



# Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation Newsletter

Special Commissioning Edition - 2017

## “Man Our Ship and Bring Her To Life”



Dr. Robert M. Humphries

Ship Sponsor Susan Ford Bales (center) gives the order to **Man Our Ship and Bring Her to Life** at the Commissioning of the *USS Gerald R. Ford* (CVN 78) at Naval Station Norfolk on July 22, 2017. Captain Richard McCormack, United States Navy Commanding Officer of *USS Gerald R. Ford* (left) and Master Chief Laura Nunley (right) join Susan at the podium.



United States Navy

Crew members of the *USS Gerald R. Ford* (CVN 78) “Man The Rails” at the Commissioning Ceremony.

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*Letter from the Executive Director,  
Joseph S. Calvaruso*



Joe Calvaruso sitting in President Ford's chair in the Inport Cabin aboard the USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) on July 21, 2017.

This is a commemorative edition of The Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation newsletter.

In this edition, we look back on Commissioning Weekend for the USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78), including the commissioning ceremony, itself, as well as special events held that weekend. I was honored to join the many guests during Commissioning Weekend and to have served as a member of the USS Gerald R. Ford Commissioning Committee. The Committee was led by Ship Sponsor Susan Ford Bales and Co-Chairmen Doug DeVos, Greg Willard, and Red Cavaney, all four of whom are also Foundation Trustees.

In addition, this newsletter takes a retrospective look at the ship's already stellar history leading up to the commissioning. Not surprisingly, the Ford and her crew didn't rest on their commissioning laurels; immediately following Commissioning Weekend, she went to sea where her first tail hook landings and Electromagnetic Aircraft Launch System launches were successfully completed.

Commissioning Weekend began with the Ship Sponsor Luncheon on July 21. There were special gift presentations by the Commissioning Committee Co-Chairmen and heartfelt remarks delivered by Susan. The luncheon concluded with a remarkable musical medley by Master Sergeant Alvy Powell of the United States Army Chorus. The Chairmen's Reception was held that evening at Naval Station Norfolk. Highlighting the evening were remarks from former Defense Secretaries Dick Cheney and Don Rumsfeld, and poignant toasts by Susan, Doug DeVos, CNO Admiral John Richardson, Captain Richard McCormack, and Admiral Phil Davidson. Also in attendance were members of President Ford's Administration, including Paul O'Neill and Brent Scowcroft, members of the Ford's crew, Foundation Trustees, and Ford family members.

The Commissioning Ceremony was conducted the following morning in CVN 78's hangar bay. After the ceremony, the nearly 18,000 guests were invited to tour the ship – America's newest "100,000 Tons of Diplomacy." Across the country in Grand Rapids, members of the public gathered at the Museum to watch a live telecast of the commissioning.

Leading up to the Commissioning, citizens across West Michigan supported three cornerstone Commissioning Committee fundraising events. The first event, hosted by Don and Angela Sheets, took place in Midland, Michigan at the Midland Center for the Arts. Don Rumsfeld gave the keynote

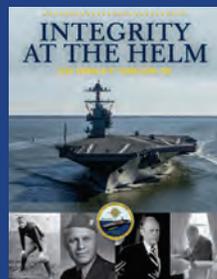
address to a large crowd of CVN 78 supporters. The Air Zoo in Kalamazoo, Michigan was host for the second West Michigan event. Bob and Susan Brown hosted this cornerstone event, and Dick Cheney gave remarks about his former boss and dear friend President Ford. Both of the facilities displayed temporary CVN 78 exhibits that had been made especially available by the Foundation. The final event was hosted by Doug and Maria DeVos at their home. Historian John Meacham gave remarks to the large gathering as the perfect capstone to the evening. A big thanks goes to each of the hosts for those three events and to the generosity of the donors who attended.

The funds raised by the Commissioning Committee at these events and elsewhere made possible significant enhancements to directly benefit the crew and their quality of life on the ship. Many of those enhancements are discussed in this newsletter.

Also included is a list of the major donors to the Commissioning Committee, many of whom are also Foundation supporters. We hope that all CVN 78 supporters will join us in the years ahead in their continued support of President Ford's legacy through the Foundation's "Friends of Ford".

Thank you for making the USS Gerald R. Ford such a singular tribute to President Ford and the motto: *Integrity At The Helm*.

Best regards,



For those who were unable to attend the CVN 78 commissioning, the official Commissioning Book can be viewed at this link:

[https://issuu.com/faircountmedia/docs/uss\\_gerald\\_r\\_ford\\_cvn\\_78](https://issuu.com/faircountmedia/docs/uss_gerald_r_ford_cvn_78)



**To Friends of *USS Gerald R. Ford* (CVN 78),**

Please accept our heartiest gratitude and congratulations on the commissioning of *USS Gerald R. Ford* (CVN 78), America's newest aircraft carrier and aircraft carrier class. This is the largest and most significant tribute ever bestowed upon President Ford, and it is one for which he is richly deserving. The *Ford* will defend America and her allies for decades, as will her fellow *Ford Class* carriers well into the Twenty-Second Century.

Through the generosity and tireless efforts of thousands of Americans from coast to coast, the Commissioning Committee raised \$6.5 million for the *Ford* and her crews. The amount raised is unprecedented for any commissioning. The outpouring of support is a shining honor to President Ford and his extraordinary legacy of *Integrity At The Helm*. The funds will support the *Ford* and the tens of thousands of sailors who will serve aboard her. The Committee has already delivered and placed into service significant accessions to the ship, and plans for additional accessions are underway.

On behalf of all of us on the Commissioning Committee and our Navy League partners, thank you for making CVN 78's Commissioning Weekend and this extraordinary tribute to President Ford a reality.

May God bless and watch over the *USS Gerald R. Ford*, those who built her, and all those who will serve aboard her. And may His light shine upon President Gerald Ford and Betty Ford and the nation they loved so dearly.

**Sincerely yours,**

***USS Gerald R. Ford* (CVN 78) Commissioning Committee**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susan Ford Bales".

**Susan Ford Bales, Ship Sponsor**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Greg Willard".

**Gregory D. Willard,  
Co-Chairman**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Doug DeVos".

**Douglas L. DeVos,  
Co-Chairman**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Red Cavaney".

**Red Cavaney,  
Co-Chairman**

# Ship Sponsor Luncheon - July 21, 2017



Commissioning Committee Co-Chair Greg Willard

## REMARKS OF GREG WILLARD SHIP SPONSOR LUNCHEON JULY 21, 2017

On behalf of my Commissioning Committee Co-Chairmen, Doug DeVos and Red Cavaney, welcome as we celebrate *USS Gerald R. Ford's* Commissioning Weekend. And, in particular, we pay special tribute today to CVN 78's extraordinary Ship Sponsor, Susan Ford Bales. (applause).

Commissioning Weekend is the culmination of a vast collaborative effort that's spanned several years and thousands of people. First and foremost have been Commanding Officers Rear Admiral (then-Captain) John Meier and current Captain Rick McCormack and the officers and crew of *USS Gerald R. Ford*, our superb Navy League partners, and our Commissioning Committee members with whom Doug, Red, and I have been so honored to serve.

The Commissioning Committee, along with our Navy League partners, set out on this journey to raise funds to support the ship and her crew, primarily by funding and providing significant enhancements to the ship. We originally established what was thought at the time to be a rather robust fundraising target of \$4 million. Alas, we woefully underestimated your boundless admiration for President Ford and for his namesake aircraft carrier. Through the generosity of so many, we are pleased to announce that the Commissioning Committee for the *USS Gerald R. Ford* has shattered all records for Navy commissionings. Ladies and gentlemen,

with your patriotic support, we raised \$6.5 million! (applause).

We would be remiss not to pause to thank several very special people who were at the epicenter of what the Commissioning Committee accomplished in our fundraising efforts. With us today are Doug DeVos, Maria DeVos, and the DeVos family, Peter and Pietro Secchia, and Mary-Pat Woodard. Their generosity and support to the men and women of CVN 78 have been amazing. Would each of you and your family members please stand. (applause).

We've also been so fortunate to have at our side the leadership of the Navy League-Hampton Roads Council, particularly Navy League Chairman, Captain Bill Crow and Navy League CEO, Maryellen Baldwin. Both of them, together with their Navy League colleagues, are simply outstanding; Bill and Maryellen, would you please stand. (applause).

During the luncheon service, a series of slides will be displayed on the large screens. As Commander Julie Treanor (SUPPO) can explain to you in detail, the slides illustrate just a few of the major enhancements to the ship that have been developed through your generosity. As you view those slides, you'll see just a few of the many enhancements that are being placed on the ship: the statue of Lieutenant Commander Jerry Ford in the ship's Ceremonial Quarterdeck, the Tribute Room, the Inport Cabin, the Ship's Chapel, the formal state rooms, "Mac's" the onboard Starbucks, state of the art gymnasium and recreational equipment, and many more. And, as those slides are displayed, each of you should pause and bask in a moment of well-deserved personal pride - very well-deserved pride - for making it all possible. It was each of *you*, and *your* boundless generosity that has made every single one of those enhancements possible. On behalf of all of us on the Commissioning Committee, thank you

from the bottom of our collective heart!

.....  
... And now we're in for a treat. My grandson celebrated his three year old birthday last week, and couldn't stop talking about all of his *treats*. But today, we have an extra special treat - one that would wow even young Emmerich Willard.

Master Sergeant Alvy Powell is going to perform three musical selections. The first is one that President Ford requested -- literally, Alvy -- every time you were present before President and Mrs. Ford. On those occasions, the President would quietly ask Alvy, "... *Alvy, would you mind singing .....*" And to each of the President's heartfelt requests, Alvy always would immediately interject with a smile, "Yes, sir, Mr. President; I'll work it into the program." So, today, Susan has emulated her father and quietly whispered to Alvy, "... *Alvy, would you mind singing .....*" So, the first selection will be President Ford's favorite song from Alvy's repertoire.

The second song has a little story behind it. President Ford left the White House on January 20, 1977, and flew to California that day with Mrs. Ford. Several weeks later, they went to New York City for their first major public appearance since leaving the presidency. Mrs. Ford wanted to see a new Broadway musical, "A Chorus Line", which was playing at the Shubert Theater. As many of you will recall from A Chorus Line, mid-way through the musical there's a very poignant song. That evening in New York, as the actress began to sing the song, Mrs. Ford reached over, and she and the President held hands, both of them with unmistakable smiles and, yes, also with a glint of tears of pride in their eyes. So, in a few moments, when you listen to the lyrics of Alvy's second number, think about those lyrics and reflect on Jerry and Betty Ford holding hands there in the Shubert Theater weeks after leaving the White House. And also think about Susan's remarkable journey with the shipbuilders and now with the crew as they formally transition tomorrow morning from a "Pre- Commissioning Unit - PCU" to the "USS". Finally, the third song Alvy is going to perform ...

*Greg Willard remarks continued on next page.*



Greg Willard remarks continued.

well ... as the saying goes, it needs no introduction – and I shall give it none. One final item. We are about to witness history, ladies and gentlemen. Over the course of the last four decades, Master Sergeant Alvy Powell, a member of the United States Army Chorus, has performed for nine – nine! – United States Presidents. He has sung at countless inaugurations, White House ceremonies, and public events throughout America and around the globe. He was the soloist at President Ford's state funeral; he was the soloist at Mrs. Ford's funeral. He is currently the oldest enlisted soldier in the United States Army.

Next month, Alvy Powell is retiring.

Today is a moment of history. This is the last public solo he will give as a member of the United States Army Chorus. Therefore, it is a high honor to introduce to you a distinguished patriot, a dedicated soldier, and a national treasure, ladies and gentlemen, Master Sergeant Alvy Powell, accompanied by Staff Sergeant Dan Campolieta.

Dr. Robert M. Humphries

Master Sergeant Alvy Powell's final solo performance.



Dr. Robert M. Humphries

Doug and Maria DeVos are acknowledged at the Ship Sponsor Luncheon for their generosity.



Dr. Robert M. Humphries

(l-r) MaryPat Woodard, Susan Ford Bales and Barbara Appleby at the Ship Sponsor Luncheon.



Dr. Robert M. Humphries

Peter Secchia and his grandson Pietro Secchia are acknowledged for their generosity.



Dr. Robert M. Humphries

(l-r) Staff Sergeant Dan Campolieta and Master Sergeant Alvy Powell at the Ship Sponsor Luncheon.



Dr. Robert M. Humphries

Co-Chair Red Cavaney explains the plank owner tradition to the luncheon attendees.

Good afternoon and welcome. As one of the Commissioning Committee Co-Chairmen, I'm here to carry on the tradition at this Ship Sponsor Luncheon of a special gift. First, I want to explain the tradition of plank owners. Many of you who were in the Navy know this tradition well; but, for those who don't, I'll take a moment to explain the significance of plank owners.

A plank owner is the designation given to each member of a ship's crew as of the day the ship is commissioned. That obviously happens only once in the lifetime of the ship. The term plank owner finds its origin back to the days of sailing ships, when the sailors slept on the decks. After boarding the ship and reporting to duty, those sailors would look around for the softest boards on the deck. Those boards literally became their beds on the ship throughout their time on their ship. The plank owner tradition was initiated when the ships were disassembled. A lot of the sailors returned to the ship's decommissioning because they wanted to recover the memories of their seagoing days by retrieving as a permanent memento the plank they slept on; thus began the plank owner tradition that is still honored to this day.

The Navy has perpetuated this tradition and the sense of pride in the crew members who serve on a ship as that ship's first crew. Of course, the decks of today's ships are made of steel, not wood. So, today, Doug (DeVos), Greg (Willard) and I and our Commissioning Committee are proud to carry forward the Navy's plank owner tradition by presenting USS Gerald R. Ford plank owner plaques to the officers and crew of CVN 78. Would you please join me in welcoming Captain Rick McCormack, the Commanding Officer of the USS Gerald R. Ford, as we present him with the first plank owner plaque of the USS Gerald R. Ford. (applause).

Right Photos: Top: Commissioning Committee Co-Chairs (l-r) Red Cavaney, Greg Willard and Doug DeVos present the 1st plank owner plaque to Captain Rick McCormack, Commanding Officer of the USS Gerald R. Ford. Middle: Captain Rick McCormack presents the 2nd plank owner plaque to Susan Ford Bales, Ship Sponsor of the USS Gerald R. Ford. Bottom: USS Gerald R. Ford Captain Rick McCormack presents plank owner plaques to the Co-Chairs of the Commissioning Committee (l-r) Greg Willard, Doug DeVos and Red Cavaney at the Ship Sponsor Luncheon. Photos courtesy of Dr. Robert M. Humphries.

RED CAVANEY PRESENTS PLANK OWNER PLAQUES SHIP SPONSOR LUNCHEON JULY 21, 2017



Dr. Robert M. Humphries





Dr. Robert M. Humphries

Co-Chair Doug DeVos introduces the "Wings Over America" Scholarship Foundation at the Ship Sponsor luncheon.

The Navy's plank owner plaque tradition is magnificent. As Commissioning Co-Chairmen, one of the things that Greg (Willard), Red (Cavaney), and I feel so deeply about is what a tremendous honor it's been for each of us to learn about and to be part of these traditions of the United States Navy. When this all started, we really didn't know what to expect. But we have just been absolutely overwhelmed with the welcome and friendship we've received from the men and women of CVN 78 and the Navy, the Newport News Shipbuilders, and everyone in the Newport News/ Norfolk communities. It's been extraordinary – simply extraordinary. To all of you, please know how deeply grateful the three of us are for this opportunity; it's a real honor!

Greg talked earlier about how incredibly generous donors have been throughout our fundraising efforts, and the work that has gone into those efforts. We held events in Grand Rapids and in Kalamazoo, and our friends at Dow in Midland, Michigan organized a tremendous event there. Our remarkable Ship Sponsor, Susan, was tireless; she traveled to every event we had and on top of that, she worked non-stop for months and months to support us and the crew. Secretary Rumsfeld and Vice President Cheney both came to Michigan to help us as well. People from around Michigan and all over the country became involved in this effort. We were able to raise these funds primarily to help the crew and their quality of life aboard the ship. But we also wanted to help their families in a special way. We were very thrilled to be able to connect with a wonderful organization, *Wings Over America*. Let me give you a little bit of history, and we would like to make a check presentation to a scholarship fund with this organization.

It started in 1987. The AIRLANT Wives Club noticed a need for scholarships within their community, and so, through a variety of fundraisers, bake sales, whatever they could do, they raised money. And that year they gave away their first scholarship. Since then this effort has come to be known as *Wings Over America*, and it's now a separate scholarship foundation. They have experienced tremendous growth over those years. "Investing in the Best" is the Wings Over America motto. Over the years, through the work of their fantastic board of directors and volunteer staff, Wings Over America has awarded over \$1.4 million to worthy college students in almost every state and several overseas bases. The Wings Over America Scholarship Foundation's mission is to provide college scholarships to dependent children and spouses of all United States Navy personnel -- officer and enlisted - active duty, retired, honorably discharged or deceased who served within Naval Air Forces. This year over \$200,000 in funds will be awarded to the students in 2017. Earlier this year, a special award – the Gerald R. Ford Scholar Award – was established. And with us today is a very special young man, Connor Penny; Connor is the *first* Gerald R. Ford Scholar. He graduated from Ocean Lakes High School in Virginia Beach Virginia and will attend Duke University, majoring in Electrical Engineering and Economics. Connor could you please stand so we can recognize and celebrate you. Congratulations! (applause).

As you can imagine, the Wings Over America Foundation doesn't work on its own; there are dedicated folks who make it work so magnificently. At this time, the *USS Gerald R. Ford* Commissioning Committee has a special gift. I would like to ask Susan [Ford Bales], together with Foundation Chairman Rear Admiral Rich O'Hanlon USN (Ret.) and Foundation President Mrs. Linda Lindsey, to join us here on stage. On behalf of all those, including many here today, who donated to our Commissioning Committee's fundraising efforts, we are delighted to present the Foundation our gift of \$125,000.

Left: Commissioning Committee Co-Chair Doug DeVos presents plank owner plaque to retired Newport News Shipbuilding President, Matt Mulherin.

### DOUG DEVOS PRESENTS COMMISSIONING COMMITTEE'S \$125,000 DONATION TO WINGS OVER AMERICA SHIP SPONSOR LUNCHEON JULY 21, 2017



Dr. Robert M. Humphries

(l-r) Doug DeVos, Greg Willard, Linda Lindsey, Susan Ford Bales, RADM Rich O'Hanlon, Red Cavaney at the Wings Over America Scholarship Foundation check presentation.



Dr. Robert M. Humphries



USS Gerald R. Ford Ship Sponsor Susan Ford Bales

## REMARKS OF SUSAN FORD BALES SHIP SPONSOR LUNCHEON JULY 21, 2017

Admiral Davidson, Admiral Shoemaker, Admiral Lindsey, Captain McCormack and members of the crew of the *USS Gerald R. Ford*; my Commissioning Co-Chairmen Greg Willard, Doug DeVos, and Red Cavaney; Don Rumsfeld and Paul O'Neill; Matt Mulherin and my fellow Newport News Shipbuilders; Captain Bill Crow, Maryellen Baldwin, and our Navy League partners; Joe Calvaruso and Trustees of Dad's Foundation; Ladies and gentlemen,

Welcome --- WE MADE IT! (applause).

Today is a day to celebrate and to say thanks.

First, I want to thank each of you here today and the countless Americans from coast to coast for your generosity. I particularly want to thank Doug and Rich DeVos and the DeVos family; MaryPat Woodard, the

Secchia family, and the Van Andel family. You and so many others here today opened your hearts to make possible the Commissioning Committee's amazing ship enhancements and other accessions for the crew. Your support for CVN 78 – which, as Greg explained, has shattered all records - has been breathtaking and will benefit her crews for decades. So, on behalf of Dad, thank you from the bottom of my heart for your extraordinary support to Dad's namesake carrier and her fantastic crew. (applause).

I began this journey as your Ship Sponsor in 2006. I have to admit, I didn't have a clue what I was supposed to do! I originally hoped there was a book of instructions, or, heck, I'd have settled for just a pamphlet titled: "*Seven Easy Steps To Being A Ship Sponsor*". Guess What!?! There are NO "how-to" instructions for being a Ship Sponsor. Other than breaking the bottle of sparkling water at the christening, and when I "*bring the ship to life*" tomorrow at the commissioning, there are no specified duties for a Sponsor. But you know what – there's a real benefit to that. Each of us can shape our roles to fit our own priorities and those of our ship. And, in my case, I carried out the priorities Dad would have set. It's been fantastic and extremely rewarding. And I know Dad would share my happiness.

Fortunately, I've had fantastic teachers along the way. First, were my fellow Newport News Shipbuilders. During our journey together, I've turned construction wrenches with the shipbuilders, punched holes, welded, pulled cable, strung telephone wires, worked up in the big blue crane (which I have NO desire, Matt, to go back to (laughter), tested the anchors and weapons elevators, launched EMALS sleds, calibrated dual band radar, turned on the pumps to flood the dry dock, and tested the giant hangar bay doors. One of my greatest moments was when Matt Mulherin announced that they'd designated me as an Honorary Shipbuilder. It is always a joy to be able to say: "*My fellow Newport News Shipbuilders.*"

Patriotic commitment to excellence is not a slogan to the shipbuilders; it's part of their very being. Whatever the challenges of this new carrier class – and goodness knows we've had a few - their goal was always firm: to provide the American people with the mightiest warship ever built. And, ladies and gentlemen, that is exactly what the Newport News shipbuilders have done! Congratulations, fellow shipbuilders. (applause).

My second group of fantastic teachers has been the ship's amazing officers and crew. They come from all walks of life; it is such an amazing tapestry. Common to every single one of them – without exception – is a love of country and a personal character of integrity and courage without equal. Dad summed it up perfectly in a personal letter he wrote in the twilight of his life. In the letter, he poignantly expressed that there was no greater honor he ever received than to have his name associated with the brave men and women of the *USS Gerald R. Ford*. Dad showed America and the world, by word and deed, that doing the "right" thing is not always easy -- and it's definitely not always popular. At the end of Dad's life journey, the Navy honored his legacy of "*integrity at the helm*" and his integrity to do the "right" thing by placing his name on this mighty ship. Today, and in our every tomorrow, the officers and crew of *USS Gerald R. Ford* will be shining tributes to that legacy. They are, indeed, the greatest honor Dad ever received. Congratulations and thank you to each and every one of you! (applause).

If my service as Ship Sponsor has helped the crew and shipbuilders in their responsibilities; if I've made them proud to be associated with this ship and Dad's legacy of integrity; or if their families have an extra bit of happiness from the activities we've done together, then mark me down as the proudest Ship Sponsor in the history of the United States Navy. Thank you, men and women of the *USS Gerald R. Ford*. And thank you, my fellow Newport News Shipbuilders.

May God watch over and keep safe the *USS Gerald R. Ford* - those who built her - and those who will sail her into harm's way. And may God bless Gerald R. Ford and Betty Ford and the nation they loved so dearly. Thank you all very much.



Matt Mulherin presents gold charm to Susan Ford Bales at Ship Sponsor Luncheon.

## REMARKS OF MATT MULHERIN SHIP SPONSOR LUNCHEON JULY 21, 2017

very personal way with Gerald R. Ford, her dad and the man whose name is on the ship we built. She was that special connection to him, and it has been wonderful. Susan, we can't thank you enough for all you've done for your fellow Newport News Shipbuilders and for setting a standard for Ship Sponsors that is absolutely unique. You have befriended us, and we, in turn, have made you one of us - a Newport News Shipbuilder.

Jennifer Boykin, the new President of Newport News Shipbuilding, and I have had a talk about how we can keep you with us. And we made a decision. We are still building Gerald R. Ford Class carriers. And, as the Ship Sponsor of the lead carrier in the class, we figured that you had some responsibilities for those other carriers. So, Susan, you are very welcome to come by and check up on CVN 78's sister carriers and to make sure the quality of the Ford Class is up to your standards. (laughter). If you want to do a little work while you are there, we are happy to have you back -- ANY-TIME! (laughter and applause).

Susan, to commemorate the commissioning and to symbolize the work that has gotten us here today, work that I have described that you have certainly been part of, we have a gift for you. It's a gold charm for your charm bracelet. The first part of the charm is kind of what one would expect at an event like this. It's a little gold circle that has the date, the commissioning of the Gerald R. Ford. The second part is pretty unique - very unique to you. It is a gold hard hat. Ladies and gentlemen, only Susan would warrant a gold charm hard hat because she has indeed redefined what it is to be a ship sponsor. We have this gift for you. We sincerely hope it reminds you of today and your thousands of friends - your fellow Newport News Shipbuilders. Thank you, Susan, for everything! (applause).

Thank you for that wonderful introduction. I have one update; I'm no longer the President of Newport News Shipbuilding, having retired at the end of June and handed the reins to the very capable Jennifer Boykins, who's here with us today. (applause). Also, Rolf Bartschi, recently retired as the Vice President of the *USS Gerald R. Ford* construction is with us. (applause). Rolf and I both decided that after - but only after - *Ford* was delivered to the Navy we were going to retire from Newport News Shipbuilding. We both have 36 years at the shipyard; I think we need a good night's sleep here for a little while to recover from it. (laughter and applause).

It certainly has been a joy building the *USS Gerald R. Ford*. It's the capstone in our careers. So, we thought long and hard about how long we would stay. I will tell you a simple reality - Susan [Ford Bales] was an enormous part of why we decided to stay and see the *Ford* all the way through deliver. And we were pretty certain Susan would never have forgiven us if we had left her before her dad's ship was complete. (laughter).

Susan, you truly redefined what it means to be a Ship Sponsor. You have broken the mold.

The captain mentioned your tireless involvement with the ship and crew. But, ladies and gentlemen, let me share with you a little secret about how *much* she's been involved. Susan has her own steel-toed shipyard shoes and her own hard hat and safety glasses. And her hard hat is not one of those hard hats that is gleaming white - far from it; Susan's hard hat has scars all over it where she has been bumped and jostled as she's pulled cables, fitted steel that's part of the steel on the ship - she was out there helping to adjust and use jacks to haul those units into place - and calibrated dual band radar, and tested the EMALS. She has been truly amazing. I can't tell you how many times she has visited the shipyard - I have truly lost count.

Susan knows shipbuilders by name. For example, she knows the name of the guy in that big blue crane talked about earlier. She knows him by name because she has given David Rushing directions on how to operate *his* crane! (laughter) Because when Susan did any work on the ship, she was very particular to make sure everything was done perfectly. She has been fantastic!

Of course, the best part of having Susan as Ship Sponsor is that she connected us in a

**"According to an ancient tradition, God preserved humanity despite its many transgressions because at any one time there exist ten just individuals who, without being aware of their role, redeem mankind. Gerald Ford was such a man."**

Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, January 2, 2007

# Ship Sponsor Luncheon Memories



Dr. Robert M. Humphries

(l-r) Don Rumsfeld, Lisa McCubbin and Clint Hill.



Dr. Robert M. Humphries

(l-r) Rachel Meier, Maria DeVos, Red and Sheri Cavaney, and Dan and Ann Bitzer following the luncheon.



Dr. Robert M. Humphries

(l-r) Randy Bumgardner and Mike Wagner.



Robert M. Humphries

(l-r) Ship Matrons of Honor Tyne Berlanga and Heather Devers are presented with plank owner plaques by USS Gerald R. Ford Captain Rick McCormack .



Dr. Robert M. Humphries

**Above:** Ship Sponsor Susan Ford Bales enjoys listening to Alvy Powell's final solo with her granddaughter Joy. **Right:** (l-r) Mike Jandernoa, Secretary Paul O'Neill and John McConnell.



Dr. Robert M. Humphries



Dr. Robert M. Humphries

Captain Richard McCormack (center) with crew members from the USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78).



Dr. Robert M. Humphries

(l-r) Vice Admiral Mike Shoemaker, Rear Admiral Bruce Lindsey and Ship Sponsor Susan Ford Bales.



Dr. Robert M. Humphries

Don Sheets and Master Sergeant Alvy Powell.



Dr. Robert M. Humphries

Steve, Jack and Mike Ford Family Table at the luncheon.



Dr. Robert M. Humphries

Annie Willard, Don and Joyce Rumsfeld.



Dr. Robert M. Humphries

Luncheon attendees Joyce Rumsfeld, Hank Meijer, John McConnell, Kathy and Jim Hackett join Sgt. Alvy Powell in singing "God Bless America".

# USS Gerald R. Ford Tour - July 21, 2017



**Left:** Bronze Statue of Lt. Commander Gerald R. Ford is the centerpiece of the Ceremonial Quarterdeck aboard the *USS Gerald R. Ford* (CVN 78). **Right:** Vice President Dick Cheney and Secretary Donald Rumsfeld tour the Gerald R. Ford Tribute Room aboard the *USS Gerald R. Ford*.



Secretary Donald Rumsfeld shows he can still climb flights of steps aboard an aircraft carrier at 85 years old while touring the *USS Gerald R. Ford* (CVN 78); Remley Johnson follows.



(l-r) Liz Cheney (l) and Annie Willard admire President Ford's *USS Monterey* napkin ring on the CVN 78 Inport Cabin table.



**Left:** (l-r) Mike Ford, Pietro Secchia, Peter Secchia, Angela Ruberto and Steve Ford during the ship tour. **Above:** (l-r) Doug DeVos and Dick Cheney pose with a crewmember of the *USS Gerald R. Ford* during the tour.



(l-r) Jack, Julianne, Christian and Jonathan Ford during the ship tour.



Dick Cheney's grandsons receive a first-hand look at the ship's fire-fighting technology and equipment.



David Frey, Tripp Frey, Hank Meijer, J.C. Huizenga, and Ford family members (front row) preparing for the ship tour.



Commissioning Committee Members Donna and Joe Calvaruso tour the bridge of the USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78).



**Above:** (l-r) Chad Crafford, Mike Ford, and Dick Cheney talk with Captain McCormack on the bridge of the USS Gerald R. Ford. **Right:** (l-r) Michigan Attorney General Bill Schuette, Steve Ford and Commissioning Committee Co-Chairman Doug DeVos during the tour of the USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78).





(l-r) Randy Bumgardner, Phil Perry, Liz Cheney and Philip Perry, Dick Cheney and grandson Richard Perry, Captain Rick McCormack, Greg Willard, Annie Willard, John and Lilah Willard, Donald Rumsfeld, Remley Johnson, and Sarah Eaton gather on the flight deck of the *USS Gerald R. Ford* (CVN 78).



**Above:** Vice Admiral David Architzel, USN (Ret.) during the tour of the *USS Gerald R. Ford* (CVN 78). **Right Above:** *USS Gerald R. Ford* F-18 aircraft on the flight deck. **Right Below:** Captain Richard McCormack, Vice President Dick Cheney and Secretary Donald Rumsfeld with crew members on the flight deck of the *USS Gerald R. Ford* (CVN 78) during the ship tour.





Secretary Don Rumsfeld (center) and Vice President Dick Cheney (right) during Flight Deck Control presentation by LCDR Jaime Roman.



Don Holloway

Left & Right: Items in the Gerald R. Ford Tribute Room aboard the USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78).



Don Holloway



(back row) U.S. Representative Liz Cheney, Vice President Dick Cheney, Philip Perry (front row) Richard Perry and Phil Perry on the flight deck of the USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) during the ship tour.

# USS Gerald R.



**USS Gerald R. Ford Naming Ceremony**  
January 16, 2007

**USS Gerald R. Ford Keel Laying**  
November 14, 2009

**USS Gerald R. Ford 825-Ton Superlift**  
September 12, 2011

**USS Gerald R. Ford Island Landing**  
January 26, 2013



Susan Ford Bales at the naming ceremony of the *USS Gerald R. Ford*. Seated (l-r) Vice President Dick Cheney, Secretary of the Navy Donald C. Winter, Senator Carl Levin, Senator John Warner, and Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Mike Mullen (Photo by U.S. Navy).

(l-r) U.S. Senator Carl Levin, Ship Sponsor Susan Ford Bales, Corporate Vice President and President of Newport News Shipbuilding Mike Petters, and Shipbuilder Robert Bowker. Bowker welded Susan's initials onto a plate, which was then permanently affixed to the ship. (Photo by Newport News Shipbuilding.)

The 825-ton stern superlift for the aircraft carrier *Gerald R. Ford* (CVN 78) was lowered into place to complete the ship's stern. (Photo by Newport News Shipbuilding.)

During a special ceremony at Newport News Shipbuilding, the island of *Gerald R. Ford* (CVN 78) was lifted and placed onto the ship's flight deck. The island is the flight operations command center for the ship, making the lift a symbolic moment in the ship's construction. (Photo by Dr. Robert M. Humphries).

**USS Gerald R. Ford Crew Move-Aboard**  
August 3, 2015

**USS Gerald R. Ford Ship Chapel**  
December 3, 2015

**LCDR Jerry Ford Statue Unveiled**  
April 7, 2016

**USS Gerald R. Ford Turn Ship Evolution**  
June 11, 2016



Ship's Sponsor Susan Ford Bales (left) serves Petty Officer 2nd Class Julio Castro during the first meal aboard the aircraft carrier *Gerald R. Ford* (CVN 78). Capt. John F. Meier (center), the ship's Commanding Officer, also helped serve. (Photo by Huntington Ingalls Industries.)

The *Gerald R. and Betty Ford Memorial Chapel* was dedicated on December 3, 2015 by Ship Sponsor Susan Ford Bales, *USS Gerald R. Ford*'s Commanding Officer John Meier and Ship Chaplain Commander Robert Jones. (Photo Courtesy of U.S. Navy.)

The circa 1944 statue of Lieutenant Commander Gerald R. Ford was unveiled in the carrier's hangar bay at Newport News Shipyard. The Lcdr Ford statue is a gift of the *USS Gerald R. Ford* Commissioning Committee and is now the centerpiece of the ship's Ceremonial Quarterdeck. (Photo courtesy of U.S. Navy.)

One of the most important accomplishments of the Turn Ship evolution is the "Sally Test". A Sally Test involves precision draft readings and confirms that there is adequate stability for safe underway operations at sea. Turning the ship is an opportunity for the crew to demonstrate all the procedures required to get the ship underway safely before sea trials.

# Ford ( CVN 78)

2015

2016

2017



past, present, future

**USS Gerald R. Ford 100% Completion**  
May 7, 2013

**USS Gerald R. Ford Dry Dock Flooding**  
October 11, 2013

**USS Gerald R. Ford Christening Ceremony**  
November 9, 2013

**USS Gerald R. Ford EMALS Testing**  
June 16, 2015



Newport News Shipbuilding's 1,050-metric ton gantry crane lifted the forward end of one of aircraft carrier *Gerald R. Ford's* (CVN 78) catapults into place Tuesday, bringing more than three years of structural erection work to a close. (Photo by Huntington Ingalls Ind.)



Ship Sponsor Susan Ford Bales initiated the flooding of Dry Dock 12, where the *USS Gerald R. Ford* (CVN 78) has been under construction since November 2009. (Photo by Newport News Shipbuilding.)



Ship Sponsor Susan Ford Bales christened the *USS Gerald R. Ford* on November 9, 2013. Joining Susan at the bow of the ship are (l-r) Captain John Meier, Senator Carl Levin, and Newport News Shipbuilding President Matt Mulherin. (Photo by Newport News Shipbuilding.)



Ship Sponsor Susan Ford Bales gives the signal to begin the testing of the electromagnetic aircraft launch systems (EMALS) being integrated on the aircraft carrier *USS Gerald R. Ford* (CVN 78). (Photo by Huntington Ingalls Industries.)

**USS Gerald R. Ford Presidential Visit**  
March 2, 2017

**USS Gerald R. Ford Builder's Sea Trials**  
April 8, 2017

**Betty Ford Counseling Center**  
July 20, 2017

**USS Gerald R. Ford Commissioning**  
July 22, 2017



President Trump addressed sailors aboard | the *USS Gerald Ford* (CVN 78), which the President described as "4.5 acres of combat power and sovereign U.S. territory, the likes [of which there is nothing to compete....it is a monument to American might that will provide the strength necessary to ensure peace." (Photo by Newport News Shipbuilding.)



The *USS Gerald R. Ford* (CVN 78) underway for its first set of sea trials, known as Builder's Sea Trials. Builder's Sea Trials provide an opportunity to test systems, components and compartments at sea for the first time. (Photo by Newport News Shipbuilding.)



The *Betty Ford Counseling & Assistance Center* was dedicated on July 20, 2017 by Ship Sponsor Susan Ford Bales and Captain Kimberly Toone, MD, *USS Gerald R. Ford's* Medical Officer. (Photo Courtesy of U.S. Navy.)



Ship Sponsor Susan Ford Bales (center) gives the order to:  
**"Man Our Ship and Bring Her to Life"**  
at the Commissioning of the *USS Gerald R. Ford* (CVN 78) at Naval Station Norfolk. (Photo courtesy of Dr. Robert M. Humphries.)

# Commissioning Chairmen's Reception - July 21, 2017

## Newport News Shipbuilding Presentation of a Ship's Wheel to USS Gerald R. Ford's Captain Rick McCormack

### Rolf Bartschi Remarks:

I represent Newport News Shipbuilding and it is my honor to take this moment to congratulate the Captain [McCormack] for achieving this milestone in putting this ship into service. We have all worked hard; we have worked hand-in-glove with each other to get things done. Part of that is developing a relationship. When you tackle a lot of tough problems, you've got to work together to come through them and I think we did that. Susan [Ford Bales] has been here the whole time helping us along in a way that I have never seen before which is outstanding as well.

We have a small token of our appreciation, that I will describe Captain, for you to have on the ship. It's a ship's wheel and it is made out of wood in our pattern shop, handmade. The machine shop crafted the hub of the wheel which has *USS Gerald R. Ford, Integrity at the Helm* inscribed on it. It can be used in two ways Captain. You can hang it on the wall or it is actually set up to drive the ship. You can put it at the helm!

[Captain's McCormack's response: "I think I will drive the ship with it"...] With that, Captain, we wish you well, and please enjoy the wheel.



Dr. Robert M. Humphries

Rolf Bartschi (right) presents a ship's wheel to USS Gerald R. Ford Captain Richard McCormack from the shipbuilders at Newport News Shipbuilding.



Dr. Robert M. Humphries

**Above:** (l-r) Vice President Dick Cheney, Lt. General Brent Scowcroft (ret.) and Ship Sponsor Susan Ford Bales chat at the Reception.  
**Below:** Reception Ice Sculpture.



Dr. Robert M. Humphries

**Above:** (l-r) Ship Sponsor Susan Ford Bales, Commissioning Committee Co-Chair Red Cavaney, Vice President Dick Cheney, Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, Commissioning Committee Co-Chairs Greg Willard and Doug DeVos during the presentation of Plank Owner Plaques to Vice President Cheney and Secretary Rumsfeld at the Commissioning Chairmen's Reception. **Below:** (l-r) Mike and Steve Ford.



Dr. Robert M. Humphries



Dr. Robert M. Humphries



(l-r) Susan Ford Bales, Admiral John Richardson, Admiral Philip Davidson, Doug DeVos and Captain Rick McCormack present toasts at the Committee Chairman's Reception.

## Committee Chairman's Reception Toasts

### Commissioning Committee Co-Chairman Doug DeVos Toast

"Please raise your glass to Gerald R. Ford, the 38<sup>th</sup> President of the United States; the United States Navy and to the sailors that serve; those that have served in the past, those that presently serve and all those that will serve in the future. May God bless you and have His hand over you in all that you do. Cheers!"

### USS Gerald R. Ford Captain Richard McCormack Toast

"Any good Commander is only as good as his people. He goes to sea with them, he goes to battle with them. You are all on the same ship and we fight together. With all of the things we have gone through with the shipyard workers and the ship's force I want to propose a toast to my crew for all the things you have done and for all the things you have made us. We've got a long way to go, but I toast to you, the crew of the *Gerald R. Ford*."

### Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command Admiral Philip Davidson Toast

"Good evening and welcome to Norfolk. The Commissioning of the *USS Gerald R. Ford* is at a very fortuitous time here in Norfolk. This is the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Naval Operating Base here in Norfolk, the world's largest Naval Operating Base. ...My favorite part of being a fleet commander is knowing when our ships are fully trained and certified and forward deployed. And, when our potential advisories look out on the horizon and see the United States Navy out there and think 'Boy I don't want to mess with that' ... every day that that happens, we win! And, it is ships like the *USS Gerald R. Ford* that make that possible. So to the *Gerald R. Ford* and to the United States Navy Fleet...To the Fleet!"

### Ship Sponsor Susan Ford Bales

"To many in Michigan, he was known as neighbor and friend; to others, he was known as Team Captain; to others on an aircraft carrier in the South Pacific in World War II, he was known Lieutenant Commander; to others in Washington, he was Congressman; to a grateful nation he was Mr. Vice President and Mr. President; and to his very proud daughter who loves and misses him, simply as Dad.

Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in a toast to the 38<sup>th</sup> President of the United States, the namesake of CVN 78, and the man I'm so proud to call my dad, Gerald R. Ford."

### United States Navy Chief of Naval Operations Admiral John Richardson Toast

"...Only in America does a man of humility and integrity like President Ford come to office in the way that he did and inspire a nation and inspire us each as individuals. Only in America do visionaries like Secretary Rumsfeld and like Vice President Cheney inspire us in the goal of the vision for this ship. ...Only in America do we have young men and women, so talented with so many choices that choose to raise their right hand and take an oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States; wear the cloth of our nation, leave their families and go to sea to defend this Nation. ...Ladies and Gentlemen...God Bless the United States of America!"

## Secretary Don Rumsfeld Remarks at Commissioning Chairmen's Reception, July 21, 2017

Thank you. Thank you so much to Greg (Willard) and our Commissioning Committee Co-Chairmen, to the officers and crew of the *USS Gerald R. Ford*, and to so many friends of the former president.

I am working on a book on Gerald Ford - not about his life, but about his presidency. His presidency was too short, but he served our country so very well. As I review the archives and read books that others have written about that period, I have been thinking a great deal about Gerald Ford and the terrific human beings who served with him. And I know in this room there are an awful lot of people who served with the president. Most of them were pretty young.

I turned 85 last week [loud applause]. And Dick Cheney's a lot younger, let me tell ya! (laughter). I was here in Norfolk many, many years ago. In fact, I had a daughter born over in Portsmouth Naval Hospital. I think it was in 1956; is that right, Joyce? Our daughter is 62 now.

My father served on an aircraft carrier in World War II. It was a "CVE"; an escort carrier -- not very big. I think it carried about 27 aircraft and might have been about 500 feet long. And then I had the privilege to land on the *USS Monterey* (CVL 26) when I was doing my carrier qualifications; the very aircraft carrier 10 years before that Gerald Ford had served on. It carried about 45 aircraft and was maybe 600 plus feet long. Anyone who has been on the *USS Gerald R. Ford* recognizes that you could probably fit *both* of those ships on her flight deck. She is an amazing piece of equipment -- truly impressive! It's been quite a journey for the Navy to go from those baby escorts to a ship as impressive as the *USS Gerald R. Ford*.

My time with Gerald Ford was also quite a journey. I remember in 1958 when I was working on Capitol Hill for a Congressman named Bob Griffin, a good friend of Jerry Ford's.

A friend of Joyce's [Rumsfeld] and mine had been shot down by the People's Republic of China while flying a plane off their coast. He was in my flight class and was from Grand Rapids. And his wife, as it turned out, was a widow at the time -- and didn't know it. She came to see her Congressman to see if possibly her husband had been recovered and was

in a prison somewhere. Sadly, it turned out he had not been recovered. But that was the first time that Gerald Ford appeared on my radar screen.

In 1962, I got elected to Congress. Bob Griffin came to me and said, "We are running Jerry Ford for Chairman of the Republican Conference. And, Rumsfeld, your job is to go out and scrounge up votes with the Freshman Class for Jerry Ford for Conference Chairman." We hadn't even been sworn in yet, and I had already been recruited to get votes for Gerald Ford! Two years later, our Republican Party lost a lot of seats. Out of the 435 members of Congress, I think only 140 of us survived. And we decided that Jerry Ford should run for Minority Leader. So, Bob Griffin and I started working and talked him into it. He wasn't eager to run, but he agreed to do it and went on to become the Minority Leader.

In 1974, he assumed the presidency as the only individual in the history of our country who had never run for national office; he'd never been elected President, or elected Vice-President. I was serving as Ambassador to NATO and got a call from then Vice-President Ford asking me to come back and help out. I was in France at the time, flew back immediately, and the first thing I did was to call Dick Cheney. I said "We need help... I am supposed to chair President Ford's transition to the presidency, and he is going to be sworn in before I ever get back. I know he is going to need help." And Dick Cheney dropped what he was doing. We'd worked together in several organizations previously, including the Nixon White House. We set about, along with the transition team that had former Congressmen Rogers Morton and Bill Scranton and friends of soon to be President Gerald Ford on the transition team.

So it's been a long run. And an awful lot of people in this room are old enough to have observed President Ford and understood his Midwestern values, especially his integrity. I would like to add his basic human decency as



Dr. Robert M. Humphries

At podium, Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. Seated (l-r) Vice President Dick Cheney, Commissioning Co-Chairmen Doug DeVos, Greg Willard and Red Cavaney at the Chairmen's Reception.

an individual. He cared about other people, and it showed.

I've traveled around the world. I've got two titanium hips, a titanium shoulder and a new titanium knee -- and by the way, they dragged us up 10 flights and down 10 flights on our tour of the *USS Gerald R. Ford* today. So, I can tell you, I'm lucky to be here! [laughter]. At 85, I should be home in bed; this is crazy! We gather here to honor a ship and the men and women who serve aboard it, to certainly honor a president who served our country so well. And for a lot of us it's also to honor him as a friend; a person that we worked with and respected greatly. I have every confidence in the men and women of the crew of this great ship, many of whom I have had a chance to say hello to, to thank, and to shake hands with today - and, most memorably, to be briefed by and to look in their eyes and see how proud they are of this ship. I have every confidence they are going to serve this ship and our country in a manner that - without question - would make Gerald Ford proud.

Gerald Ford never saw this ship. He passed away before it was finally constructed. I had the great privilege of picking up the phone one day and calling him over Thanksgiving; I think it was in 2006. He sounded fragile on the phone. I said to Joyce, "Why don't we fly down to Rancho Mirage and see him, see how he's doing". (continued on page 22)

## Vice President Dick Cheney Remarks at Commissioning Chairmen's Reception, July 21, 2017

Thank you very much Don!

I am delighted to be here tonight to have an opportunity to be with all of you as we look forward to tomorrow's events. We spent the afternoon on CVN 78, the *USS Gerald R. Ford*. The Captain was kind enough to give us a personal tour. It is a phenomenal piece of equipment. People ask me of all the various jobs that I've had which one I enjoyed most. I've always said it was being Secretary of Defense, and today's tour and the sailors I met are wonderful examples of why that's so.

It's a privilege today to pay tribute to President Ford. The last time I talked to President Ford was after John Warner, the Senator from Virginia and distinguished member of the Armed Services Committee, called to tell me that they were getting ready to name CVN 78 after President Ford. John asked if I would like to call President Ford and tell him what the Navy was about to do. Of course, I jumped at the chance. When I got the President on the phone, he was obviously delighted. This was only a short period of time before he died. I could not think of a better or more appropriate gift than to be able to confirm for him that this magnificent ship that is out here today would forever bear his name.

Don explained some of the background of President Ford and himself. Frankly, when I think about my own career and all of the good things that have happened to me, there are two individuals to whom, more than any others, I owe a deep debt of gratitude. They fundamentally changed my life, changed my careers, and were role models and mentors for me. One was Jerry Ford. The other was Don Rumsfeld.

It nearly did not happen. It came very close that the relationship didn't develop along the lines that it has. Joyce Rumsfeld is over here at that table; she knows the story I am about to tell because she has heard it many times.

The fact is, when I went to Washington, I was going to be a professor. It was 1968, and I was working on a doctorate in Political Science at the University of Wisconsin. I had a grant to spend a year on the *Hill* working for any member of Congress who would have me. As part of the orientation program, Don Rumsfeld, who at that time was a young Congressman from the North side of Chicago, was one of the speakers who came in and spoke to our group. He was very impressive, and I

made an appointment to go see him afterward -- to see if I couldn't hire on. I was paid by a foundation, and I wouldn't cost him a dime - free help. So, I went in at the appointed hour and sat down across the desk from him. He asked me what I was doing. I explained to him that I was working on my Doctorate in Political Science doing multiple regression analysis of roll call voting in the House and Senate from 1948 to 1960. At that point he looked at his watch and said "this isn't gonna work." And he threw me out! [laughter]. True story!

So, I went down the hall and went to work for another member of Congress. A few months later, Don was nominated by President Nixon to serve as a Counselor to the President and run the Office of Economic Opportunity, an anti-poverty program. I sat down and wrote an unsolicited 12-page memo to him to tell him how he ought to conduct himself in his confirmation hearings and what he ought to do with the agency once he was sworn in; basically laid out a program for him. I passed the memo to the Congressman that I was working for, and he passed it on to Don.

I didn't hear anything until a couple of weeks later when Don was confirmed by the Senate. I got a phone call that day from a guy working for him. He asked me if I would come down the next day, to be part of a transition advisory group. I said fine and went down to OEO the next day. It was Don's first day on the job. He came in and spoke to a group of about 40 of us, academics like myself, policy types. He talked about what he was going to do. I thought I heard elements of my memo in there, but that wasn't clear. He walked out and left. Then his secretary came in and asked, "Is there anybody in here named Cheney?" I said yes and held my hand up. She said, "Come with me." She took me around the back end of the office. First day on the job, rain is leaking through the roof, pans of water on the floor, and so forth. I had to stand there for a couple of minutes because Don was busy. He finally looked at me and said, "You! You're Congressional Relations... now get the hell out of here!" That's exactly how he hired me. [laughter, while on stage,



Dr. Robert M. Humphries

Vice President Dick Cheney at the Commissioning Dinner July 21, 2017 at Naval Station Norfolk. Secretary Don Rumsfeld looks on.

a smiling Don Rumsfeld, seated behind Dick Cheney, emphatically shakes his head NO! He didn't say, "Would you like a job?" or "I'm sorry I threw you out last time." Or "I really liked your memo," No, he said "You're Congressional Relations; now get out of here!" So...I went down and took over Congressional Relations.

I had the great good fortune to work for him. He was the toughest boss I ever had. But I learned more from him than just about anybody else. And, as I said, the other man who had an enormous impact on my own career was Jerry Ford [Applause]. I will always remember August 9, 1974 getting the message to meet Don at the airport. We drove in to the White House and came in through that Southwest gate about two hours after President Ford had taken the oath of office as President of the United States. We were just young enough (and dumb enough) to think we could do anything. And President Ford put us in charge of the transition. That was the beginning of the relationship that fundamentally transformed my life and my career.

It was a truly remarkable moment in American history. It's easy to forget how difficult those days were back during the Watergate period. We'd reached the point where we had the most serious Constitutional crisis since the Civil War. And we had a man who was up to the task - the first ever chosen through the 25<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution to step in, take on those responsibilities, and govern as effectively as Jerry Ford did.

After he left office, he lived another 30 years. We all had great opportunities to spend time with him and to appreciate everything he had done for us. I always had the feeling that he

*(continued on page 22)*



Dr. Robert M. Humphries



Dr. Robert M. Humphries

**Left:** Donald Rumsfeld (right) introduces Dick Cheney at the Commissioning Chairmen's Reception on July 21, 2017. **Right:** During Dick Cheney's remarks, Donald Rumsfeld motions behind him. Commissioning Co-Chairmen Doug DeVos (center) and Greg Willard (far right) join in on the fun!

*Donald Rumsfeld remarks continued:*

Several weeks before the Navy had given me one of those *USS Gerald R. Ford* baseball caps, along with a painting of what the ship would someday look like. And I decided that there was no one who'd appreciate that baseball cap and painting more than President Ford. So we flew down. He, at the time, was very frail. I got to the front door and rang the doorbell. I immediately heard Jerry Ford's strong, very UN-frail voice yelling, "Rummy... come on in!!!" I immediately gave him my *USS Gerald R. Ford* baseball cap; oh my! He put it on and he was so proud of that cap and

this ship. There is a photograph of him with the cap on, the same type of cap that the ship's crew now wears. Oh, what it would have meant to him to be with all of us this weekend!

Now before I introduce my friend Dick Cheney, let me recognize someone who's also very special. Where is Liz Cheney sitting? There she is! Can you imagine? Liz now is the US Congressman from the state of Wyoming succeeding her father. And she is also on the Armed Services Committee. [Applause]

Dick Cheney is a former everything!

(laughter). He was my former assistant at the Office of Economic Opportunity. He was my former assistant at the Cost of Living Council. He was my former assistant when I was Counselor to the President in the Nixon Administration. He is a former member of Congress from the State of Wyoming. He is a former Secretary of Defense. He is a former CEO of a major company. He is a former Vice President. And, he's still young; it's unbelievable! (laughter).

Dick Cheney, please come up here, and say hello to these wonderful folks.

*Dick Cheney remarks continued:*

felt a little bit of pride in the fact that I followed in his footsteps. I was a member of Congress for 10 years, then I went on to become Vice President. On more than one occasion when I would see him at meetings and events, he would look at me and with that smile of his and say, "Dick, I don't know why the heck you took that darn job; it's the worst job I ever had!" But I loved it, and I loved working for him. And I loved being a part of what he represented, because what he represented is very, very important for Americans to remember as we go forward.

It's a tremendous privilege for me personally to be here tonight and to have the opportunity tomorrow to be there as we commission the *USS Gerald R. Ford*. But, as Don said, we owe an enormous debt to all of you who are wearing the uniform. You are prepared to go into harm's way and take this magnificent piece of equipment, this ship, the most formidable warship ever built, and take her to sea and do whatever's required to defend the American people and defend our way of life.

It is a truly remarkable instrument. And I want you to know - all of you in uniform, devoted as you are -- that we are here to support you!

(applause). These are dangerous times. The world is not nearly as safe and peaceful as it has been sometimes in the past. We are in a very difficult time internationally. CVN 78 - the *USS Gerald R. Ford* - will be a formidable force when the time comes for her to defend the freedom of the American people. And, just like her extraordinary namesake, she and those who serve aboard her are, and will always be, up to the task.

Thank you all very much.



The Ship Sponsor Seal and the companion Ship's Crest of *USS Gerald R. Ford* (CVN 78) are rich in symbolic themes and tributes to President Ford and his namesake aircraft carrier. The seal and crest were developed through a year-long collaboration between Ship Sponsor Susan Ford Bales and Rear Admiral (then Captain) John Meier, the *Ford's* first Commanding Officer and members of his crew.

The background is a map of the world representing the global presence of *USS Gerald R. Ford* and the future *Ford Class* aircraft carriers. The map directly links the *Ford's* global mission of strength and freedom to the Chief of Naval Operations' guiding principle of operating forward.

The thirty eight surrounding stars honor the 38th President of the United States. Twenty six of the stars are gold, representing the aircraft carrier *USS Monterey* (CVL 26), aboard which Lieutenant Commander Gerald R. Ford served in combat during World War II.

The core color scheme is maize and blue representing President Ford's undergraduate university, the University of Michigan. The inner rings are Yale University's blue and white colors, in tribute to the law school from which he received his law degree. The ship's motto "*Integrity At The Helm*" highlights President Ford's extraordinary legacy of integrity and honesty and his legacy's connection with the Navy's core values. President Ford's signature symbolizes his personal connection to CVN 78 and, in particular, the immense pride he felt upon learning that CVN 78 would bear his name.

A nautical compass with a fleur-de-lis pointing true north is included on the Ship's Crest to symbolize the Boy Scouts of America in honor of President Ford's distinction as the only President who achieved the rank of Eagle Scout. The compass itself recalls the resolute moral compass President Ford utilized in leading America through its greatest constitutional crisis since the Civil War.

# USS Gerald R. Ford Commissioning - July 22, 2017

## Excerpts of Remarks by President Donald J. Trump at Commissioning Ceremony for the USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN-78)

USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN-78)  
Norfolk, Virginia

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much... I'm thrilled to be back on this magnificent ship for this historic moment with the amazing men and women of the United States Navy. (Applause.)

... Thanks to the entire Ford family — Susan, Jack, Steve, and Mike — for all that you've done to support this ship on its voyage. Thank you, Susan! Thank you! (Applause.) I also want to recognize two other people who were very special to President Ford. Thank you, Vice President Cheney and former Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld. Thank you. (Applause.) They look great!...

As we put this stunning ship into the service of our nation, we must also pay tribute to the thousands of citizens, military and civilian, who helped design and build her. Their love of country has been poured into every rivet and bulkhead on this vessel. You hammered, chiseled, and sculpted this mighty hull. You were there when the first steel was cut, when the turbines first roared to life, and when those beautiful bronze propellers first began to spin — and spin they did. And now you are here to witness the moment when your incredible work of art becomes the pride of the United States Navy and a symbol of American power and prestige, no matter where in the world you go...Wherever this vessel cuts through the horizon, our allies will rest easy and our enemies will shake with fear because everyone will know that America is coming and America is coming strong. (Applause.)

To every worker from Newport News Shipbuilding and every craftsman and engineer who helped build this incredible fortress on the sea, today we salute you. Thank you. (Applause.) Your skill and your grit build the instruments of war that preserve peace. This ship is the deterrent that keeps us from having to fight in the first place. But this ship also ensures that if a fight does come, it will always end the same way; we will win... When it comes to battle, we don't want a fair fight. We want just the opposite. We demand victory, and we will have total victory... Having the best technology and equipment is only one

part of the American military dominance. Our true strength is our people. Our greatest weapon is all of you. Our nation endures because we have citizens who love America and who are willing to fight for America. (Applause.) We are so very blessed with warriors who are willing to serve America in the greatest fighting force in the history — the United States military.

... In a few moments, I will commission this wonderful, beautiful, but very, very powerful warship. Captain McCormack will assume command. The Long Glass will be passed, and the officer of the deck will set the first watch. And then the crew of the *USS Gerald R. Ford* will man the ship, and Susan, as the Ship Sponsor, will bring her to life. (Applause.)

... It is so fitting that this ship is named after a sailor of tremendous character, integrity, and wisdom — President Gerald R. Ford. You know that first-hand, Susan! Gerald Ford was raised in the American heartland. He grew up in Grand Rapids and became an Eagle Scout. He played football at the University of Michigan on a team that won two national championships. And listen to this: On that great team, he was named MVP. Not bad! (laughter and applause)

He then went to Yale Law School, and after Pearl Harbor, he volunteered to serve. President Ford joined the Navy and asked to be sent to sea. He wanted to do that very badly. He never really knew why; he just knew it was his personal calling to serve America. He was assigned to a new carrier — the *Monterey* — becoming a plankowner himself on its commissioning in 1943. From there, he sailed to the Pacific and saw action — and a *lot* of action — in the Pacific Theater. Like so many others of his generation, Gerald Ford returned home and started a family. He ran for Congress, where he served the people of Michigan with honor for many years. From there, he



President Donald J. Trump.

became Vice President and then President of the United States of America.

With this ship, we honor him for his lifetime of selfless and distinguished service. We also remember his wife, Betty — I remember her well. We honor the bravery she showed in living her life so that her experiences could help others. Susan, she was a great woman — a great woman! (Applause.)

Gerald Ford said that his time in the Navy convinced him that our lack of military preparation before World War II has only encouraged our enemies to fight harder and harder and harder. He learned a lot. In the future, he said, "I felt the United States had to be strong. Never again could we allow our military to be anything but the absolute best" If he could see this ship today, President Gerald Ford would see his vision brought to life. And he would see his legacy of service being carried on by each and every one of you. (Applause.)

Gerald Ford embodied American values like few others: love of family, love of freedom, and, most of all, love of country. He knew that patriotism is the heartbeat of a nation. He knew that we must love our country in order to protect it. And he knew that we must have pride in our history if we are going to have confidence in our future...

I hereby place *United States Ship Gerald R. Ford* in commission. May God bless and guide this warship and all who shall sail in her....



David Hume Kennerly

USS Gerald R. Ford Commanding Officer, Captain Rick McCormack (left) requests the first watch to be set. Greg Willard (center) passes the Long Glass to Lieutenant Joel Cincotta of South Orange, New Jersey – the ship's first Officer Of The Deck.

## USS GERALD R. FORD

### Passing The Long Glass -- Setting CVN 78's First Watch

#### July 22, 2017

The commissioning of a Navy ship is a ceremony steeped in rich history and tradition. One of the ceremonial cornerstones of a commissioning is the "Passing Of The Long Glass" during which the crew sets the ship's First Watch. This tradition was proudly conducted at the *USS Gerald R. Ford's* Commissioning:

Captain Brent Gaut: *Officer Of The Deck, set the Watch.*

Lieutenant Joel Cincotta: *Aye, Aye Captain.*

Captain Brent Gaut: *The Officer Of The Deck is the Commanding Officer's direct representative, and, while on watch, is responsible for the safe operation of the ship and for the safety of the crew. The Long Glass is the traditional symbol of the Officer Of The Deck's authority while on watch. CVN 78's Long Glass has been specially prepared with an exterior wrap of tightly knotted maize and blue colored rope which forms an image of CVN 78 within the knots of the rope. We are honored to have Mr. Greg Willard with us this morning. Greg was the White House Staff Assistant to President Gerald Ford and continued to serve the President after he left office. Greg will pass the Long Glass to Lieutenant Joel Cincotta of South Orange, New Jersey – the ship's first Officer Of The Deck. The Petty Officer Of The Watch is Quartermaster Jose' Triana of Miami, Florida; the Messenger Of The Watch is Yeoman Third Class Daquan Bridges of Fayetteville, North Carolina; and the Boatswain's Mate Of The Watch is Boatswain's Mate Second Class Bradley Cole of Lomira, Wisconsin.*

*USS Gerald R. Ford's* Long Glass was then formally passed by Greg Willard to Lieutenant Joel Cincotta, and Boatswain's Mate Bradley Cole immediately piped the side with his boatswain's whistle to signal that the Long Glass had been passed and that Lieutenant Cincotta had set the First Watch. Lieutenant Cincotta then announced,

***"Captain, the watch is set."***



Following the order of Ship Sponsor Susan Ford Bales to “bring the ship to life,” Sailors of *USS Gerald R. Ford* sprint across the Hangar Bay as they “man the rails” in bringing the ship to life.

**SUSAN FORD BALES  
USS GERALD R. FORD COMMISSIONING CEREMONY  
REMARKS TO “BRING THE SHIP TO LIFE”  
July 22, 2017**

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In the twilight of his life, Dad learned of the decision to name CVN 78 the *USS Gerald R. Ford*. Dad always felt that the highest honor he ever received was to wear the uniform of Lieutenant Commander in the United States Navy. So, upon learning details of the Navy’s plans to name CVN 78, the *USS Gerald R. Ford*, Dad wrote a personal letter about CVN 78 and his feelings at such an extraordinary honor. He concluded his letter with this heartfelt farewell:

*“Thus, it is a source of indescribable pride and humility to know that an aircraft carrier bearing my name will be permanently associated with the valor and patriotism of the men and women of the United States Navy.”*

There is no one – absolutely no one – who would be prouder of the commissioning of this mighty ship than President Gerald R. Ford.

Therefore, on behalf of the 38<sup>th</sup> President of the United States, and as your Ship Sponsor, I’m honored to give the command:

***Officers and Crew of the United States Ship Gerald R. Ford,  
Man Our Ship, and Bring Her To Life!***

# # # #



Don Holloway

Guests await the Commissioning of the USS Gerald R. Ford.



Dr. Robert M. Humphries

(l-r) Matthew Meier, Rachel Meier, Rear Admiral John Meier and Michael Meier.



Dr. Robert M. Humphries

(l-r) Tammy Huizenga, Mike Ford, and J.C. Huizenga



David Hume Kennerly

**Above:** U.S. Representative Liz Cheney and Susan Ford Bales. **Below:** University of Michigan Football Coach Jim Harbaugh and Bob Humphries.



**Right:** (l-r) Vice President Dick Cheney, Secretary James Mattis and Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. **Below:** Commissioning Committee Co-Chair Red Cavaney and Sheri Cavaney.



David Hume Kennerly



David Hume Kennerly

Dr. Robert M. Humphries



## USS GERALD R. FORD (CVN 78) COMMISSIONING COMMITTEE

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Susan Ford Bales

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**The Commissioning Committee for *USS Gerald R. Ford* (CVN 78) extends its sincere gratitude and appreciation to the following individuals and organizations who so generously supported the Commissioning Committee's accessions to the ship and her officers and crew:**

**Integrity At The Helm**

The DeVos Family

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Doug and Maria DeVos; Peter and Joan Secchia

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**Captain**

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## Grand Rapids Commissioning Watch - July 22, 2017



Admiral Patrick Walsh (Ret.) (left) speaks to the crowd gathered outside the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum to witness the Commissioning of the *USS Gerald R. Ford* via a live telecast from Naval Station Norfolk on July 22, 2017.

On Saturday, July 22, 2017, the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation hosted the Grand Rapids Community at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum at 8:30 a.m. for the telecast of the commissioning of the *USS Gerald R. Ford* (CVN 78).

The Salvation Army Brass Band kicked off the festivities with upbeat patriotic tunes. East Grand Rapids Mayor Anna Seibold began the local commissioning program. Bagpiper, Jerry Dibble, led the procession of the Sea Cadets, who presented the colors, and Grand Rapids Police Department Officer Wally Tett sang the "National Anthem". Admiral Patrick Walsh (Ret.) gave a thoughtful and heartfelt speech about the *USS Gerald R. Ford* and her namesake.

Nearly a thousand guests watched the commissioning on a big screen positioned outside of the Museum, and on the screen in the museum auditorium. The crowd was mesmerized by the ceremony, and the hometown pride of President Ford's fellow Grand Rapidians was beaming. To help celebrate this once in a lifetime occasion, red, white and blue cupcakes and snacks were provided by SpartanNash; a blood drive was conducted by the Red Cross and games and other activities, including writing postcards to the crew of the *USS Gerald R. Ford* continued. It was a day filled with patriotism, community spirit, and hometown pride -- a fitting tribute to President Gerald R. Ford.

### *Excerpts from Admiral Patrick Walsh's remarks:*

I am blessed to be here in Grand Rapids, to share the memory of an American family at this great event, and join in the pride and the gratitude for Michigan's favorite son. It is a rare privilege and high honor to recognize a magnificent leader, renowned statesman, and life-long public servant, represented before us now as a man-of-war and ship of steel.

My remarks begin with you...extended friends and family of this legacy...because days pass too quickly, our opportunities with each other too fleeting, our reunions too limited, to miss a chance to express our thanks and gratitude to each other, for each other. Life has taught us that we should not allow special moments such as today, to slip by quietly. Whether we

realize it, sense it, or understand it completely, we are part of a great circle of community, history, and tradition, where one generation cares for and nurtures the next. Jerry Ford did that for my generation – today we honor his name on a ship whose sailors will endeavor to carry his example of honor, courage, and commitment forward...and bring his ideas of selfless public service to life for generations to follow.

...For the tasks that lay ahead and many years of duty, President Ford's example instructs us on the history, heritage, and brotherhood of our Navy. We commission this ship with a sense of excitement, but also with a sense of deep respect and obligation to our

predecessors who stood watch before us. In a few minutes, Susan Ford Bales will give the order...to bring this ship to life. The crew will run to their stations with youthful enthusiasm and a solemn sense of obligation to this great family.

*...I have one charge for the crew: understand his values, follow his personal example, judgment, and remember how Gerald Ford stood proudly for all that we represent...then I am confident that you will man the helm with integrity.*

Admiral Walsh's remarks can be viewed in their entirety on the Foundation's website:

[geraldrfordfoundation.org](http://geraldrfordfoundation.org)



President Gerald R. Ford Tribute Room



Plankowner Plaque



MWR Passenger Vans

### USS Gerald R. Ford Commissioning Committee Ship Enhancements (partial list)

- Lieutenant Commander Gerald R. Ford Statue – Ceremonial Quarterdeck
- President Gerald R. Ford Tribute Room
- Inport Cabin
- USS Gerald R. Ford Chapel
- “Mac’s” Starbucks
- USS Gerald R. Ford Library
- Flag Office and Mess
- Crew Fitness Center

- Wings Over America – USS Gerald R. Ford Scholarship
- Chief of Staff Quarters
- Wardroom Lounge
- CPO Lounge
- MWR Passenger Vans
- Crew Uniform Patches
- Plankowner Plaques
- Crew Commemorative Books



*Yes, I want to be a member of “Friends of Ford”*

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- ★ Free admission to the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum
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*For further information, please contact Kristy Lecceadone at 616.254.0396 or email [klecceedone@38foundation.org](mailto:klecceedone@38foundation.org).*

Attached is an application envelope for your convenience. Memberships are tax deductible to the limits allowed by the IRS.

The Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation is a tax-exempt 501(c)3 organization.

**Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation, 303 Pearl Street, NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49504-5353  
616-254-0396**



"In my life, I've received countless honors. But none was greater than to wear the uniform of Lieutenant Commander in the United States Navy. On an aircraft carrier in the South Pacific during World War II, I learned to respect, and to rely on, my comrades as if my life depended on them – because it often did. As a World War II veteran, I yield to no one in my admiration for the heroes of Omaha Beach and Iwo Jima. At the same time, I take enormous inspiration from their grandsons and granddaughters who are writing new chapters of heroism around the globe. Thus, it is a source of indescribable pride and humility to know that an aircraft carrier bearing my name will be permanently associated with the valor and patriotism of the men and women of the United States Navy."

**President Gerald R. Ford, November 8, 2006**



United States Navy, released.



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*The Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation fosters increased awareness of the life, career, values and legacy of America's 38th President. It does so through activities designed to promote the high ideals of integrity, honesty, and candor that defined President Ford's extraordinary career of public service. The Foundation promotes the ideals, values, commitment to public service and historical legacy of President Gerald R. Ford and further promotes greater civic engagement and recognition of integrity wherever it exists in the public arena. It supports permanent and changing exhibits designed to promote historical literacy; conferences; educational outreach and other programs, both scholarly and popular, including at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum.*