

Late June 2013

Deposit Balance \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Future USS Minnesota Successfully Completes Sea Trials**

Lt. Cmdr. Jennifer Cragg, Navy.mil, May 16



Minnesota during sea trials, note two dolphins frolicking with the sub. U S Navy photo

**NEWPORT NEWS, Va (NNS)** — Pre-Commissioning Unit (PCU) *Minnesota* (SSN 783), the nation's newest and most advanced nuclear-powered attack submarine, moored May 16 at Huntington Ingalls Industry's Newport News Shipbuilding following its successful completion of Alpha and Bravo sea trials. Testing evolutions completed during Alpha sea trials included diving to test depth, conducting an emergency surfacing, and testing the submarine's propulsion plant to evaluate the ship's seaworthiness and operational performance. Bravo trials consisted of testing *Minnesota's* acoustic performance and combat systems. The tenth ship of the Virginia-class, *Minnesota* is scheduled to be delivered approximately one year earlier than its contract delivery date. Starting in August of 2008 with *USS New Hampshire* (SSN 778), the last five boats have been delivered early, and all Virginia-class submarines currently under construction are scheduled to be delivered prior to their contract delivery dates. *Minnesota* is commanded by Cmdr. John Fancher, a native of Hammond, Ind., who reflected on the transformation he has seen with his crew from initial construction of the attack submarine to the recent completion of sea trials. "I could not be more proud of the crew. The events required during sea trials are some of the most demanding tasks a submarine can be asked said Fancher. "All our preparation and training really paid off. I also cannot say enough about the support from the entire Sea Trials Team. Their insight and experience was vital to *Minnesota's* success." Capt. David Goggins, Virginia Class Program Manager reflected on the completion of the Alpha and Bravo Sea Trials. "PCU *Minnesota's* successful run through Alpha and Bravo Trials is indicative of

the quality and dedication of the crew and our Navy/shipbuilding team," said Goggins. "*Minnesota* continues the Virginia Class' trend of delivering these outstanding assets to the fleet early to contract, within budget, and ready for operational tasking." Rear Adm. Ken Perry, Commander, Submarine Group Two participated in *Minnesota's* Alpha trials as Officer in Tactical Command and praised Fancher and his crew for their performance. "I want to commend Cmdr. John Fancher and his officers and crew for completing this major milestone very successfully," said Perry, who also recognized the integral partnership between the shipbuilders Newport News and General Dynamic Electric Boat and support from Naval Sea Systems Command, Naval Reactors, PEO Submarines and stakeholders throughout the Navy and industry who have designed, built and delivered this most modern attack submarine for the nation. Chapter sea trial covers were just printed and Delivery to the USN covers are still at the Newport News post office for canceling.

**USS Guardian MCM-5 is off the reef in the Philippines – CO Relieved**



Photo by U S Navy

An event not cherished by a commanding officer or any nations Navy, the *USS Guardian MCM-5* is finally removed from the Tubbatha Reef, in pieces. Fines calculated by the Philippine Government are in the millions for the US ignoring demands to not enter the reef, and the commanding officer was relieved from duty. Some say blame the Pentagon, speculation the ship was probably ordered to spend time circling about the reef waiting for permission for its next port call. In any event, the ship ran around and the Navy relieved her commanding officer, Lt.Cdr. Mark Rice, USN.



Sem photo early in grounding. USN Photo



Final section lifted off onto barge. Photo by U S Navy

Final lift of the last section of the ex-*USS Guardian* was on 30 March 2013 by *MV Jascron 25* and placed aboard Barge *SEABRIDGE*. The ship was officially decommissioned and struck from the Navy register (NVR) on 15 February 2013.

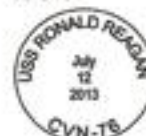


Lt. Cmdr. Mark A. Rice, commanding officer of *USS Guardian (MCM 5)*, receives the ship's decommissioning pennant to place inside a time capsule along with the ship's ensign, messages and mementos, during a March 6 ceremony in Sasebo, Japan. (U.S. Navy photo)

An official decommissioning ceremony was held at the mine countermeasures ships homeport on 6 March 2013 at Sasebo, Japan. On 4 April the Navy announced that the CO, Lt. Cmdr. Mark Rice and three other officers who've been relieved of duty are the executive officer and navigator, the assistant navigator, and the officer of the deck.

**Proposed T-F anniversary cancel for USS RONALD REAGAN in doubt**

Our initial request for a pictorial postmark aboard the *USS RONALD REAGAN CVN-76* anniversary was positive. The device was made and submitted, only to find out that there was a hurdle that we were not aware of and the request would be forwarded to officials in Honolulu for final approval. Since the date of the event is July 12 and quickly approaching, I am not sure if final approval will come in time. If you sent for the fancy cancel, it's possible you may only get the ships standard four bar hand cancel on your covers. The design submitted to the carrier for the anniversary is below.



10th Anniversary in Commission  
FPO  
AP 96516-2576