Lockheed Martin-Led Team Begins Construction On Navy's Littoral Combat Ship, The Future USS Beloit

During the ceremony, the ship's sponsor's initials were welded onto a keel plate that will travel with the ship throughout its life.

Marinette, Wis., July 22, 2020 – Lockheed Martin and Fincantieri Marinette Marine marked the beginning of construction on Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) 29, the future USS Beloit, with a ceremony in Marinette. As part of a ship-building tradition dating back centuries, a shipyard worker welded into the ship's keel plate the initials of Major General Marcia M. Anderson (U.S. Army, Retired), USS Beloit ship sponsor and a Beloit, Wisconsin, native. This plate will be affixed to the ship and travel with Beloit throughout its commissioned life.

LCS 29 will be the 15th Freedom-variant LCS and will join a class of more than 30 ships. To date, four Freedom-variant LCS have deployed to support U.S. Navy presence and peacekeeping missions. In May, LCS 7 (USS Detroit) partnered with a U.S. Navy destroyer and Coast Guard teams to serve interdiction missions in the U.S. Southern Command Area of Responsibility.

"With two deployments so far this year, Freedom-variant LCS have proven that they are capable and can serve a unique role in the U.S. Navy's fleet," said Joe DePietro, vice president and general manager of Small Combatants and Ship Systems. "LCS' speed, maneuverability and flexibility allows the ship to serve a multitude of missions by quickly integrating equipment and deploying manned and unmanned aerial, surface or sub-surface vehicles."

In total, there are more than 500,000 nautical miles under the keel of Freedom-variant LCS. The ship delivers advanced capability in anti-submarine, surface, and mine countermeasure missions, and was designed to evolve with the changing security environment. As near-peer competition from large nation states increases, Lockheed Martin is partnering with the Navy to evolve LCS to meet these threats. Targeted upgrades are already underway with naval strike missiles being installed in support of upcoming deployments. Future installs of improved electronic warfare and decoy launching systems are under development.

LCS 29 is the first Navy ship to be named after Beloit, Wisconsin, and the ship's sponsor has personal ties to Beloit. During a long career with the U.S. military, Major General Anderson became the first African American woman to obtain the rank of major general in the U. S. Army and U. S. Army Reserve. As a citizen-soldier, Anderson was employed for 28 years by the United States Courts, where she served as the Clerk of the Bankruptcy Court, Western District of Wisconsin, located in Madison, Wisconsin, until her retirement in late 2019.

"The construction of the Navy's newest Littoral Combat Ship and naming it after the city of Beloit, with its rich and storied history of supporting our nation's national security, is more than fitting," said Major General Anderson. "When completed, the USS Beloit's voyages will be part of the tradition of small cities and towns in America sharing our story around the world."

Beloit is one of six LCS in various stages of construction and test at the Fincantieri Marinette Marine shipyard.

"We are proud to celebrate the future USS Beloit today," said Jan Allman, CEO of Fincantieri Marinette Marine. "The Fincantieri Marinette Marine shipyard is honored to build this capable warship, named for another city from the wonderful state of Wisconsin. I think this is a true testament to the hard work and patriotism of Midwesterners, and we look forward to working with the City of Beloit as we continue building LCS 29 for our US Navy partner."

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About Fincantieri Marinette Marine
Fincantieri is the leading western shipbuilder with a rich history dating back more than 230 years, and a track record of building more than 7,000 ships. Fincantieri Marine Group is the American subsidiary of Fincantieri, and operates three Great Lakes Shipyards: Fincantieri Marinette Marine, Fincantieri Bay Shipbuilding, and Fincantieri ACE Marine. Fincantieri Marine Group's more than 2,100 steelworkers, craftsman, engineers and technicians in the United States specialize in the design, construction and maintenance of merchant ships and government vessels, including for the United States Navy and Coast Guard.

About Gibbs & Cox

Gibbs & Cox, the nation's leading independent maritime solutions firm specializing in naval architecture, marine engineering and design, is headquartered in Arlington, Virginia. The company, founded in 1929, has provided designs for nearly 80 percent of the current U.S. Navy surface combatant fleet; approaching 7,000 naval and commercial ships have been built to Gibbs & Cox designs.

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