

Your NAVY

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IN ACTION FROM THE SERVICE'S TOP
PHOTOJOURNALISTS
BY HOWARD CARTER



Homecoming is sweet. Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS John S. McCain (DDG-56) arrives at Naval Station Everett, Washington, on 31 October following a deployment. (USN/Andrew G)

A US Navy F/A-18F Super Hornet and F-35 Lightning II, both assigned to Air Test and Evaluation Squadron 9 (VX-9), overfly the Point Mugu Sea Range in southern California along with a USAF F-15 Eagle during Exercise Gray Flag on 24 September. Gray Flag is an annual large-force test event that brings joint forces together to test and evaluate multi-domain systems in a maritime environment. (USN/Kory Hughes)



Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Howard (DDG-83), the Philippine Navy's first-in-class frigate BRP Jose Rizal (FF-150), a Royal Canadian Navy CH-148 Cyclone helicopter, and the Halifax-class frigate HMCS Vancouver (FFH-331) during a maneuvering exercise in the South China Sea on 16 October as part of the bilateral Exercise Sama Sama that included vessels from America, Australia, Canada, France, Japan, and the Philippines. (USN/Brenden Dalrymple)



During the dark, early days of WWII we learned the hard way that insufficient anti-aircraft protection spelled doom for many US Navy ships. Have we forgotten that lesson? While it is true that our ships now have fearsome missile protection, what about the anti-ship weapons that get past those lines of defense? The Phalanx close-in weapons system is devastating against aircraft, cruise missiles, and drones that get past those lines. However, do our ships have enough of these systems? Probably not. If one system is knocked out of action then a ship lucky enough to have them is left relatively defenseless. Should the numbers of Phalanx be increased to make sure every Navy ship has at least one system? In this image, a Phalanx aboard the USS Nimble (CVN-68) conducts a training exercise in the Pacific on 6 November. (USN/Hannah Kantner)



Independence-variant littoral combat ship USS Mobile (LCS-26) returns to its homeport in San Diego following a 19-month rotational deployment. (USN/Vance Hand)