, every year, on every ocean.

"The incoming of the Ford here

in this area is a real opportunity to improve our procedures and training together," said D'Hebrail. "The U.S. Navy is the biggest in the world, so it's very interesting for us to be able to train in high intensity [exercises] with Allies like the U.S. Navy, which have a lot of [opportunities] to train. The U.S. Navy is one our best Allies inside NATO."

Before departing the ship, they exchanged gifts with Huffman and Lanzilotta to honor the visit, and their countries' partnerships.

"The most important part of interoperability is the people," said Kaack, as he presented Lanzilotta with a plaque. "Meeting people builds friendships, and friendships build trust."

The GRFCSG is scheduled to continue integrating and training with the Marine Nationale, Deutsche Marine, Spanish Armada, Royal Netherlands Navy, Royal Danish Navy, and Royal Canadian Navy throughout exercise Silent Wolverine.

"Strengthening the bonds among our NATO Allies is key to maintaining security in the Atlantic and across the globe," said Rear Adm. Greg Huffman. "Being able to host leaders of French, German, and Dutch navies aboard while at sea increases this unified approach toward stability in the region."



The crew of the first-in-class aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) man the rails as the ship returns to Naval Station Norfolk, Nov. 26, 2022.
(Photo by MC2 Nolan Pennington)



Ford Strengthening NATO Alliances

Story By MC2 Jackson Adkins



Lt. j.g. Jeremy Luallen, left, from Lancaster, California, Ford's fire marshal, receives a tour of the the Dutch frigate HNLMS De Zeven Provinciën's (F 802) engineering spaces by Korporaal Niels Bos, from Groenlo, Netherlands, during a crossdeck visit, Nov. 3, 2022. (Photo by MC3 Jacob Mattingly)

NATO alliances have a unique bond that extend past the bulkheads of the ships sailing with the Gerald R. Ford Carrier Strike Group (GRFCSG). The companionship and professionalism between each asset is what amplifies the powerful presence of the GRFCSG and allied ships.

The Sailors serving within the GRFCSG took part in an opportunity to visit their foreign counterparts during a cross-deck pollination (X-POL) evolution that the first-in-class aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) conducted a while on deployment with the Spanish Armada frigate Álvaro de Bazán (F 101) and Dutch frigate HNLMS De Zeven Provinciën (F 802).

Ford's fire marshal, Lt. j.g. Jeremy Luallen, from Lancaster, California, visited the De Zeven Provinciën during GRFCSG's X-POL and noted the significance of the Sailor-exchange program and what the evolution was all about.

"We're all NATO, so it's critical to keep that alliance and bond to make sure that we have a strong alliance and defend the world as necessary," said Luallen. "I think it's also for the Sailors who aren't involved with the high-level political aspects of what's going on in the world to really see and meet each other to learn about what their respective professions do on a different platform."

Ford's chaplain, Cmdr. Genevieve Clark, from McMinnville, Oregon, added why the evolution supplemented the alliance between the countries participating in Ford's deployment.

"We are a global force. If we are truly going to be a global force, we need to understand how others operate and be in sync with them so that we can support others and they can support us," said Clark. "It's easier during peacekeeping to learn and grow than it is when we're in the fight."

Clark and Luallen were also able to gain some insight on the personal experiences of all the Sailors from partner ships taking part in the GRFCSG's mission.

"I just enjoyed getting to hear the stories of the commanding officer, executive officer and the chaplain about their families,"

said Clark. "The chaplain was showing me photos of his dog and it just made me realize we are all humans and want to talk about our families, the love, and goodness in the world."

Luallen experienced similar engagements with the Dutch Sailors as Clark did with the Spanish Sailors.

"It was very interesting to see the use of autonomy on the ship, comradery was huge," said Luallen. "The crew was great. They were super engaged. It was overall just a good experience."

Clark noted the positive interactions and experiences she took from the Álvaro de Bazán by observing the Spanish Sailors and her junior Sailors interacting with each other and how impactful they were to her.

"I enjoyed getting to see from afar, even with language barriers, that quickly you realized you have more in common than you do apart from each other."

Lastly, Luallen noticed how similar the De Zeven Provinciën's ship was to Ford and how both ships operate.

"It's interesting and insightful to see their systems and how their platforms are run. Their ship was impressively clean and well organized," said Luallen. "There were a ton of similarities from how we operate."



Sonar Technician (Surface) 2nd Class Maria Martinez, second from right, from Houston, assigned to Ford's operations department, and Fire Controlman 1st Class Sam Lantinga, right, from Grand Rapids, Michigan, assigned to Ford's combat systems department, speak to Sailors assigned to the Spanish Armada frigate Álvaro de Bazán (F 101) during a crossdeck visit on the Álvaro de Bazán, Nov. 3, 2022. (Photo by MC3 Adonica Munoz)

THE WOLVERINE

USS GERALD R. FORD (CVN 78)

MEET THE TRIAD

COMMANDING OFFICER

CAPT Paul Lanzilotta

EXECUTIVE OFFICER

CAPT Matthew Mulcahey

COMMAND MASTER CHIEF

CMDCM Bryan Davis

MEDIA DEPARTMENT

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER

LCDR David Gardner

ASSISTANT PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICERS

ENS Paula Niederland

ENS Martin Carey

DEPARTMENT LCPO

MCCS Ryan Wilber

PRODUCTION LCPO

MCC Gary Prill

EDITOR

MC2 Zack Guth

STAFF

MCC Julie Matyascik

MCC Spencer Fling

MC1 William Spears

MC2 Jackson Adkins

MC2 Brian Glunt

MC3 Trenton Edly

MC3 Grant Gorzcoski

MC3 Jacob Mattingly

MC3 Adonica Muñoz

MCSN Manvir Gill

MCSA Daniel Perez

MCSA Tyrell Lovewine

COMMAND OMBUDSMEN



Jillian Stone

401-405-4171

FordOmbudsman1@gmail.com



Hiromi DeFranco

757-708-5761

FordOmbudsman3@gmail.com



Kristi Hanzlicek

757-708-5581

FordOmbudsman2@gmail.com

THIS MONTH IN NAVAL HISTORY

December 2, 1965

USS Enterprise (CVAN 65) and USS Bainbridge (DLGN 25) became the first nuclear-powered task unit in combat operations with the launch of air strikes near Bien Hoa, Vietnam.

December 14, 1944

The rank of Fleet Admiral (five-stars) of the U.S. Navy is established during World War II due to the rapid build of U.S. military forces. The first five-star admirals were William D. Leahy, Ernest J. King, and Chester W. Nimitz.

December 23, 1910

Lt. Theodore G. Ellyson becomes the first naval officer sent to flight training when he was ordered to report to the Glenn H. Curtiss Aviation Camp at North Island, San Diego, California.

December 30, 1959

The first fleet ballistic missile submarine, USS George Washington (SSBN 598), is commissioned.

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