

LEAHYGRAM V



CELEBRATING OUR 16TH YEAR

August 26, 1978

Dear LEAHY Families and Friends,
Our previous LEAHYGRAM was mailed to you a short time before we left on our deployment to the Western Pacific (WESTPAC). We're now in port in Subic Bay, Philippine Islands, after having left San Diego the morning of July 6. But let me backtrack a bit to fill you in on a few of our predeployment activities.

We interrupted the flow of supplies coming aboard, the last minute training and briefings and the other many details involved with preparing a Navy ship for a scheduled seven-month cruise, long enough to hold a Dependents' Cruise. One of the Navy's methods for familiarizing families and friends with life aboard ship is to have periodic one-day cruises in which guests are embarked, giving them a chance to see first-hand what their husbands, brothers, sons, relatives and friends do aboard ship.

LEAHY's Dependents' Cruise was on June 2. Our ship has a normal complement of slightly over 400 men but on this summer day we steamed past Point Loma, the promontory overlooking San Diego Harbor, with an extra 126 persons aboard. During the nine-hour cruise, our guests were entertained by a variety of activities.

Conducted tours gave them a close look at where we work and live. An underway replenishment (UNREP) with a Navy oiler and a vertical replenishment (VERTREP) with a helicopter gave them insight as to Navy at-sea operations. A film and a slide presentation about LEAHY gave our guests a chance to relax while learning more about LEAHY and her history.

Chaplain (Lieutenant Commander) Frank Taylor and his son, Edward, watch the cliffs of Point Loma pass as LEAHY glides out to sea at the beginning of the Dependents' Cruise.



Signalman Third Class David Holm of Libertyville, Illinois points to a passing Navy ship off our port bow as two young visitors to LEAHY during our dependents' cruise look on.



Our guests crowd LEAHY's weather-decks to watch an UNREP with a Navy oiler.



To add a festive touch to the occasion, we had a barbecue on board, complete with hamburgers, hot dogs and chicken. By the time we returned to port that evening, our guests were both well fed and better informed about life at sea on a Navy ship.



Lieutenant J.G. Frank Murphy of Coldwater, Michigan and his wife, Candi, renewed their marriage vows during our dependents' cruise. Performing the ceremony, with a painting of Fleet Admiral William Daniel Leahy looking on, is Chaplain Taylor.



A Navy helicopter hovers over LEAHY's fantail as our guests look on from a safe distance.



Electrician's Mate Senior Chief Ben Siebels, his two children, Chad and Carisa, and his wife Sharon eat a relaxing picnic meal on the fantail during our dependents' cruise.

Members of Cub Pack 396 from El Cajon, California pose on the pier prior to touring LEAHY.



Just as many LEAHYMEN took leave during the Christmas and New Year holiday seasons, many chose to take leave in the weeks before we deployed. This was the final chance to visit with friends and loved ones before the deployment. Then on July 6, friends and relatives gathered on Pier 4, Naval Station San Diego to see us off.

After being underway for six days, we steamed into Pearl Harbor, Hawaii the morning of July 12 where we refueled and took on stores. A series of briefings for many of the officers and men followed at Commander in Chief Pacific Fleet Headquarters. These briefings brought us up to date on the ever-changing maritime environment in the far reaches of the Pacific Ocean.



LEAHYMEN enjoyed four days of liberty in Hawaii visiting Honolulu and swimming at the various beaches. Then on July 16 we departed Pearl Harbor and returned to our at-sea routine of watch standing, maintenance and training in the never-ending task of increasing our military and job specialty knowledge.

We were scheduled to sail to Buckner Bay, Okinawa, but Mother Nature changed our plans. On July 27, we ran into the edge of two typhoons, Wendy and Virginia. In order to avoid the 65-knot winds and 30-foot waves of these typhoons, we were forced to turn north and head for Yokosuka, Japan. We arrived in Yokosuka

(just south of Yokohama) on the morning of July 29. After taking on fuel, we steamed out of the harbor the following morning and headed toward our original destination, Okinawa.

Threading our way between the two typhoons, we arrived at Okinawa August first, 26 days after leaving San Diego. We had steamed more than 6,800 miles to reach this southernmost of the Ryukyu Islands which stretch south in a thin string from Japan.

We tied alongside a pier at White Beach, on the south coast of the island and again took on fuel and fresh water and the crew had a chance to go ashore for the evening.

The training never stops on LEAHY. Boatswain's Mate Second Class Leonard Bell (third from left) of Philadelphia explains the fine points of line handling to members of Deck Division as the ship ties alongside Pearl Harbor Pier H16. Listening to Leonard are (from left) Electronics Technician

Seaman Apprentice Tom Chambers, Seaman Apprentice Terry Thompson of Marengo, Illinois and Seaman Lou Dekorsi of Chicago.



The next morning we were underway again, our destination the large U.S. naval base at Subic Bay in the Philippine Islands. Two events during this period added a bit of variety to our everyday routine.

First, Boatswain's Mate Third Class Bill Murray of Piscataway, New Jersey was working topside helping stow a mooring line when a pigeon landed on the deck. He took it to sickbay and our corpsmen checked to make sure it wasn't injured and then gave it water. The bird had identification bands on its legs and stamped markings on its wing. The pigeon was

turned over to storekeeper Second Class Ed Gale. Ed raced pigeons back in his hometown of Farmington, Connecticut for four years and his father is now caring for his flock of 50 birds while he's in the Navy. Ed identified the pigeon as a long-distance racer that had been blown off course during a race. Right now, Ed is caring for the bird and is going to try and trace down the owner when we reach Taiwan. If he's unable to do so, he'll free the bird and hopefully our winged stowaway will find its way back to its coop.

Somebody christened the pigeon Mr. Liberty Gale, and for now, Ed has decided to let the racer keep the name.





Among those present at the ship's birthday celebration were (from left) Captain Pearlman, Mess Management Specialist Chief (partially hidden behind the captain) Orlando Trinidad, Personnelman Senior Chief Renato Buenafe, Ship's Serviceman Seaman Rickey Hill, Signalman Second Class Gary Cerilli, Mess Management Seaman Bob Gibbs and Machinist's Mate Third Class Raul Cruz. August 4, by the way, not only has significance for the ship, but also for Seaman Hill. It's his birthday.

Another cheerful happening during our passage from Okinawa to Subic Bay was a birthday celebration August 4. On that day in 1962, LEAHY became a commissioned ship of the line in the United States Navy.

We didn't have champagne for our birthday celebration but the menu did include steak and lobster, with birthday cake for dessert.

It's worth noting here that each night underway around 11:30 we serve a snack on the messdecks for those men who are going on watch or coming off watch. Leftovers from supper are usually served, so that night the men had steak and lobster. How's that for a midnight snack?



Machinist's Mate Second Class John Kraft of San Diego, one of two LEAHYMEN of the Month for May, takes a break in the after engine room.



The other LEAHYMAN of the Month for May is Gunner's Mate (Missiles) Seaman Warren Pai of Honolulu. Warren is seen here with the ship's forward missile launcher just over his right shoulder.



Gunner's Mate (Guns) Second Class Carl Farmer of Harlan, Kentucky stands in front of one of our 3-inch 50-caliber twin gun mounts. Carl was LEAHYMAN of the Month for June.

We arrived in the Philippines the morning of August 5 and moored to Alava Wharf at the Naval Ship Repair Facility at Subic Bay. LEAHY will be in Subic for about three weeks for "upkeep" and maintenance after her long voyage.

In the months ahead, we'll be visiting a number of ports in the Western Pacific and participating in a variety of fleet exercises. As always, we will continue to keep you informed of our activities through these LEAHYGRAMS.

S. S. Pearlman
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Captain, U.S. Navy
Commanding Officer