

Navy Reservist wears many hats...Officer...Marine... Sailor...Buddhist Chaplain

JO1(SW/AW) Rob Kerns

WASHINGTON-- A simple ceremony marked a huge occasion as the U.S. Armed Forces commissioned their first Buddhist Chaplain.

For Chaplain (LTJG) Jeanette G. Shin this marks the end of one journey that began in 1988, when she enlisted in the United States Marine Corps, and starts another serving both the service members of the United States and Buddha.

Shin joined the Marines after graduating from Moore High School in Moore, Okla., in 1988. After completing boot camp in Paris Island, S.C., she attended the Marine Corps' Telecommunication School in Twenty Nine Palms, Calif., learning to work as a telecommunications operator.

"After school I was stationed at Henderson Hall in the Navy Annex," said Shin. "I really enjoyed the work I did there. I was in the know about what was going on in our country."

According to Shin, the work brought challenges she never expected to have in her life.

"Working shift work is challenging at first, but I grew to enjoy the different hours and the challenges that come with being a Marine."

The Marine lifestyle seemed to suit Shin and she began to look into reenlisting at the end of her enlistment. Military cutbacks during the early 90s forced her to change job fields if she wanted to stay in.

Shin decided to leave the military and use the GI Bill to go to college.

While attending Northern Virginia Community College, Shin worked in a number of jobs to help pay her way through school.

"Looking back I really worked quite a few jobs," said Shin. "I worked for a temp agency for a while then I was a security guard, I worked in retail, and then I was fortunate to land a job as a correspondence analyst at the U.S. Justice Department."

While working various jobs, Shin continued her education, completing a bachelor's of arts degree in Philosophy and Religious Studies from George Mason University in 2000 and graduating cum laude with a master's degree in Buddhist Studies from the Institute of Buddhist Studies at Berkley University 2004.

"When I entered seminary school in 2000 I knew I wanted to work in a temple and do the work of the Buddhist ministry. It wasn't until the 9/11 attacks that I began to reconsider coming back into the military," said Shin.

Shin, like many people, felt compelled to do as much as she could for her country after the attacks, and so she spoke to a recruiter for the Navy Reserve.

She knew there were obstacles ahead of her. There had already been two failed attempts to create a Buddhist chaplain position in the military, first in 1944 and then again in 1987.

"I was surprised at the ease of the application process," said Shin. "Everyone was very supportive of my application and desire to reenter the service as a Reservist."

In a ceremony taking place in a restored area of the Pentagon, Shin was commissioned by Chief of Navy Reserve, VADM John G. Cotton.

Before the ceremony began, Cotton remarked how special it was to have the ceremony in an area of the Pentagon that had been destroyed in the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

"In this area that was once destroyed, we are celebrating a great first in our armed services," said Cotton. "Lieutenant Shin is amazingly



Photo by JOCS Bob Hansen

LTJG Jeanette Shin (right) explains the significance of her religious garments to fellow chaplain, Captain Washington Johnson. Shin, the first Buddhist Chaplain in the U.S. Military, and Johnson are assigned to Reserve Units at Naval and Marine Corps Reserve Center, Alameda, Calif.

qualified to do this remarkable job and serve our Sailors in these changing times."

After taking her oath of service, Shin expressed her gratitude to her peers, and said she looks forward to making a difference in the fleet.

"I am very grateful to have the opportunities to serve the sea services – regardless of their religious faith," said Shin. "I will do my best to help all Sailors and Marines in any way I can."

Shin's commissioning is an important moment for the Navy's Chaplain Corps, as it continues to improve its diversity to serve Sailors and Marines from a variety of religious backgrounds. Shin was praised for her tremendous accomplishment and welcomed to the Corps by her peers.

"This is another historical moment for the Chaplain's Corps of the United States Navy, as we reach out to provide for the religious needs of our people," said Chief of Navy Chaplains, Chaplain (RADM) Louis V. Iasiello. "You are most welcome to our ranks as a chaplain, and we look forward to working with you in the future."

"This really is your statement of care and love and concern for us," said CAPT Harold L. Robinson, Special Assistant Reserve Manpower Chief of Naval Chaplains Office, who was recently promoted to rear admiral. "It's a call of the Chaplain Corps to serve every human being we encounter, and that's what we are saying. We are very blessed to have you among us."

Shin's first assignment in the Reserve is at Navy Marine Corps Reserve Center Alameda, Calif., and she will attend the Navy's chaplain school in October.

According to Shin, she looks forward to serving at Alameda, but she is already looking forward to getting back to her roots one day.

"There's an old saying 'Once a Marine, always a Marine,' and I will always be most comfortable in camys. I hope one day to be stationed back with a Marine detachment," said Shin. ❖



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RIMPAC 2004

of the Pacific

A UH-3H Sea King helicopter assigned to the "Golden Gators" of Helicopter (HC-85), a Navy Reserve squadron, takes off from the flight deck of the amphibious assault ship USS Tarawa (LHA 1). Tarawa is one of many U.S. ships participating in Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) 2004. RIMPAC is the largest international maritime exercise in the waters around the Hawaiian Islands. This year's exercise includes seven participating nations; Australia, Canada, Chile, Japan, South Korea, the United Kingdom and the United States. RIMPAC is intended to enhance the tactical proficiency of participating units in a wide array of combined operations at sea, while enhancing stability in the Pacific Rim region.

RESERVE SAILORS GO TO SEA FOR THEIR FIRST TIME DURING RIMPAC 2004

Rim of the Pacific

CS2 Donald Moore from Fresno, Calif., attached to Cargo Afloat Rig Team F 501 sends off a pallet of produce to be loaded aboard SS Cape Girardeau (T-AK 2039) bound for USS Howard (DDG 83). Cape Girardeau is supplying U.S. Naval vessels during RIMPAC 2004.



Photo by PH2 Ron Trevino

JO1 Douglas Mappin

RIMPAC 2004 Combined Information Bureau

Pearl Harbor – After 10 days at sea, weary Reserve Sailors manned the rails aboard SS Cape Girardeau (T-AK 2039) as she sailed into Pearl Harbor.

The crew of Cape Girardeau provided a hands-on training platform for Reserve Sailors during RIMPAC 2004, a multinational exercise involving seven nations, for USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74) Carrier Strike Group.

During the exercise, Reservist Cargo Afloat Rigging Teams (CARTs) conducted off-loading procedures known as vertical replenishments (VERTREP) and connected replenishments (CONREP).

For most of the CARTs, offloading supplies is second nature.

“Our CART teams came aboard to work. They had one day of turnover to prepare,” said CAPT Eugene Dawydiak, commanding officer from Naval Reserve Military Sealift Command San Francisco Bay 132. “The Reservists all came from five different CART units and built a whole new crew in the space of two days.”

Dawydiak, who was aboard as an observer, was impressed by the teams’ ability to adapt so quickly.

After loading supplies pier side, Cape Girardeau pulled out of port

with her crew of 78. The exercise provided the Reservists a rare out-to-sea training exercise. Their first phase out to sea involved vertical replenishment (VERTREP), during which supply pallets were moved via helicopter.

For SK3 Shannon Duncan, CART F-501, Lemoore, Calif., the exercise was far from routine.

Duncan joined the Navy Reserves two years ago, so she could have a worthwhile job, while remaining at home to care for her three sons.

“I worked on the VERTREP team and the camaraderie was phenomenal,” said Duncan. “We made sure everything was done safely so no one would get hurt. It was a lot of work and long hours.”

“Our CART teams are squared away. They want to look good,” said Dawydiak. “That’s the point. They came here well-trained, well-prepped and ready to prove themselves.”

The crew took pride in its ‘we deliver’ mission. The ship has often been referred to as a “floating grocery store.” Its crew delivered countless pallets of food and supplies to five Navy ships participating in the joint RIMPAC exercise. The crew members worked as a team, ensuring safe delivery of their cargo.

“During the course of the four days, we all did many things,” said Duncan. “We worked on the loading team and the firefighting teams.

“The Reservists all came from five different CART units and built a whole new crew in the space of two days”

We removed debris from the deck after a pallet of rice spilled on deck. We had to remove the debris before the helicopter came over.”

In such cases, a foreign object debris (FOD) walk is necessary because any debris left on deck can damage equipment such as the helicopter, and more importantly, it can pose a danger to the deck crew.

Cape Girardeau also conducted another type of replenishment known as connected replenishment (CONREP), which required the Girardeau to pull alongside another vessel. The crews of both ships ferry supplies across a wire line. Using pulleys and powered winches, Sailors deliver small packages and supplies such as postal mail to the other ship.

Duncan felt her classroom training was beneficial to this learning experience. She also agreed that at-sea training provides Reservists a better, real world experience that their classes cannot match.

“I worked hard on this trip and I learned a lot,” Duncan said. “Tomorrow we leave to do CONREPs. I am ready to go back out again.”

Cape Girardeau, a 605-foot long, 32,000-ton vessel, is one of two cargo replenishment ships the Navy has utilized for cargo transport since 1988. Cape Girardeau can transport nearly 18,000 tons of cargo, and is managed by the Maritime Administration. ❖



Photo by PH2 Anthony R. Hayes

A1 and A-Kilauea after conducting underway replenishment operations with other ships participating in the exercise Rim of the Pacific 2004 (RIMPAC 2004). RIMPAC 2004 consists of more than 18,000 participating Sailors from multiple countries conducting exercises that work to ensure effective communications and cooperation in joint operations throughout the Pacific Rim.



MM3 Antonio Gutierrez of Cargo Afloat Rig Team F 501 runs to safety after connecting a hook underneath a SH-60 Seahawk during vertical replenishment (VERTREP) from SS Cape Girardeau (T-AK 2039), to USNR Rainier (T-AOE 7) during RIMPAC 2004.

Photo by PH2 Ron Trevino