



*Navy League of the United States
Minnesota Council*



SPECIAL EDITION

THE USS MINNEAPOLIS SAINT PAUL (LCS 21) IS COMMISSIONED IN DULUTH MINNESOTA

MAY 21, 2022

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USS Minneapolis - Saint Paul News

USS Minneapolis Saint Paul - LCS 21 arrives in Duluth

The USS Minneapolis Saint Paul (LCS 21) arrived in Duluth on May 16, 2022. The weather was clear, a tad chilly, but an otherwise beautiful Duluth day. The ship passed under the Lift bridge about 9:30 am and moored at Pier 8 for the commissioning later that week.



Photos Courtesy of Duluth Bridge Cam



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Crew Picnic - Wednesday May 18th

The Minnesota Navy League sponsored the first crew event on Wednesday May 18th. A crew picnic was held on the Pier and was catered by Famous Dave's. The crew enjoyed ribs, brisket, chicken, baked beans, potato salad and of course corn bread. No one left hungry. It was a wonderful opportunity for us to get to know some of our crew.





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Bent Paddle Brewing Beer Tapping - Wednesday May 18

Our second event was a Beer Tapping at the Bent Paddle Brewing Company. The Minnesota Navy League commissioned Bent Paddle to produce a special beer for the commissioning. The beer was served at all Navy League sponsored events throughout the week. The beer “Wayfinder Freedom North Star Pale Ale” featured the original watercolor produced by local Duluth artist John Salminen on the cans label. The term Wayfinder comes from the ship’s motto “*I Will Find a Way or Make One*”. The cans were a true collector item throughout the week.

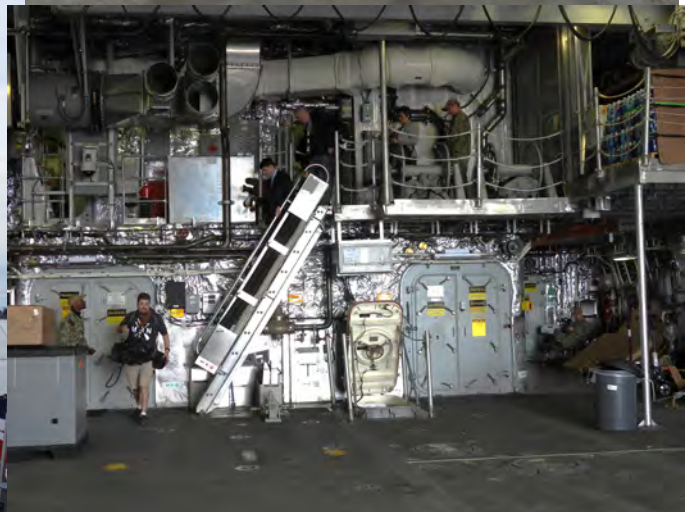




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Press Day - Thursday May 19th

The media were invited aboard on Thursday May 19th to interview USS Minneapolis Saint Paul Commanding Officer, Commander Alfonza White, and the Command Senior Chief MACS Edward Pare. Additionally, media were given a tour of the ship's focsle, bridge, wet mission bay aviation mission bay and the mess deck. All major Minnesota news stations attended, including WCCO, KSTP, KARE-11, Fox 9, WDIO and other smaller news outlets.





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Mayor's Reception - Thursday May 19th

The Mayor's reception was hosted at the Duluth Great Lakes Aquarium. Duluth Mayor Emily Larson and Superior Mayor Jim Paine were able to mingle with members of the crew while heavy hors d'oeuvres were served along with Bent Paddle beer, wine and soda. We were also treated to Navy Divers in the Aquarium tanks welcoming the crew. In attendance at this event were members of the USS Duluth Crewmembers Association and 97 year old WWII Veteran Jim Clermont.





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Ships Sponsor Luncheon - Friday May 20th

The Ship's Sponsor Luncheon was held on the pier on Friday May 20th. This provided our ship sponsor, Jodi Greene and her matrons of honor Nicole Sunberg and Carly Olson the opportunity to meet one-on-one with the crew. The luncheon was catered by Black Woods catering and included hamburgers, salads, chips and dessert. During the luncheon cards were presented to crewmembers that had been made by school children of the matrons of honor





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Chairman's Reception - Friday May 20th

The Chairman's reception was hosted by Master of Ceremonies, Mr. Greg Coleman at the Duluth Entertainment Convention Center in the Harborside ballroom overlooking the Duluth lift bridge. Mr. Coleman is a former Minnesota Viking punter and former sideline analyst for Minnesota Viking Radio Network. This reception was a plated dinner and provided the opportunity to present the ship with gifts and memorabilia in honor of the commissioning. The Minnesota Navy League presented plank owner ball caps, plank owner certificates as well as the original watercolor of the ship transiting under the Duluth Lift bridge. The ship received many other items including signed jersey from the Twins and signed Wild sweater, a taconite table, and a personal Greg Coleman Minnesota Viking football jersey.





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Chairman's Reception - Friday May 20th





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Platform Breakfast - Friday May 21st

The Platform breakfast the morning of the commissioning serves two purposes, first to feed the VIPs who will be attending the ceremony and second for the Navy to provide last minute instructions to the speakers and get everyone to the pier for the ceremony. Rep Betty McCollum was able to meet ship crew members before getting to the dais as the principal speaker.





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COMMISSIONING DAY!!!! MAY 21, 2022

The glorious day finally arrived!!! Sunshine, clouds, rain and then sun again. A typical day in Duluth. The big day had all the pomp associated with a Navy commissioning. Dignitaries on the platform included Governor Tim Walz, Mayor's Jacob Frey, Melvin Carter and Emily Larson, Senator Amy Klobuchar, Representatives Betty McCollum and Pete Stauber and other Navy dignitaries. Minnesota's New Ulm Battery, the only town-based Civil War-era militia in the country that is still in existence, performed the 21-gun salute. Naval Sea Cadet Corps, Twin Cities Squadron presented the colors. It was a thrilling day to see our ship brought to life as an active part of the United States Navy.





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COMMISSIONING DAY!!!! MAY 21, 2022





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Departure for Mayport, Florida - Tuesday May 24th



Photos Courtesy Bjornberg photography

Our Command Triad



Cdr. Alfonza White



Cdr. Bryan Kemnitz



Senior Chief Edward Pare



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A Sincere Thank you to all who made the Commissioning of USS Minneapolis Saint Paul (LCS 21) a success. None of this would have been possible without our LCS Commissioning Team and most importantly our sponsors.

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The USS Minneapolis St Paul Commissioning
is a project of the Minnesota Council, Navy
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