

# *Retirement Ceremony*

*in honor of*



Captain Geoffrey W. Patterson  
*UNITED STATES NAVY*

*Presided by*  
Vice Admiral Johnny R. Wolfe, Jr.  
*UNITED STATES NAVY*  
*DIRECTOR, STRATEGIC SYSTEMS PROGRAMS*

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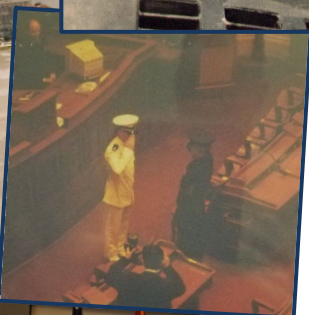
Tuesday, 29 July 2025

The Navy Museum  
Washington Navy Yard Washington, D.C.

# *The Retirement Ceremony*

*The retirement ceremony is the nation's expression of appreciation for a job well done, a sincere official recognition of a long period of faithful and honorable service. It is a day of great significance marking the end of a richly rewarding way of life – working in defense of freedom. Shipmates from the member's duty stations are assembled and highlights of his career are reviewed, awards and commendations cited, and the senior officer bids him farewell.*





*Vice Admiral Johnny R. Wolfe, Jr*  
*Director, Strategic Systems Programs*  
*Washington, D.C.*

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Vice Adm. Johnny Wolfe is a native of Somerset, Texas. He graduated from the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy, Kings Point, New York, in 1988 with a Bachelor of Science in Marine Systems Engineering. He earned a Master of Science in Applied Physics from the Naval Postgraduate School in 1994 and was selected to transfer to the engineering duty officer community.

Vice Adm. Wolfe was promoted to Vice Admiral and assumed the duties as Director of the U.S. Navy's Strategic Systems Programs (SSP) in 2018. As Director of SSP, Wolfe leads the Navy's command responsible for Navy Nuclear Weapons Programs which include the Submarine Launched Ballistic Missile (SLBM) Trident II (D5LE) strategic weapon system that makes up the sea-based leg of the nation's nuclear deterrent triad, and the Sea-Launched Cruise Missile-Nuclear (SLCM-N) program which was designated a Major Defense Acquisition Program in March 2024. Wolfe also oversees the Navy's Conventional Prompt Strike (CPS) program, responsible for designing and developing the sea-based hypersonic strike capability for the warfighter.

In addition, Wolfe is designated as Echelon I Director for Naval Nuclear Weapons Oversight Program (CNO N00NW) which provides regulatory oversight for the Navy Nuclear Deterrence Mission (NNDM) and technical authority on Navy nuclear weapons and Nuclear Weapons systems.

Wolfe's awards include the Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Bronze Star, Meritorious Service Medal with gold star, Joint Services Commendation Medal, Navy Commendation Medal with gold star, Navy Achievement Medal with three gold stars, Air Force Achievement Medal and various other service awards.



# *Rear Admiral Douglas Williams*

## *United States Navy*



Rear Admiral Douglas L. Williams is a native of Baton Rouge, LA. He graduated from the US Naval Academy in 1995 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Ocean Engineering. As a Surface Warfare Officer, his time at sea included sea tours aboard USS Anchorage (LSD 36) and USS Jarrett (FFG 33). He earned a Master of Science in Mechanical Engineering from the Naval Postgraduate School in 2002, where he was also selected for transfer to the Engineering Duty Officer community.

From 2002 to 2005, he was assigned to the Strategic Weapons Facility, Atlantic in Kings Bay, GA, to begin a career with Strategic Systems Programs (SSP). During this tour, he served in various capacities while earning his

Engineering Duty Officer qualification. In 2005, he reported to SSP Headquarters and assumed duties as the Reentry Special Projects Division Head.

In 2008, Williams volunteered for an Individual Augmentee deployment to Djibouti, Africa at the Combined Joint Task Force, Horn of Africa. During his tour, he was selected to act as the liaison to U.S. Naval Commander, Fifth Fleet to coordinate and support Counter Piracy efforts within the region. In 2009, he returned to SSP Headquarters and served in many positions including the Missile Engineering Section Head, Strategic Navigation Subsystem Branch Head, Fire Control & Guidance Subsystem Branch Head, and the Missile Subsystem Branch Head. In 2017, he assumed the duties as the 18th Technical Director and Deputy Direct Reporting Program Manager for SSP.

In 2022, he was selected to the rank of Rear Admiral (Lower Half) and was assigned as the Director for Test at the Missile Defense Agency where he was responsible for all aspects of planning, designing and execution of the Missile Defense System flight, ground, and cyber testing, and Wargames and Exercises in order to support fielding capabilities to the warfighter.

On August 1, 2023, Williams was selected to serve as the Missile Defense Agency Acting Director for a period of over 5 months and oversaw the Missile Defense Agency's global mission to develop, deliver, and sustain layered capabilities to defend the United States, deployed forces, and allies and partners against missile attacks.

On January 1, 2025, he was promoted to Rear Admiral (Upper Half) and is currently serving the Missile Defense Agency as the Director of Test.

Williams' awards include the Legion of Merit (2 awards), Meritorious Service Medal, Joint Commendation Medal, Navy Commendation Medal (2 awards), and the Navy Achievement Medal (2 awards).

# *Captain Geoffry W. Patterson*

*United States Navy*



CAPT Patterson was born in Chicago, IL. He entered Naval service by enlisting in 1989. He later graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1997 with bachelor of science degrees in Mechanical Engineering and Naval Science. He subsequently earned a master of science degree in National Security and Strategic Studies from the U.S. Naval War College.

He qualified both enlisted and officer submarines on USS DALLAS (SSN 700) first as a nuclear trained electrician and later as a division officer. He served as operations and support ship officer on the deep sea vessel "Submarine NR-1". He served as engineer officer on USS ALASKA (SSBN 732) gold and combined crews, and executive officer on USS WEST VIRGINIA GOLD (SSBN 736). He commanded USS MARYLAND (SSBN 738) combined and blue crews following crew split. His final command was USS GEORGIA (SSGN 729) blue crew.

His shore and staff tours include duty as the Engineering and General Training Department Director at Trident Training Facility – Bangor, and Maritime Planner in the Plans and Policy Directorate of United States Special Operations Command. He completed an Executive Fellowship in the National Security Analysis Department at the Johns Hopkins University-Applied Physics Laboratory. He served as the Operations, Evaluation, and Training Branch Head at Strategic Systems Programs (SSP) headquarters. His final assignment was the Fleet Integration and Logistics Branch Head at SSP.

He completed three overseas deployments in support of U.S., Joint and Coalition submarine operations in the European Command theater and seven strategic deterrent patrols in the Pacific and Atlantic oceans. The crews he served collectively earned twelve unit awards including the Meritorious Unit Citation, nine Battle Efficiency "E"s, U.S. Strategic Command's Omaha Trophy and the Atlantic Fleet's Arleigh Burke Fleet Trophy.





*Any man who may be asked in this century what  
he did to make his life worthwhile, I think can  
respond with a good deal of pride and  
satisfaction, 'I served in the United States Navy'*

*- John F. Kennedy, August 1963*





## **PROGRAM *of* EVENTS**

**Arrival of Official Party**

**Presentation of Colors**  
U.S. Navy Ceremonial Guard

**National Anthem**

**Invocation**

**Master of Ceremonies**  
CAPT William Harley

**Opening Remarks**  
VADM Johnny R Wolfe, Jr

**Guest Speaker**  
RADM Douglas Williams

**Presentation of Awards**

**Retiree's Remarks**

**Benediction**

**Piped Ashore**









# *The Watch*

*For 31 – years  
This Sailor has stood the watch*

*While some of us were in our bunks at night  
This Sailor stood the watch*

*While some of us were in school learning our trade  
This Shipmate stood the watch*

*Yes... even before some of us were born into this  
world - This Shipmate stood the watch*

*In those years when the storm clouds of war were  
seen brewing on the horizon of history  
This Shipmate stood the watch*

*Many times he would cast an eye ashore and  
see his family standing there  
Needing his guidance and help  
Needing that hand to hold during those hard  
times - But he still stood the watch*

*He stood the watch for 31 – years*

*He stood the watch so that we,  
our families, and our fellow countrymen  
could sleep soundly in safety,  
each and every night,*

*Knowing that a Sailor stood the watch.*

*Today we are here to say:*

*‘Shipmate... the watch stands relieved’*

*Relieved by those You have Trained, Guided, and Led!*

*Shipmate you stand relieved... we have the watch...*

*“Boatswain... Standby to Pipe the Side...  
A shipmate is going Ashore.”*





*Only a submariner realizes to what great extent an entire ship depends on him as an individual. To a landsman this is not understandable, and sometimes it is even difficult for us to comprehend, but it is so!*

*A submarine at sea is a different world in herself, and in consideration of the protracted and distant operations of submarines, the Navy must place responsibility and trust in the hands of those who take such ships to sea.*

*In each submarine there are men and women who, in the hour of emergency or peril at sea, can turn to each other. These men are ultimately responsible to themselves and each other for all aspects of operation of their submarine. They are the crew. They are the ship.*

*This is perhaps the most difficult and demanding assignment of the Navy. There is not an instant during their tour as a submariner that they can escape the grasp of responsibility. Their privileges in view of their obligations are almost ludicrously small, nevertheless, it is the spur which has given the Navy its greatest mariners – The men and women of the Submarine Service.*

*It is a duty which most richly deserves the proud and time honored title of ... Submariner.*



## GOING ASHORE

*Avast ye swabs, lands in sight-make haste in sail for  
we land tonight and in the morn at break of day,  
we'll man the rails and gangplank way.*

*The Bos'n's pipe will trill and shrill—as we send a  
shipmate to the shore, there to remain forever more.*

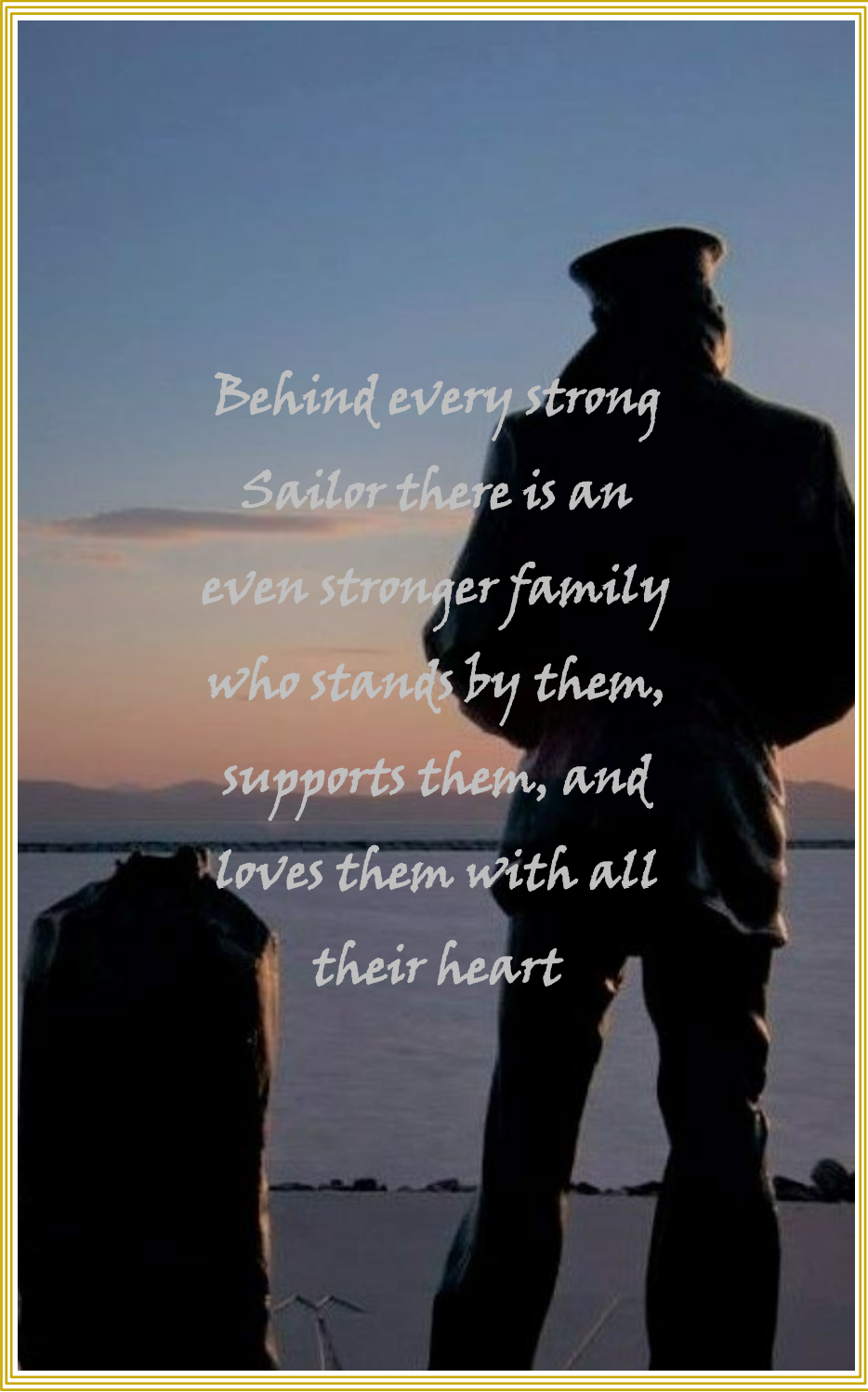
*Tonight we'll crack a keg or two, gather round and  
drink a toast to you.*

*We'll lift our mugs away up high, for the many  
years that drifted by.*

*Remember throughout the many years, you sailed  
away amidst the tears of loved ones left behind,  
worried and hoping they'd be fine.*

*Of our shipmates too, my man, who followed you to  
many lands, intine their names and faces, will be  
forgotten as all those places.*

*But like the morning fog and dew, we'll endeavor to  
remember you, and when morning sun lifts the  
haze, and we sail again for many days, you'll  
remember us as we will you, until the years leave  
only a few to recall the good old days, of sailing men  
o're the waves.*



*Behind every strong  
Sailor there is an  
even stronger family  
who stands by them,  
supports them, and  
loves them with all  
their heart*

