



Carrier Aviation News NewsBytes 1996–1999



NewsBytes 96–97

FY98–99 Budget Highlights

Feb 10th 1997: The following are the highlights for FY98 and FY99 Budget:

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\$18mill for CVN–77
New Attack Submarine (NSSN) 4 boat program
SSN–23 (Seawolf) completion
concept demonstration of the Arsenal Ship
funding for Future Surface Combatant (SC–21)
3 LMSR sealift ships
51 aircraft in FY98 and 71 in FY99
Special Operations version of V–22
Joint Primary Aircraft Training Program (JPATS)
Joint Strikefighter Program (JSF)
AMRAAM missiles
Joint Standoff Weapons System (JSOW)
Joint Direct Attack Munitions (JDAM)
reduction of 11,000 personell (mostly enlisted)
Deployable Battle Force ships: 354 in FY97, 346 in FY98 and 335 in FY99
decomissioning of 18 ships in FY98 and 17 in FY99
available aircraft: 2,556 in FY99
Personell: 402,013 in FY97, 390,802 in FY98 and 384,888 in FY99
Source: US Navy

Blue Angels 1997 Schedule

Jan 23rd 1997: In 1997, the team is scheduled to perform at:

March 15: NAF El Centro, Calif.
March 22–23: Mesa, Ariz.
April 5–6: MacDill AFB, Fla.
April 12–13: MACS Cherry Point, N.C.
April 19–20: NAS Fallon, Nev.
April 25–27: MCAS El Toro, Calif.
May 3–4: NAS Key West, Fla.
May 10–11: Brunswick, Ga.
May 17–18: Montreal
May 21–23: Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md.
May 24: NAS Patuxent River, Md.
May 31–June 1: Willow Run, Mich.
June 7–8: NAS Lemoore, Calif.
June 14–15: Hillsboro, Ore.
June 21–22: NAS/JRB Willow Grove, Pa.
June 28–29: North Kingstown, R.I.
July 5–6: Fargo, N.D.
July 12: Pensacola Beach, Fla.
July 19–20: NAS Brunswick, Maine.

July 26–27: Kansas City, Mo.
Aug. 2–3: Salinas, Calif.
Aug. 9–10: Seattle, Wash.
Aug. 15–17: NAS Miramar, Calif.
Aug. 23–24: NAS Corpus Christi, Texas.
Sept. 6–7: Grand Junction, Colo.
Sept. 13–14: Fort Smith, Ark.
Sept. 20–21: NAS Oceana, Calif.
Sept. 27–28: Smyrna, Tenn.
Oct. 4–5: El Paso, Texas
Oct. 11–12: San Francisco
Oct. 18–19: Liberal, Kan.
Oct. 25–26: Tulsa, Okla.
Nov. 1–2: NAS Cecil Field, Fla.
Nov. 8–9: NAS Pensacola, Fla.
–US Navy–F/A–18E/F First Carrier Landing

Jan 18th 1997: ABOARD USS JOHN C. STENNIS (NWSA) -- The Navy's newest multi-mission strike fighter, the F/A–18 E/F Super Hornet, made its first aircraft carrier landing Jan. 18 aboard USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74) underway 140 miles off the coast of Cherry Point, N.C. These sea trials will continue for two weeks.
–US Navy–

President Supports New Carrier

Jan 16th 1997: President Clinton supports the building of a new carrier beyond CVN–76 Ronald Reagan currently being constructed. RDe funding is likely to be provided the next fiscal year leading up to \$1 bill in 2000.

Military Losses

Dec 19th 1996: The number of aircraft lost to accidents was an all-time low of 67, down from 69 the previous year. The aircraft major-accident rate dropped slightly from 1.53 to 1.50 accidents per 100,000 flying hours. This continues a steady six-year declining aviation accident trend. Since this statistic is a rate, it takes into account variations in flying hours and reductions in personnel.

On-duty fatalities of military members, DOD Civil Service employees, and bystanders dropped from 206 to 171. Most of the deaths were the result of aviation accidents, where fatalities increased from 85 to 108, 34 of which occurred in the crash of the military plane carrying former Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown and his traveling party.

Off-duty accidental military deaths dropped from 376 to 293, an all-time low. The largest improvement was in the reduction of private motor vehicle fatalities.

–US Navy–

Ships Returning from Mid-East

Dec 19th 1996: Ships returning Dec. 20 include: USS Enterprise (CVN 65), USS Supply (AOE 6), USS Briscoe (DD 977), USS Klakring (FFG 42), USS R.G. Bradley (FFG 49), USS Mitscher (DDG 57) and USS Norfolk (SSN 714).

Ships returning Dec. 21 include: USS Gunston Hall (LSD 44), USS Saipan (LHA 2)

and USS Austin (LPD 4).

–US NAVY–

VF–103 Fitted with LANTIRN

Dec 19th 1996: The operational debut of new high-tech hardware; the F–14s of Fighter Squadron 103, based at NAS Oceana, were outfitted with the Low Altitude Navigation and Targeting Infrared System for Night (LANTIRN) pods. This system allows Tomcats to deliver laser-guided weapons, to designate targets for other aircraft and gives the F–14 a precision-strike capability.

–US NAVY–

Enterprise Turns Over Watch

Dec 9th 1996: USS Enterprise turned over the Med watch to USS Roosevelt today off the coast of Spain. Enterprise then started the 4,067 mile journey home which will see the A–6 Intruder on it's last cruise before retirement from active service.

Fallout of Roosevelt Collision

Nov 26th 1996: Capt Ronald Christenson, former commander of the USS Roosevelt and Capt Coleman Landers former commander of the cruiser USS Leyte Gulf received punitive letters of reprimand over the collision of both ships on October 14th. That will virtually end their sea-going careers, several other officers were also punished to varying levels. The collision caused a total of around \$11mill damage to both ships.

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F-14 Pilot Missing

October 9th 1997:NNS4203. F-14 pilot missing following crash courtesy of Naval Air Force Atlantic Fleet Public Affairs

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NORFOLK (NWSA) -- The search has been called off for the pilot of an F-14 Tomcat aircraft which crashed off the Virginia–North Carolina coast at about 4 p.m. (EST), Oct. 2.

A Coast Guard helicopter recovered the plane's radar intercept officer shortly after the aircraft went down. The F-14 was assigned to Fighter Squadron 101 from Naval Air Station (NAS) Oceana in Virginia Beach and was flying with other aircraft when the incident occurred.

Search and rescue units, including a C-130 and a HH-60 Jayhawk helicopter from Coast Guard Air Station Elizabeth City, N.C., and a helicopter from the NAS Oceana Search and Rescue Detachment were on scene. Three U.S. Navy ships were within 40 miles of the incident and also participated in the search for the missing pilot.

Lt. Cmdr. Logan A. Allen III, 33, of Virginia Beach disappeared, Cmdr. Craig A. Roll, 39, of Virginia Beach, was rescued.

The cause of the crash is under investigation.

–USN–

JFK Heads for Home

October 9th 1997:NNS4213. USS John F. Kennedy Battle Group heading home by USS John F. Kennedy Public Affairs

NORFOLK (NWSA) -- The USS John F. Kennedy (CV 67) Battle Group will return home Oct. 28, after six months of operating in the Mediterranean Sea and the Adriatic Sea in Support of Operation Deliberate Guard and the Arabian Gulf Supporting Operation Southern Watch.

The John F. Kennedy Battle Group includes USS Vicksburg (CG 69), USS Hue City (CG 66), USS Thomas S. Gates (CG 51), USS Spruance (DD 963), USS John Hancock (DD 981), USS Taylor (FFG 50), USS Arctic (AOE 8), USS Jacksonville (SSN 699) and USS Albany (SSN 753).

As the sole conventionally powered aircraft carrier in the Atlantic Fleet, John F. Kennedy deployed with the most advanced Command, Control, Communications, Computers and Information Systems (C4I) in the Navy. John F. Kennedy and Carrier Air Wing 8 participated in numerous U.S., bilateral and multi-national exercises. The carrier's first major exercise was the French-led Iles D'or during May in the western Mediterranean to train the forces of 10 nations, including two smaller aircraft carriers from Italy and Spain.

In July, the battle group participated in the 6th Fleet exercise INVITEX involving 12 nations. During INVITEX, allied forces, including 13,000 U.S. Sailors and Marines, were challenged to effectively manage the way they communicate and act upon operational information as it is processed and distributed to allied decision-makers.

NATO'S Exercise Dynamic Mix, Sept. 23 – Oct. 7, placed John F. Kennedy Battle Group units on opposing sides. It was designed to increase task force and unit readiness as forces implemented NATO strategy and doctrine.

While deployed, John F. Kennedy Sailors and Marines enjoyed 10 port visits to six countries -- France, Spain, Israel, Greece, Bahrain, and was the first American aircraft carrier to visit the Republic of Slovenia.

Kennedy and Carrier Air Wing 8 Sailors volunteered off-duty time to help with more than 20 community projects throughout Europe. Sailor volunteers painted schools, churches, homes for the elderly, performed carpentry and yard work.

Squadrons embarked on board Kennedy include Fighter Squadrons 14 and 41; Strike Fighter Squadrons 15 and 87, Helicopter Airborne Early Warning Squadron 3, Sea Control Squadron 2, Airborne Early Warning Squadron 124, Tactical Electronics Warfare Squadron 141 and Fleet Air Reconnaissance Squadron 6 Detachment A.
–USN–

Recent Flight Accidents

September 17th 1997: The Navy is on track to conclude its safest flight year ever with a total Navy mishap rate of only 1.32 per 100,000 flight hours for fiscal year 1997. Tactical Aircraft (1.68) and F-18 Hornets (1.44) are additionally flying their safest flight year. Mishaps are tracked from October 1 to September 30, and the ratios are provided per 100,000 flight hours.

An F/A-18 Hornet aircraft crashed Sept. 14 at 11:10 a.m. local time approximately 75 miles northeast of Raysut, Oman.

The pilot, LT Jason E. Jakubowski, of Grasonville, Md., was killed when his aircraft crashed during a routine training mission. The aircraft was assigned to Strike Fighter Squadron 15 based in Jacksonville, Fla., operating from USS John F. Kennedy (CVN 67), homeported in Mayport, Fla. The cause of the incident is under investigation.
–USN–

Enterprise Underway

August 27th 1997: NORFOLK (NWSA) -- After nearly eight months at the Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry-dock Co. and Norfolk Naval Base, USS Enterprise (CVN 65) shifted to underway colors Aug. 14 for sea trials and flight deck certification. During 10 days in the Virginia Capes Operating Area, the Enterprise crew tested many of the ship's critical components affected during the in-port period. Crew members tested aviation fueling systems, radar and combat equipment, steam plants and steering systems.

Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 3 also embarked aboard to participate in the certification

process.

Enterprise will get underway again Sept. 11 for carrier qualifications.

–USN–

VFA–122 First for Super Hornet

August 27th 1997:NNS3602. Super Hornet will come to life at NAS Lemoore by Glen Faison Golden Eagle Editor

LEMOORE, Calif. (NWSA) -- Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 122 will be the Navy's training squadron for the new F/A–18 E/F Super Hornet at Naval Air Station Lemoore, Calif. The first of the new Hornets is scheduled to arrive in November 1999 with five more to follow a month later.

–USN–

Tomcat Aviator Ejected While Landing

August 19th 1997:NNS3507. NORFOLK (NWSA) -- The pilot of a Naval Air Station Ocean, Va.–based F–14 Tomcat aircraft is safe after he was accidentally ejected from his aircraft during a landing aboard the aircraft carrier USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74). Stennis personnel rescued the radar intercept officer from the pilotless Tomcat as it sat on the flight deck with engines still running.

The officers, both of Virginia Beach, Va., are assigned to Fighter Squadron 143, and both were treated for minor injuries by Stennis medical personnel. The pilot was recovered immediately astern of the carrier and rescued by a helicopter from Helicopter Antisubmarine Squadron 5 based at NAS Jacksonville, Fla.

An investigation is being conducted to determine the cause of the incident.

John C. Stennis is on routine training operations in the Virginia Capes.

–USN–

Connie Departs Gulf

August 19th 1997:by Constellation Public Affairs

ABOARD USS CONSTELLATION (NWSA) -- The USS Constellation (CV 64) Battle Group departed 5th Fleet's Area of Responsibility Aug. 17, on schedule to continue its routine six–month deployment in the waters of the Indian and Pacific Oceans.

Constellation Battle Group entered the Arabian Sea May 16, and conducted high tempo operations that included more than 4,400 sorties during more than 10 weeks in the Arabian Gulf.

Operations included exercises with friendly forces in the region. Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 2, embarked in Constellation, participated in Operation Southern Watch flying 1,460 sorties enforcing the no–fly zone over southern Iraq.

Constellation Battle Group includes the aircraft carrier USS Constellation (CV 64), USS Merrill (DD 976), USS John Paul Jones (DDG 53), USS Chosin (CG 65), USS Lake

Erie (CG 70), USS Cimarron (AO 177) and USS Mount Hood (AE 290).

–USN–

TR Enters Yard for Year Long Overhaul

August 19th 1997: In its first overhaul in 11 years TR went into the yards July 8 for a \$175mill refurbishment which includes 4 new propellers, repainting, renovating storage tanks and numerous systems upgrades.

"Wallbangers" mishap-free for 20 years

August 13th 1997: WASHINGTON (NWSA) – A San Diego-based carrier early airborne warning squadron, the "Wallbangers" of VAW-117, completed 20 years and more than 44,050 mishap-free flight hours on July 28.

In his congratulatory message, RADM Donald A. Weiss, Commander Carrier Group Three, cited "keenest attention to detail and the commitment from every member of the team to accept nothing but excellence" as the reasons for the squadron's success.

–USN–

Massive firepower demonstrated during surge in Ops

August 4th 1997: NNS3205. WASHINGTON (NWSA) -- The massive fire power projected from the flight deck of a forward deployed carrier battle group (CBG) was demonstrated like never before during a recent high tempo exercise involving USS Nimitz and the embarked Carrier Air Wing Nine.

SURGEX was a strike warfare demonstration conducted by the Nimitz Carrier Battle Group in July off the coast of Southern California. The demonstration was designed to surge the number of strike sorties a CBG can fly from approximately 100 to 200 per day for four consecutive days. The significant impact on operations and forward presence is evident from the 1000+ sorties launched during the 98 hours of continuous flight operations, more than 800 of which were strike sorties. This four-day surge was made possible by augmenting ship's company with just 200 additional personnel to help provide around-the-clock operations.

Strike sorties flown during the four days totaled 195, 193, 202 and 212 during each 24-hour period. That doesn't take into account the intensive 14 hours-a-day of flight ops conducted in the six days prior the SURGEX demo as part of the overall JTFEX.

The aircraft carrier continues to be the centerpiece of the forces necessary for forward presence. Carriers support and operate aircraft that engage in attacks on airborne, afloat and ashore targets that threaten free use of the sea, and engage in sustained operations in support of other forces.

–USN–

Courts-martial in the Navy

June 30th 1997: In 1970 the number of courts-martial in the navy and marines was 30,000 representing 1 in 32 of all personnel. In 1996 this number had dropped to 4,885 or 1 in 120. Most of the cases in 1970 were drugs and the recent figure represents better

leadership, better recruiting and more women.

Defence Review makes cuts in Navy

May 15th 1997: The Defense Department Defence Review sees cuts in the Navy of 128 surface ships to 116, 73 attack submarines to 50, production of F/A–18E/F from 1,000 to 548 and the Joint Strike Fighter to start initial production in 2008 for a total production of 2,852 aircraft.

F/A–18E/F 1,000 hour Milestone

May 9th 1997: NNS2003. The Navy F/A–18E/F Super Hornet test program passed the 1,000 flight-hour mark May 9 during a flight with Integrated Test Team (ITT) pilot CDR Tom Gurney, USN, at the controls. Tests are also under way for missile firings.
– US Navy –

Battle Efficiency Awards 1996

Apr 18th 1997: The Battle E for best Atlantic carrier goes to Nimitz (CVN–68) and for the Pacific goes to Carl Vinson (CVN–70).

Kitty Hawk Battle Group Returns Home

Apr 10th 1997: The Amphibious ships USS Essex (LHD 2), USS Cleveland (LPD 7) and USS Harpers Ferry (LSD 49) will arrive in San Diego Thursday, April 10. The USS Kitty Hawk Battle Group, with its nine tactical aircraft squadrons, and San Diego-based ships USS Cowpens (CG 63), USS Antietam (CG 54), USS Reid (FFG 30) and the attack submarine USS Salt Lake City (SSN 716) will return Friday, April 11.

The Kitty Hawk Battle Group spent three months in the Arabian Gulf in support of Operation Southern Watch and U.N. sanctions in the region. During that period, Airwing Eleven aircraft flew 1,775 sorties, accumulating 4,065 flight hours while in the Gulf.

– US Navy –

12 Ships to Join Fleet in FY98/99

Apr 10th 1997: The eighth Nimitz class aircraft carrier, USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75), will enter the fleet in the summer of 1998 as the numerical replacement for USS Independence (CV 62). The first seven Flight II Arleigh Burke class guided missile destroyers will be commissioned in FY–98 and FY–99. The ships have an improved electronic warfare suite, extended range surface-to-air missiles, Link 16 and an improved tactical information exchange system.

Expeditionary warfare forces will gain significant capability and modernization with the addition of the Amphibious Assault Ship USS Bon Homme Richard (LHD 6) and the Dock Landing Ship USS Pearl Harbor (LSD 52). Pearl Harbor will be the first LSD to have the integrated Ship Self Defense System (SSDS). All other LSDs will be backfitted with SSDS by 2002. USS New Orleans (LPH 11) and USS Guam (LPH 9), both built in the mid–1960's, are scheduled for decommissioning.

The second Seawolf nuclear attack submarine, USS Connecticut (SSN 22), is also scheduled to join the Fleet in FY98. The Seawolf class boats have an advanced design sensor suite with unmatched combat systems performance at all speeds, including automatic passive high-speed contact tracking, which is particularly important against diesel and electric submarines.

Thirty-three ships will be decommissioned or transferred to the Naval Reserve Force over the next two years including the aircraft carrier USS Independence (CV 62), the guided missile cruiser USS Arkansas (CGN 41), seven guided missile frigates, 19 attack submarines and one submarine tender.

–USN–

F-18 Injures Crewman on Indy

Apr 3rd 1997: An F-18's wheel mount collapsed during a cat shot, the wing tip slamming shut a deck hatch on the legs of a crewman who was taken by a sea hawk to a hospital in Sydney, Australia. The F-18 involved was damaged and was flown on 1 engine 220km to Williamtown RAAF base where it managed a landing with a wheel collapsing. The aviator is OK. F/A-18E/F Purchase Approved

Mar 26th 1997: The Defense Dept announced that 62 F/A-18E/F's will be purchased over the next 3 years. The first planes should reach the fleet in 1999. The navy has a requirement for 1,000 aircraft. 7 aircraft are currently going through testing, 2 F's and 5 E's.

–US Navy–

Decommissioned Carriers

USS America (CV-66) 9 Aug 1996 Reserve – Norfolk

USS Ranger (CV-61) 10 Jul 1995 Reserve – Bremerton

USS Saratoga (CV-60) 30 Sep 1994 Stricken – Philadelphia

USS Forrestal (AVT-59) 10 Sep 1993 Stricken – Philadelphia

A-6 Intruder Retires

Feb 26th 1997: The venerable A-6 Intruder retired officially from Navy service on February 28th during a ceremony aboard the Naval Air Station Whidbey Island. VA-75 will stand down on the East Coast at NAS Oceana, Va. and VA-196 at NAS Whidbey Island.

–US Navy–

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Enterprise Strikes

[Back to Front Page](#) **December 16th:** At 1:00 am this morning local time, an attack began on Iraq by US and British forces based in the region. US Navy aircraft from the USS Enterprise were among the forces. About 200 cruise missiles were fired from B-52 aircraft and ships in the [Enterprise Battlegroup](#).

The [USS Carl Vinson Battlegroup](#) is expected to arrive in the Gulf Friday (December 18th) to bolster offensive power.

The attack is expected to last up to 4 days. Navy EA-6B aircraft led the air assault against Iraqi anti-aircraft missile sites. A total of 22 navy ships are currently in the region.

December 23rd: 425 Tomahawk and cruise missiles were fired off during the 4 day mission and 600 sorties were made by US Navy, Airforce and British aircraft. No casualties were reported.

The 4 Divisions of the Republican Guard were among the targets and more than 2,000 casualties are thought to have been inflicted.

Four Killed in Collision on Enterprise

November 8th 1920 local time: During night landing re-qualifications aboard Enterprise in the Atlantic, two jets collided. An EA6-B Prowler from VAQ-130 based at Whidbey Island collided with an S-3 Viking from VS-22 (Zappers) based at Jacksonville Fla. The S-3 was sitting on the flight deck, the Prowler then fell into the sea.

All six crew, four from the Prowler and two from the Viking ejected. The two from the S-3 were injured one landing into a radar on the ship's island, the other into the sea. The four crew of the Prowler were killed, one body was found the other three missing presumed killed. The search was called off after 24 hours.

The body of Lt. j.g. Brenden J. Duffy, 27, of Annapolis Md., was recovered soon after the crash. Those missing presumed dead were Lt. j.g. Charles E. Woodward, 26, of Herndon Va., Lt. j.g. Meredith Carol Loughran, 26, of Sanston Va., and the pilot Lt. Cmdr. Kurt W. Barich, 35, of Oak Harbour, Wash. The two injured were Cmdr. James G. Wallace, 44, of Jacksonville Fla., and Lt. j.g. Kirk A. Schneringer of Cardiff, Calif., they were both listed as stable.

UPDATE November 13th: The S-3 had just landed and was in the Prowler's path. The LSO's declared a Fouled Deck but the Prowler clipped the Viking as it attempted to go around. The two survivors, suffering burns are receiving treatment at Portsmouth Naval Medical Center. They will then go home for a few days before rejoining their ship.

–US Navy–

Lincoln Departs Gulf

October 20th 1998: USS Lincoln departed the Gulf and is expected to return to home port by mid December. Capt. J. J. Quinn, Abraham Lincoln's Commanding Officer, estimated that the ship's F-14 Tomcat fighters, F/A-18 Hornets and other support aircraft had flown 1,855 sorties in the Arabian Gulf. Aircrew from the 10 squadrons of Carrier Air Wing 14 have collectively flown more than 10,000 hours in 73 embarked aircraft during the deployment, safely touching down on the 4.5-acre flight deck approximately 5,260 times.

–US Navy–

F/A-18 Lost in Med

September 16th 1998: by USS Dwight D. Eisenhower Public Affairs
MEDITERRANEAN SEA (NNS) -- While conducting routine flight operations in the western Mediterranean Sea Sept. 16, an F/A-18 Hornet from Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 83 attached to USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69), was reported in the water approximately 10 miles from the carrier.

The pilot ejected safely from the aircraft and was recovered on board Dwight D. Eisenhower by an HH-60 helicopter attached to Helicopter Squadron (HS) 15. The pilot exited the helo under his own power and is being evaluated by Navy medical personnel. The cause of the incident is under investigation.

Dwight D. Eisenhower, homeported in Norfolk, is forward deployed to the Mediterranean Sea on a routine six-month deployment.

VFA-83 is homeported in Cecil Field, Fla. HS-15 is homeported in Jacksonville, Fla. Both squadrons are assigned to Carrier Air Wing 17 and stationed on board Dwight D. Eisenhower during her deployment.

–USN–

Entire 2nd Fleet Sets Sail

August 27th 1998: Enterprise, Truman and Roosevelt along with 60 other navy ships sailed from Norfolk with 30,000 crew to ride out Hurricane Bonnie. The \$7mill cost would be small if ships were battered against wharves in port.

Marine Pilot Killed in F-18 Crash

August 20th 1998: A Marine Pilot from VFMA-212 died in a crash near Katherine, Australia. He was undergoing training on the Delemere range as part of the annual Southern Frontier exercises. No cause as yet been established for the accident.

Truman Commissioned

July 25th 1998: The USS Harry S Truman was commissioned today in front of 20,000 people in Norfolk Virginia. President Clinton spoke and Margaret Truman Daniel, daughter of the late president, will serve as ship's sponsor. Few Republican representatives bothered to attend and support the Navy's newest Nimitz class aircraft carrier.

Pilot Killed in F-14 Collision

August 3rd 1998: Lt. Cmdr. Ronald Lee ``Rhino" Wise Jr., 36, was killed while ejecting from his Tomcat July 30th in the Med. 3 F-14's were conducting fighter crew training when 2 of them collided. The other Tomcat made it safely back to the Eisenhower with minor damage. The RIO Lt. Richard Kane, 27, sustained a broken leg. They were heading for Antalya, Turkey when they decided to eject.

Lt. Cmdr. Wise was a former Intruder driver and was the last aviator to fly the A-6 at Oceana. It was his first tour with VF-103. He was married and a father of three.

Ballard Searches for Yorktown

June 1st 1998: Robert Ballard, the man who found the Titanic and the Bismark is now searching for the aircraft carrier USS Yorktown sunk by the Japanese at the battle of Midway in 1942.

F/A-18 Lost from Eisenhower

February 11th 1998: About noon Sunday (Feb 8) a navy F/A-18 was lost as it was catapulted from the Eisenhower in the Atlantic near Puerto Rico. The aviator was rescued and is OK. The aviator, Lt. Cmdr. Tom Halley of Clarksville, Tenn., was from VFA-81.

One Aviator Killed in Collision

February 7th 1998: Two F/A-18's from the George Washington collided today in the Persian Gulf while returning to the ship after a routine patrol over the no-fly zone. Both aviators were recovered by SAR and flown back to the GW. One of the aviators was killed.

Update February 12th: The 2 F/A-18s were from VFM-251, killed was Lt. Col. Henry G. VanWinkle, 41, of Kirkwood, N.Y. The other aviator, Maj. Cary D. Venden, of Conroe, Texas, is in good condition aboard George Washington. The aircraft were on their way to the no-fly zone.

Indy Leaves for Gulf

January 23 1998: WASHINGTON (NNS) -- Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen announced Jan. 21 that the USS Independence (CV 62) Battle Group (BG) will relieve the USS Nimitz (CVN 68) BG in the Arabian Gulf. Cohen made the announcement aboard Independence, forward-based in Yokosuka, Japan

USS Independence has a crew of approximately 3,150 and an air wing of approximately 2,400 officers and enlisted personnel and 75 aircraft. USS Bunker Hill (CG 52), USS John S. McCain (DDG 56), USS O'Brian (DD 975), USS Charlotte (SSN 766) and Carrier Air Wing 5 are deploying with Independence. All four ships accompanying USS Independence are Tomahawk capable. -US Navy-

Truman Test Cats

January 13 1998: All four of Truman's catapults were tested January 13 sending various bits of metal into the James River. The previous day sailors moved aboard ship and the first food was served. It's nuclear reactors are to be energized in about six weeks. Schedule for commissioning is 1 August.

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2 More Carriers for NS North Island

[Back to Front Page](#) **December 1st:** The carriers Nimitz and Ronald Reagan will likely to be home based at N.S. North Island. The final decision will see the Nimitz stationed there from 2002 followed by the Reagan in 2004. They will join the Stennis which based there last August. Another carrier based at North Island, Constellation will be decommissioned in 2003.

Kennedy Loses Sailor

November 24th: A search was called off after a sailor fell from the hangar deck of the Kennedy in the Gulf. A 36 hour search involving ships from the Kennedy battlegroup failed to turn up anything.

Blue Angel Crash

October 31st: A F/A-18B from the Blue Angels crashed during a training flight 2 miles north of Moody Air Force Base. Those killed in the crash were Lt Cmdr Kieron O'Connor, 35 of Burtonsville, Md., and Lt. Kevin Colling 32, of Castle Rock Colo.

23 Blue Angels aviators have died since they were formed and 36 aircraft lost.

Ike Completes Busy Deployment

September 19th: The Roosevelt aircraft completed 20,000 hours and 8,000–9,000 sorties during its six months deployment in Kosovo and the Gulf

Ike Loses Tomcat

October 23rd: The crew of an F-14 was rescued from the sea after ejecting from their aircraft moments after takeoff from the Eisenhower. Both received only minor injuries, they were assigned to VF-143 based at Oceana in CVW-7. The incident happened during a training exercise near Puerto Rico.

U.S. Military Loses Down

October 23rd: Military losses for the year ended June 30 were down on the same period last year. 15 sailors and airmen were killed, 6 due to aviation incidents (from a total force of over 380,000). 88 died in off-duty accidents, 70 due to car crashes

A total of 108 U.S. military personnel were killed on duty while 319 died off duty.

Operation *Allied Force*

June 13th: After 77 days Milosevic has admitted defeat (to himself) and finally pulled out his army. With an estimated 30% casualties and heavily degraded equipment, the

Serb army has begun pulling out. Despite last minute Russian grandstanding, forces from NATO began to move into Kosovo disarming any of the Serbs they find.

May 11th: The Roosevelt is getting plenty of action as part of *Allied Force*. One recent package of 37 aircraft destroyed an airfield in Serbia.

April 11th: The British carrier *Invincible* will join operation *Allied Force* with its compliment of 7 Sea Harriers.

April 6th: The Theodore Roosevelt battlegroup has been diverted to the Adriatic for operations in support of *Allied Force*. The Kitty Hawk will relieve Enterprise in the Gulf. The TR joins the French carrier Foch

Super Hornet Delivers

March 12th: Much to the consternation of its detractors the F/A–18E/F "Super Hornet" is proving to perform beyond expectations. During two weeks of Carrier Suitability Tests aboard the Harry S Truman the aircraft passed the tests with flying colors. Cat shots into cross winds with uneven loads, touch and go with full loads, night landings, single-engine landings and slow cats were among the tests carried out and passed.

Although 'wing drop' was a problem in the past this has now been reduced to 'buffeting', a nuisance, aviators say during extreme manoeuvres, but not a showstopper.

The Navy plans to buy 548 of the aircraft, so far they have taken delivery of 11, 7 for testing and 4 operational in a program expected to cost \$43bill. Operational Evaluation is expected to start in May.

Kitty Hawk Deploys

March 2nd: NNS1004. USS Kitty Hawk deploys by USS Kitty Hawk Public Affairs YOKOSUKA, Japan (NNS) -- USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) departed on a scheduled three-and-a-half month deployment March 2, with embarked Carrier Air Wing (CVW) FIVE, based at Naval Air Facility Atsugi, Japan.

During Kitty Hawk's deployment, the Yokosuka, Japan, forward-deployed aircraft carrier is scheduled to participate in Exercise Tandem Thrust, Cobra Gold and Merlion '99. The ship is also planning to make a number of port visits during the deployment, including Guam, Hong Kong, Singapore and Phattya, Thailand. USS Kitty Hawk arrived in Yokosuka Aug. 11, 1998, replacing the now decommissioned USS Independence. This is the ship's first major deployment from Yokosuka and its 19th since Kitty Hawk was commissioned in April 1961. –USN–

War of Attrition

March 1st: Navy aircraft from the Vinson enforcing the southern no-fly zone are regularly fired upon by AAA and SAM's, but so far no damage has been caused. However, these sites have then been hit with precision guided weapons destroying a large part of Hussein's remaining anti-air weapons.

February 16th: NNS0802. USS Theodore Roosevelt, USS Kearsarge groups conduct JTFEX 99–1 by 2nd Fleet Public Affairs NORFOLK (NNS) -- More than 24,000 U.S. joint service members as well as personnel and units from allied nations are participating in Joint Task Force Exercise (JTFEX) 99–1, Feb. 12 – March 2, 1999. The exercise is being directed by Commander-in-Chief, United States Atlantic Command, Adm. Harold W. Gehman, Jr. Conducting the exercise is Vice Adm. William J. Fallon, Commander, U.S. 2nd Fleet and Commander, Striking Fleet Atlantic. When in a training role, Fallon is designated as Commander, Joint Task Force 950. Featuring the USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71) Carrier Battle Group and the USS Kearsarge (LHD 3) Amphibious Ready Group (ARG), JTFEX 99–1 replicates emerging threats and operational challenges our military forces may encounter around the world. It is designed to meet the requirement for quality, realistic training to fully prepare our forces for joint operations when forward deployed.

Participating forces will train using equipment and systems which incorporate the latest advances in technology, and which support the full range of capabilities that may be needed in various geographic areas where forces serve during their deployment. "This Joint Task Force Exercise will train operational units from all services in a battlefield environment that is designed to specifically prepare them for the types of challenges the military faces today," said Fallon. "It provides our battle group and amphibious ready group units valuable experience in operations with forces of other services and other nations, while giving them an opportunity to refine joint and combined warfighting skills. It also provides a challenging test of their capabilities, and completes the training and evaluation process which supports certifying the battle group and ARG as 'ready to deploy.'" In addition to U.S. forces, units from Great Britain, the Netherlands, France, Belgium, Canada, Germany, Bolivia and Brazil are participating in the exercise. This kind of combined training enhances the readiness of both U.S. and allied forces, and is representative of the way nations often assign forces to deal with modern crises today.

JTFEX 99–1 incorporates significant special operations forces (SOF) participation, as well. More than 2,500 personnel from Navy, Army and Air Force SOF units are coming together during the exercise to practice many of the missions that they may be called upon to perform in a joint task force environment. JTFEX 99–1 is taking place in the waters off Virginia and North Carolina, as well as the Puerto Rican and Jacksonville, Fla., operating areas. The exercise provides "graduate level" training for CVBG and ARG units prior to their deployment. During the exercise, participating forces will be tested on their ability to deploy rapidly, conduct joint operations during a crisis and refine tactics, techniques and procedures in joint force operations. Forces will train in a simulated high-threat environment that involves air, naval and ground operations, and which incorporates surveillance, rescue and other operations such as maritime interdiction, embassy support and non-combatant evacuation. –USN–

Last Nimitz Class in Design Stage

March 1st 1999: The last of the Nimitz class carriers entered the design stage. CVN-77 will be jointly designed by the Navy and Newport News. It is expected the Navy will order the ship in 2001 to be completed in 2008.

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