



NAVAL ENLISTED  
RESERVE ASSOCIATION  
WINDY CITY CHAPTER



NOV-DEC 2015 Edition  
P.O. Box 4562 Rockford, IL 61110  
Volume 15, Edition 6

From the President's desk...

**PRESIDENT**

Edward Whiteside  
[ewhiteside@yahoo.com](mailto:ewhiteside@yahoo.com)

**VICE-PRESIDENT**

Andy Anderson

**SECRETARY**

Vicki Koehnke

**TREASURER**

Eugene Koelker  
[genokoelker@yahoo.com](mailto:genokoelker@yahoo.com)

**EXECUTIVE COUNSELOR**

Paul Smurawski

**MASTER-AT-ARMS**

Steve Devereaux

**WEB MASTER**

Steve Devereaux

Hello Windy City Chapter,  
I hope everyone had a great Thanksgiving.  
I'd like to start by reminding everyone that our next meeting is the FIRST Tuesday in December. We decided this several years ago. After two or three years of blizzards on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday, we voted to move the December meeting up. We hope to avoid getting snowed-out this way.  
We have a lot to talk about at this meeting:  
Most of our discussion will probably be about the NERA National Conference. We can expect some good information from our members who went to the conference.  
We need to plan our Christmas/New Year party. This will most likely be held in January.  
I'm also sharing a letter from Yvette Purtill from NERA Headquarters. She would like submissions about chapter activities to publish in our Mariner magazine and on the various social sites.

I look forward to seeing everyone at the meeting.

Sincerely,  
Ed Whiteside

**Reminder:** Our DECEMBER MEETING is on the first TUESDAY, Which Is December 1st

**Mark Your Calendar:**

Meetings are conducted at 2000 hours on the second Tuesday of even numbered months:  
At the American Legion Post in Northlake, IL

**Windy City Chapter meeting minutes-**

No Meeting/Minutes for October 2015 due to the National Conference in Norfolk, Virginia

## Obama Care Snippet

The Affordable Care Act requires most Americans to maintain basic health care coverage, called minimum essential coverage. TRICARE meets the minimum essential coverage requirement under the Act. For tax year 2015, an IRS tax form is required to prove that you had minimum essential coverage during 2015. You will receive this form listing your TRICARE coverage status for each month in 2015. In order for TRICARE to verify that you and all of your eligible family members maintained minimum essential coverage, you must keep your information up to date in DEERS—including adding family members after marriage, birth or adoption. Your Social Security number and the number of each of your covered family members must be included in DEERS for your TRICARE coverage to be reflected accurately. For more information, visit [TRICARE.mil/aca](http://TRICARE.mil/aca).

If you do not have minimum essential coverage, you may have to pay a fee for each month you are not covered. The fee will be collected each year with federal tax returns.

You can find other health care coverage options that meet the minimum essential coverage requirement through the health insurance marketplace at [healthcare.gov](http://healthcare.gov).

Open enrollment for 2016 health plans runs from November 1st, 2015 through January 31st, 2016. If you do not enroll in a plan by January 31st, you will not be able to enroll in a health insurance plan until the next open enrollment period, unless you experience a qualifying life event.

---

## **NEX Dividends Help Fund New EPICENTER and Other Upgrades**

---

WASHINGTON (NNS) -- Work currently is underway on the Navy's largest non-appropriated funds construction (NAFCON) project, the Naval Station (NAVSTA) Great Lakes Epicenter, which is expected to open its doors in July 2016.

The \$14 million state-of-the-art entertainment complex is an expansion of the installation's current enlisted club. The new all-hands facility will include 28 bowling lanes, a 175-seat movie theater, a live entertainment area and a revamped food service concept. On Nov. 10, ground was broken on the bowling phase of the project.

"I think the epicenter will be the premiere, all-around entertainment facility in the Navy and maybe all of DoD (Department of Defense), once completed," said John Prue, NAVSTA Great Lakes Morale, Welfare and

Recreation (MWR) director. "It will set the stage for a variety of quality MWR programs and services all under one roof.

"Here at Great Lakes, the epicenter will not only support some of the Navy's newest Sailors, but the entire Great Lakes community, offering something for everyone," he added.

The epicenter is an example of the kinds of NAFCON projects that benefit from the Navy Exchange Service Command's (NEXCOM) annual contribution to Navy quality of life programs. NEXCOM shares 70 percent of its profits with the Navy's MWR program every year. Last year, NEXCOM contributed \$46.6 million to MWR.

"MWR programs have a tremendously positive impact on our Navy community by providing various opportunities to learn, grow and play," said Jerry Hieb, director of the Navy's Fleet and Family Readiness Support Services Division. "The annual NEX dividend is essential to our continued efforts to enhance the lives of our Sailors and their families."

The NEX dividend is used in a variety of ways, but NAFCON projects are a key benefactor of the annual sum. For example, at Naval Air Station (NAS) Key West, \$2.1 million in upgrades were finalized in August at the Sigsbee Sports Complex. The renovation replaced natural turf softball and multi-purpose fields with new synthetic turf fields, and also included new fencing and scoreboards. At the nearby Sigsbee Park, plans for a new splash pad will soon offer families a welcome respite from the heat.

Similar upgrades are underway on existing recreation facilities at installations worldwide, such as bowling alleys, golf courses and dining facilities.

"In addition to the EPICENTER, Naval Station Great Lakes MWR has put back nearly \$9 million NAF dollars into renovations and upgrades of facilities and equipment since 2008," said Prue. "Those funds were from local MWR and Navy Exchange profits, and they show how our patrons' business directly supports quality of life programs."

The Navy is tasked by Congress and DoD to establish, operate, and fund well-rounded MWR programs and facilities for Sailors and their families. MWR is one of many quality of life programs for which the Navy's shore enterprise is responsible. Supporting the fleet, fighter and family, Navy Installations Command is comprised of more than 50,000 Sailors and civilian employees located at 70 installations in 11 regions worldwide.

For more information about Navy shore installations, visit [www.cnic.navy.mil](http://www.cnic.navy.mil). For more information about MWR, visit [www.navymwr.org](http://www.navymwr.org).

---

There's nothing in a caterpillar that tells you it's going to be a Butterfly

# Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus Names Virginia-Class Submarine

Foxborough, Mass. (NNS) -- Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus announced that SSN 798, a Virginia-class attack submarine, will bear the name USS Massachusetts during a taped video message at Gillette Stadium.

The submarine will be named to honor the history its namesake state has with the Navy. This history extends to 1775, before the official founding of the United States, to the time when George Washington founded the Continental Navy in an effort to protect the 13 colonies from British attack. By 1800, six years after the establishment of the Department of the Navy, one of its first 14 ship yards was incorporated in Boston. And in 1836, The Boston Naval Hospital, one of the first of three hospitals dedicated solely to the care of naval personnel, opened.

The future USS Massachusetts will be the fifth Navy vessel to serve under that name; the first, a wooden steamer, was a privately owned ship built in Boston in 1845 and purchased by the War Department in 1847. It served as a troop transport for the Army before being transferred to the Department of the Navy in 1849. Before being decommissioned in 1852, it served by scouting potential sites for lighthouses on the West Coast. After being recommissioned in 1854, it transported guns and ammunition during the Puget Sound War. Five years later, it was transferred back to the Army to cruise the Puget Sound providing protection for the inhabitants of the region. In 1862, it was transferred back to the Navy and a year later was converted to a storeship serving in this capacity until its final decommission in 1867.

The second Massachusetts, built in 1860, also in Boston, was bought and commissioned by the Navy in 1861. She was an iron screw steamer whose service spanned for the entire Civil War. A day after joining her squadron in Pensacola, Florida, Massachusetts took her first British ship, Perthshire. Over the course of the next month, Massachusetts overpowered seven more ships of Mexican and Confederate origins. Her record continued along these lines until the end of the year when she worked at intercepting Confederate freight shipments in Ship Island's passage until early 1862 when she was decommissioned in New York. She commissioned again in April of that year and served as a supply ship until December when she decommissioned again. In 1863, she recommissioned and continued defeating Confederate ships until the end of the war in 1865.

The third ship to bear the name had a long history. A battleship commissioned in 1896, it spent the first two years of its service conducting training exercises off the Atlantic coast before being assigned to blockade duties in

Cuba in 1898. There she bombarded a Spanish cruiser and multiple fortifications. A couple of months later, Massachusetts returned to her duties cruising the Atlantic Coast for about seven years before briefly becoming a training ship for the Naval Academy. Shortly thereafter she began a pattern of being decommissioned and recommissioned to serve as a training ship before moving to Yorktown, Virginia in 1918 to become a heavy gun target practice ship until the end of World War I. A year later, Massachusetts was decommissioned for a final time.

The final Massachusetts was a battleship commissioned during the middle of World War II, in 1942. Within days of being launched, she had joined the conflict off the coast of North Africa and sunk two French ships. In addition, she played a vital role during the war for her defense against the Japanese, largely through her participation in fleet and air strikes. She was decommissioned in 1947, but received 11 Battle Stars for her actions and has been preserved in Fall River, Massachusetts as a memorial for those who served in World War II.

Virginia-class attack submarines provide the Navy with the capabilities required to maintain the nation's undersea supremacy well into the 21st century. They have enhanced stealth, sophisticated surveillance capabilities and special warfare enhancements that will enable them to meet the Navy's multi-mission requirements.

These submarines have the capability to attack targets ashore with highly accurate Tomahawk cruise missiles and conduct covert, long-term surveillance of land areas, littoral waters or other sea-based forces. Other missions include anti-submarine and anti-ship warfare; mine delivery and minefield mapping. They are also designed for special forces delivery and support.

Each Virginia-class submarine is 7,800-tons and 377 feet in length, has a beam of 34 feet, and can operate at more than 25 knots submerged. They are designed with a reactor plant that will not require refueling during the planned life of the ship, reducing lifecycle costs while increasing underway time. The submarine will be built under a unique teaming agreement between General Dynamics Electric Boat and Huntington Ingalls Industries' Newport News Shipbuilding division wherein both companies build certain portions of each submarine and then alternate deliveries. Massachusetts will be delivered by Huntington Ingalls Industries' Newport News Shipbuilding.

For more information about the Virginia-class attack submarine, visit <http://www.navy.mil/local/virginiaclass/>

# Honor, Respect, Devotion to Duty: Continuing Promise 2015

Posted by LTJG Katie Braynard, Friday, October 23, 2015



Military Sealift Command hospital ship USNS Comfort (T-AH 20) is anchored off the coast of Port Au Prince, Haiti in support of Continuing Promise 2015. Continuing Promise is a U.S. Southern Command-sponsored and U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. 4th Fleet-conducted deployment to conduct civil-military operations including humanitarian-civil assistance, subject matter expert exchanges, medical, dental, veterinary and engineering support and disaster response to partner nations and to show U.S. support and commitment to Central and South America and the Caribbean. U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Andrew Schneider.

In early September, the Military Sealift Command hospital ship USNS Comfort anchored off the coast of Port Au Prince, Haiti, marking the start of [Continuing Promise 2015's](#) final mission stop after visiting 10 other Latin American and Caribbean nations.

Continuing Promise is a humanitarian civic assistance mission and a U.S. Southern Command medical training exercise aimed at strengthening regional partnerships and improving the lives of thousands in Central and South America and the Caribbean.

This year, Continuing Promise brought together military and civilian personnel from medical, dental, veterinary and engineering disciplines and assisted numerous communities in 11 countries.

Joining this Department of Defense-led mission in Haiti were three Coast Guardsmen: Cmdr. Ted Kim, Lt. Cmdr. Tim Sommella and Lt. Cmdr. Frank Puzzini.

## Cmdr. Ted Kim



At the closing ceremony, the First Lady Mrs. Martelly and the Minister of Public Health Dr. Guillaume presented the awards for the Comfort and Security Cooperation Office in Haiti. Along with the Mission Commander, U.S. Navy Capt. Sam Hancock and the Medical Commander, U.S. Navy Capt. Christine Sears, U.S. Coast Guard Cmdr. Ted Kim was recognized for helping more than 14,500 Haitians during the mission. U.S. Coast Guard photo.

Cmdr. Ted Kim, who currently serves as the senior defense official and defense attaché assigned to U.S. Embassy Port-au-Prince, is responsible for all DoD related activities and missions in Haiti, including the CP-15 mission to Haiti.

Since early 2015, Kim worked closely with USNS Comfort's advanced planning teams to prepare for the deployment to Haiti. He negotiated with the Haitian Government directly on behalf of the US government to ensure the ship visit and medical mission were welcomed.

During the visit, he coordinated the mission from the strategic level, overseeing the command and control operations from the Embassy and providing daily

status reports to the Ambassador, U.S. Southern Command leadership and the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

Kim even worked side-by-side with colleagues from U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and Center for Disease Control (CDC) to coordinate the historic engagement of Cuban and USNS Comfort doctors in a subject matter exchange and treatment of patients in Haiti.

The mission allowed Kim to reflect on how these joint humanitarian missions can make a difference in the lives of thousands.

“Personally, it was a heartwarming experience to help the most vulnerable people, especially children, women and elderly folks,” Kim said. “Most of them have never seen by a doctor before. This is their first professional medical care in their lives!”

#### **Lt. Cmdr. Tim Sommella**

Lt. Cmdr. Tim Sommella currently serves as the assigned Coast Guard Liaison Officer at the U.S. Embassy in Port-au-Prince. In preparation for Continuing Promise, he accompanied and introduced the master of the USNS Comfort and other members of the pre-deployment site survey team to key Haitian maritime stakeholders in September 2014, helping to pave the way for all shipboard, customs, and immigration approvals and clearances.

During the 10-day mission, he managed the primary medical treatment site located at the Haitian Coast Guard Base. He worked alongside the ship’s medical officer in charge of the site and provided security and logistics support to the largest medical site, treating over 7,800 patients during the eight days of mission and facilitating 166 surgeries onboard USNS Comfort. He interfaced with various Haitian National Police units for crowd control and force protection of the medical personnel ashore and afloat.



Lt. Cmdr. Tim Sommella with the Haitian Coast Guard Commandant, Jean Marie Wagnac and the USNS Comfort Surgeon General, U.S. Navy Capt. Delgado. U.S. Coast Guard photo.

“The opportunity to work closely with the Government of Haiti in the past year to prepare for the USNS Comfort visit and then assist our Department of Defense colleagues and Navy shipmates throughout the week was such an amazing and exhilarating experience,” said Sommella. “Continuing Promise not only helped a huge number of Haitian families but changed the lives of so many individuals.”

#### **Lt. Cmdr. Frank Puzzini**

Lt. Cmdr. Frank Puzzini, a reservist, was assigned to US Southern Command’s Interagency and Partnership Directorate during Continuing Promise. Deployed to Port-au-Prince for Continuing Promise, he played an integral role in the day-to-day operations, assisting Sommella at the base and fleet landing. He worked seamlessly and integrated with the U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps civilian affairs teams distributing water, providing additional security at the entry control points, and coordinating support services for medical emergencies.

“It was great recognition to be selected by U.S. Southern Command to be part of the downrange team supporting the U.S. Embassy for the Continuing Promise mission in Port-au-Prince, Haiti,” said Puzzini. “I appreciated the opportunity to play a key role helping the Coast Guard Liaison Officer (Lt. Cmdr. Sommella) provide logistical support for the hospital ship USNS Comfort’s port call in Port-au-

Prince. Our critical linkage with the Haitian Coast Guard, and our readiness posture, helped to overcome significant roadblocks to allow patients access to the hospital ship and on site patient care in the challenging operational environment.”

His Coast Guard experience proved invaluable with a number of challenging security situations and he ensured a positive experience for the Haitian nationals waiting for medical care in the grueling heat.

“It was extremely rewarding to work in support of the USNS Comfort’s visit to Haiti and I learned significant leadership lessons that will be highly beneficial in my Coast Guard career,” Puzzini said. “I was privileged to be part of a very high performing Coast Guard, DoD, Active Duty, Reserve and Interagency Team that assisted thousands of Haitian Citizens in great need of medical care.

The Continuing Promise mission and teamwork will always be remembered as a high point in my Coast Guard Reserve career”.

Working with their DoD counterparts, Kim, Sommella and Puzzini made a direct positive impact on the lives of thousands of Haitians.

In Haiti alone, Continuing Promise treated 14,474 patients, performed 119 general surgeries and 47 oral surgeries, and sponsored 104 workshops, training more than 300 Haitian medical professionals, none of which would have been possible without the coordination and skill of these three Coast Guard officers.



U.S. Coast Guard Lt. Cmdr. Frank Puzzini, with the Haitian Coast Guard Commandant, Jean Marie Wagnac, and his command staff along with members of the U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps civil affairs team. U.S. Coast Guard photo

- See more at:

<http://coastguard.dodlive.mil/2015/10/honor-respect-devotion-to-duty-continuing-promise-2015/#sthash.WuZkKyvU.dpuf>