

# IT'S FLEET WEEK!

THE FLEET RETURNS TO SAN FRANCISCO FOR ANOTHER  
EXTREMELY POPULAR DEMONSTRATION OF NAVAL POWER  
BY ROGER CAIN



The USS Tripoli (LHA-7) is the second America-class amphibious assault ship that was built, and is seen here with two CH-53E Super Stallions on its deck.



Four of the six parade ships can be seen here coming into the bay lead by the San Francisco Fire Department's St. Francis Fireboat.



Capable of pumping 18,000 gallons a minute, the SFFD's St. Francis Fireboat #3 was christened in 2016, and lead the parade.

The city of San Francisco held their annual Fleet Week celebration 7/14 October with the arrival of a small fleet on Friday 11 October, followed by a practice air show. Saturday's airshow had to deal with heavy fog, that cancelled the US Navy Blue Angels from performing, but on Sunday the fog dispersed and the show was on. The ship parade was led by San Francisco Fire Department's *St. Francis Fireboat #3*. The lead ship was the USS *Tripoli* (LHA-7), an *America*-class amphibious assault ship with the USS *Somerset* (LPD-25) behind it, which is a *San Antonio*-class amphibious transport dock. Following them was the Canadian Frigate HMCS *Regina* (FFH-334), tailed by the USCGC *Bertholf* (WMSL-750), a *Legend*-class maritime security cutter.

Much smaller in size was the one and only LUSV *Ranger*, a Large Unmanned Surface Vessel. There are four smaller units, but this is the only "large" USV that has been built. While still undergoing testing, the USVs can be considered optionally, or lightly, manned because they sometimes have a small crew on board, such as this arrival to the San Francisco Bay.

Closing out the parade line was the USS *Potomac*, built in 1934 as the US Coast Guard Cutter *Electra* and was recommissioned and converted in 1936 by the US Navy to serve as Franklin D. Roosevelt's presidential yacht. Renamed the *Potomac*, the ship served FDR until his death in April 1945.

Roosevelt had been an Assistant Secretary of the Navy and had a deep love for the service and for the



USS *Somerset* (LPD-25), which is a *San Antonio*-class amphibious transport dock, is the fifth ship of the US Navy of that name.