



THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA VIETNAM WAR COMMEMORATION



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Dear Commemorative Partners,

[The United States Navy](#) sails to 247 years of courageously serving our Nation on **Thursday, October 13**. Their unofficial motto, *Semper Fortis* or “Always Courageous,” reflects this sentiment. Join with us this month as we [salute](#) the U.S. Navy and pay tribute to past and present servicemembers. **Happy Birthday, U. S. Navy!**

The Honorable Carlos Del Toro was sworn in last year as the **78th Secretary of the Navy**. At right, VWC Director, retired U.S. Army Major General Peter “Pete” Aylward, presents a Commemorative Flag to the new Secretary as a Commemorative Ambassador.



The Honorable Carlos Del Toro, Secretary of the Navy (at right), with VWC Director, retired U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Pete Aylward.



Commander Billie J. Farrell (at left), is presented a Certificate of Appreciation.

In addition to their birthday celebration, the U.S. Navy commemorates two momentous milestones this year. First, history was made on January 21 when [Commander Billie J. Farrell](#) took over the reins as the 77th Commanding Officer and [first female](#) of the oldest commissioned Naval warship [USS Constitution](#). Congratulations Commander Farrell! Second, in just over two weeks, this same Naval warship—as well as one of the Navy’s original six frigates—known as [Old Ironsides](#), will celebrate on October 21, **225 years** of her launch and faithful service. Happy Birthday *Old Ironsides!*

In Vietnam, one aspect of the Navy’s contribution included keeping shipping channels clear of mines. In May of 1966, during Operation GAME WARDEN, the Navy established Mine Squadron 11, Detachment Alpha, under the command of Task Force 116. This squadron of a dozen minesweeping boats was assigned to protect the Long Tau River shipping channel. Read more about the [Mine Squadron](#), as well as view a larger photo of one of these mines (at right). You can also delve deeper into the Navy’s involvement during the Vietnam War period and [The Ten Thousand-Day War at Sea](#) in the *Naval History and Heritage Command’s* Hampton Roads Naval Museum Vietnam Exhibit. From Intelligence, to Air Power, to Riverine operations and much more, this online exhibit has a wealth of history available to discover! Also for more on Navy Riverine operations, download and enjoy printable versions or [order](#) the full size 36 x 24-inch edition of our 3-part poster series [Riverine Operations in the Vietnam War](#).



A 1,000-pound contact mine recovered by a minesweeping boat force. (U.S. Naval Institute)

Finally, stay tuned as next month we roll out a very special Veterans Day SITREP debuting our **Virtual Tour** of the **Vietnam War Pentagon Corridor Exhibit!** To all our sailors above all, thank you for your service and Bravo Zulu!

~ The United States of America Vietnam War Commemoration Staff ~

Join the Nation ... thank a Vietnam veteran!