The 76er

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Get Ready for HOMEPORT CHANGE

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HOW TO GET MONEY BACK

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HAVING TROUBLE WITH HPC FORMS?

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FIND OUT WHO YOUR DEPARTMENT REP IS

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San Diego on the Horizon

Story by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd ClassTerry Godette
&
Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Omar Powell

Ronald Reagan is starting to get ready for the homeport shift back to San Diego and that means Sailors that have families in Bremerton or a designated place need to start making the necessary preparations to ensure a smooth move.

Sailors on board with an end of active obligated service (EOAS) date or a planned rotation date (PRD) of February 1, 2014 later will be eligible for a homeport change certificate. For Sailors that arrived after May 14, 2012, your orders would have directed you to move all your household goods and/or family to San Diego.

During the last move, Ronald Reagan's Personnel department ran into many different problems, some of which included: Sailors changing their mind about how they were going to move their personal property or deciding to fly back to San Diego to catch the ship up to Bremerton without turning their passenger reservation request in on time. To avoid these types of mistakes again information is going out early and we are encouraging Sailors not to wait until the last minute to start processing their paperwork.

"Having each Sailor being proactive in initiating their move and not waiting until the last minute would be a big help to us," said Senior Chief Personnel Specialist Kevin Hall, Ronald Reagan's homeport change (HPC) coordinator.

Another big reason to be early with your paperwork is the local area network (LAN). As the Reagan prepares to get the ship ready to come out of the yard, there will be limited LAN connectivity, meaning fewer computers for personnel staff to work with.

Another major concern that came out of last year's move from San Diego was travel claims. There are two types of payments Sailors can get their entitlements for travel -- advance or reimbursements. For the advance payments you will have to submit your package at least 15 days prior to your travel date. If you plan on getting reimbursement then you will submit your transfer package prior to travel but receive your entitlement when you return.

"A lot of Sailors forgot to file their travel claim when we moved up to Bremerton and we had people filing claims months later," said Chief Personnel Specialist Mark Diego, Ronald Reagan's assistant homeport change coordinator. "Sailors need to come to personnel within five working days to file their travel claim after executing their move, especially those who receive advances."

It's also important to remember that Admin isn't the only resource to help you. Each department has been assigned their own homeport change coordinator.

"The departmental homeport change coordinators will play a huge role in helping the process to go smoothly this time around," said Personnel Specialist 2nd Class Diego Bustillo, Ronald Reagan's homeport change personnel accounting manager. "We will be here to help also, but it is imperative that Sailors utilize their departmental coordinators as much as possible."

The departmental coordinator will attend meetings with the ship's coordinator where they will be keep up to date on the latest information. Equally important as getting your paperwork in on time is keeping your chain of command informed of your plans.

"You need to keep your chain of command informed with up-to-date information about your move in case of an emergency," said Diego. "Your chain can't help you if they are not informed of your situation."

One such circumstance in which your chain of command will play a major role in your planning is house hunting permissive TAD, a five to ten day period that allows Sailors the time to look for housing. Your house hunting leave chit will be routed and approved by your chain of command based on how long they can afford for that particular Sailor to be gone and the work schedule, said Hall. Only a certain percentage of Sailors will be authorized to take house hunting leave at a time.

Another way you can utilize your chain of command would be getting some advice. Planning your move on top of your regular work schedule can be stressful so getting advice from someone who has been through the process a time or two definitely won't hurt.

"I look at it like being on a sports team," said Quartermaster 1st Class Rodesia Brown, Navigation's departmental homeport change coordinator. "When you're on a team, you go to your veterans when you have questions. So my advice for Sailors that aren't exactly sure how and what to plan for, ask someone."

Proper planning and execution will not only benefit you, but inspire those around you to do the same. The resources are available and if you have questions, there's someone close by to get you an answer.

FREE RIDE

OPLIFT CONTACTS:
OPLIFT Coordinator - LCDR Al Guajardo (Handler)
Assistant OPLIFT Coordinator - LT T. Flournoy (Flight Deck Officer)

Story by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Kevin Hastings

The Ronald Reagan -- a floating city of 3,000 men and women smashed between an airport and a nuclear reactor. A year ago, Ronald Reagan made her voyage to Bremerton, Wash. to undergo a Docked Planned Incremental Availability, loading her flight deck and hanger bays with her crew's vehicles and changed from a 4.3 billion dollar aircraft carrier into what Yahoo quoted as, "the most expensive parking lot in the world."

However, as with anything in the Navy, there are rules and instructions for the evolution to ensure a smooth and safe transition from Bremerton, Wash. back to our traditional homeport of sunny San Diego.

The OPLIFT dates are not set in stone yet because the date of departure has not yet been disclosed.

"The details for the exact dates will be coming soon," said Senior Chief Mass Communication Specialist Dean Lohmeyer, from St. Louis. "Everything will hinge on our exact date of departure from Bremerton."

The ship plans on accommodating as many Sailors as they can, but certain categories of Sailors will be given priority.

"Sailors who are not eligible for the homeport change certificate will have priority because they will not be reimbursed for shipping or driving their vehicles to San Diego," said Lohmeyer. "Having a spot on the OPLIFT will save Sailors several hundred dollars on gas money, hotel rooms, or shipping their car."

Lohmeyer explains that the process is pretty simple.

"There will be OPLIFT coordinators in each department throughout the ship," said Lohmeyer. "They'll give you the forms you'll need to be able to sign up."

Sailors who took advantage of the opportunity last time also noted the benefits of having the option.

"Overall, it helped me get the things I needed to have a comfortable time here in a new place," said Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Davien Fields, from Savannah, Ga. "It was easy to sign up to get a spot on the ship for my car; plus how many people can say they had their car on an aircraft carrier?"

If any Sailor feels like the OPLIFT isn't the best option for them, the Navy does provide different avenues to help Sailors relocate back to San Diego.

"Sailors have a several options if they don't make the OPLIFT," said Lohmeyer. "They can ship their car through a private vendor, or even take advantage of generous no-cost TAD offer from the chain of command to drive their vehicles to San Diego."

With the generous TAD offers from the chain of command there are a few things Sailors should keep in mind while planning their journey back.

"The first thing Sailors should keep in mind is to schedule this with their chain of command, so their division and department don't go over the approved percentages of Sailors on leave or TAD at one time," said Lohmeyer. "As long as our Sailors keep an open mind, I'm sure each department will work with their people as much as possible to try to create as many win-win situations as they can."

With the first OPLIFT underneath Ronald Reagan's belt, the problems and struggles learned last time will help Ronald Reagan make this one a smoother process.

"The biggest problem we encountered was communication between Sailors and their chain of command," said Lohmeyer. "Sailors sign up for the OPLIFT and then decided to drive their cars to Bremerton which opened spots for others on the OPLIFT. To avoid the same problem twice, we need to make sure our OPLIFT coordinators review their rosters several times as we approach the deadline. If we can get the Sailors on the list before they leave town, we can save them a lot of money."

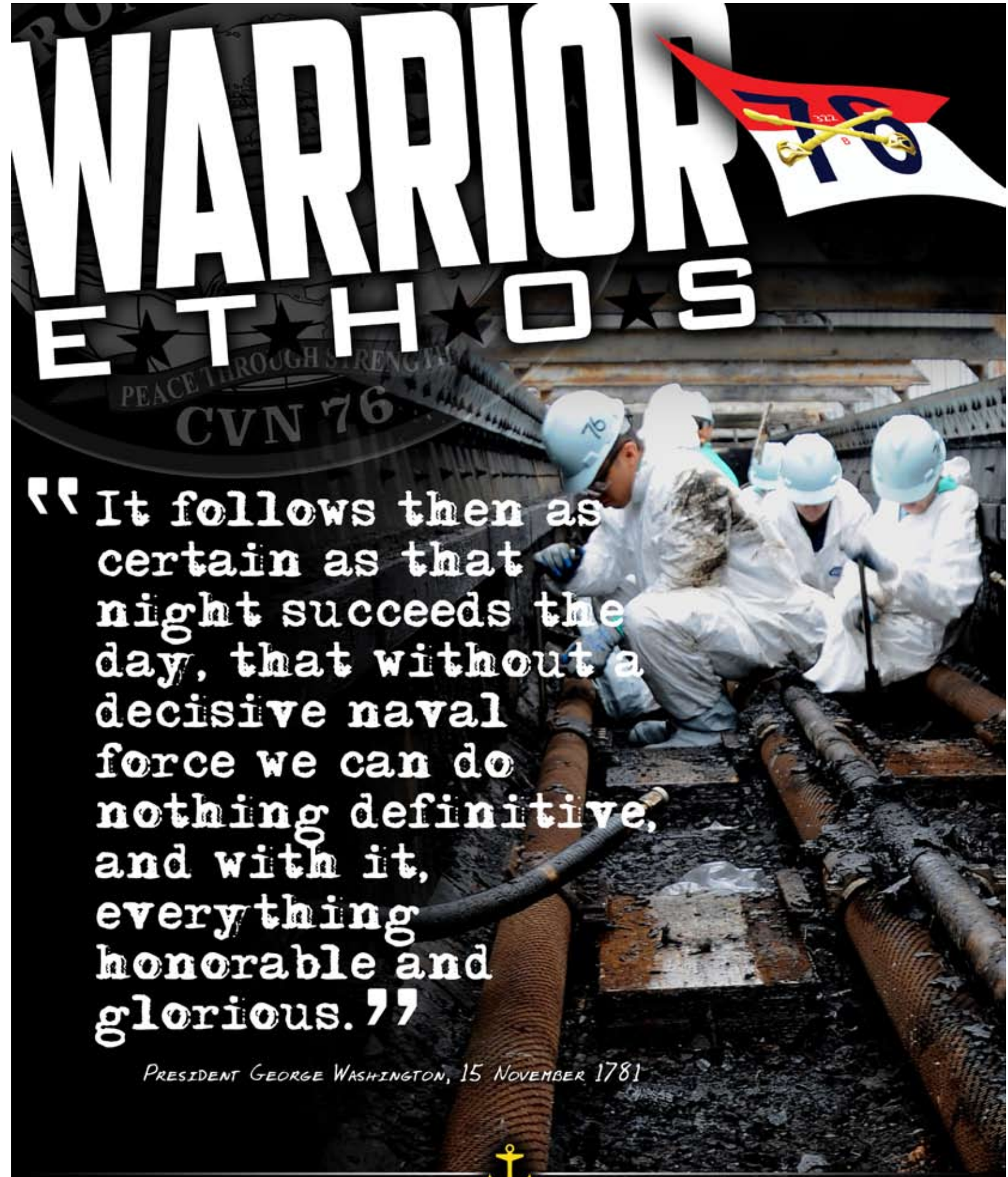
According to Lohmeyer, the onload of vehicles should take only one day.

"We were able to unload all the cars in a day when we docked here in Bremerton," said Lohmeyer. "We estimate that it should take the same amount of time to load the cars back on. Because of this, Sailors will have to be ready for their load time ready to go. (i.e. filled with fuel, cleaned and packed.) And because we want to accommodate as many people as we can, if you're on the standby list and someone doesn't show up, be ready to go."

The most important thing to know is that this command is doing it's very best to help its crew come back home without spending their bankroll.

The transit to San Diego will mark a new beginning for this ship and her crew; this warship will get back to what she does best—defending our natural right to freedom.

WARRIOR ETHOS



"It follows then as certain as that night succeeds the day, that without a decisive naval force we can do nothing definitive, and with it, everything honorable and glorious."

President George Washington, 15 November 1781

USS Ronald Reagan

Sailors Helping Sailors. One Team. One Fight.