



DESTROYER ESCORT HISTORICAL MUSEUM USS SLATER DE766

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: October 11, 2011
TO: Assignment Editors
CONTACT: Rosehn Gipe, Marketing Coordinator
EVENT: USS SLATER Celebrates Navy's 236th Birthday
DATE & TIME: Thursday, October 13, 2011, 9:30 a.m.

SIGNIFICANCE: The Navy traces its origins to the Continental Navy, which the Continental Congress established on October 13, 1775, by authorizing the procurement, fitting out, manning, and dispatch of two armed vessels to cruise in search of munitions ships supplying the British Army in America.

In 1972, Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Elmo Zumwalt, authorized recognition of October 13 as the Navy's Birthday. It is intended as an internal activity for members of active forces and reserves, as well as retirees, dependents, and friends. Since 1972, each Chief of Naval Operations has encouraged a Navy-wide celebration of this occasion "to enhance a greater appreciation of our Navy heritage, and to provide a positive influence towards pride and professionalism in the Naval Service."

The Capital Area Chief Petty Officers Association will conduct a ceremony aboard the USS SLATER beginning at 9:30 a.m. to celebrate the Navy's Birthday. To mark this occasion, the Association is honoring USS SLATER volunteer William Haggart as their Volunteer of the Year. Every ship needs a bosun, and Bill Haggart is SLATER's bosun. In the Navy, the Boatswain's Mate, or Bosun is the sailor charged with taking care of all the ship's anchor gear, mooring lines, ropes and boats.

Bill joined the Navy right after World War II and served in the escort aircraft carrier USS PALAU (CVE-122), the submarine rescue ship USS KITTIWAKE (ASR-13), and various harbor tugs at Boston naval shipyard. When he left the Navy, Bill found a career as a truck driver and continued to serve his community as a volunteer fire fighter. After he retired, Bill started coming down to the SLATER in early 2006. He soon became the "go to" guy for any project that involved rope, or knotting and splicing. Also, he teaches his skills to a new generation of volunteers. He serves SLATER with cheerfulness and enthusiasm and it is hoped he will be a part of the crew for many years to come.

USS SLATER is located on the Hudson River in Downtown Albany just south of the Dunn Memorial Bridge. Public hours are Wednesday through Sunday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission is \$7 for adults and \$5 for children. The ship will be open through November 27, but closed on Thanksgiving Day. Call 518-431-1943 for more information or visit the website at www.ussslater.org.

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