

Future Littoral Combat Ship Augusta to Be Christened



The future USS Augusta (LCS 34) will soon be christened by the ship's sponsor, the Honorable Leigh I. Saufley. *AUSTAL USA* ARLINGTON, Va. – In a time-honored Navy tradition, the Honorable Leigh I. Saufley, sponsor of the Navy's newest Independence-variant littoral combat ship the future USS Augusta (LCS 34), will christen the ship during a 10:00 a.m. CDT ceremony on Saturday, Dec. 17, in Mobile, Alabama, the Defense Department said in a Dec. 16 release.

Saufley, president and dean of the University of Maine School of Law and the former chief justice of the Maine Supreme Judicial Court, will break a bottle of sparkling wine across the bow to symbolically christen the ship at the Austal USA shipyard. Augusta's commanding officer, Cmdr. Christopher Polnaszek, will represent the ship's crew in the ceremony.

The principal speaker will be the Honorable Jerry Carl, U.S. House of Representatives (R-Alabama). Remarks will also be provided by the Honorable Mark O'Brien, mayor of Augusta; Vice Adm. John Mustin, chief of Navy reserve; Ms. E. Anne Sandel, acting principal civilian deputy to the assistant secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, and Acquisition; Mr. Rusty Murdaugh, president, Austal USA; and Mr. Stan Kordana, vice president of Surface Systems, General Dynamics Mission Systems.

"The future USS Augusta will honor the beautiful, capital city of the pine tree state," said Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro. "The Honorable Saufley and the ship's crew will forge a special connection with the fine people of Augusta. This future ship's Sailors will stand the watch with pride and represent Augusta with the honor, courage, and commitment they

deserve.”

Augusta’s motto, “Protecting the frontier”, continues the legacy of the first USS Augusta (SSN 710), a Los Angeles-class submarine that was in active service for 24 years and decommissioned on Feb. 11, 2009. Augusta is the 17th Independence-variant LCS and 33rd in the LCS class. It is the second ship named in honor of the city of Augusta, Maine.

Independence-variant Littoral Combat Ships are fast, optimally-manned, mission-tailored surface combatants that operate in near-shore and open-ocean environments, winning against 21st-century coastal threats. LCS integrate with joint, combined, manned and unmanned teams to support forward-presence, maritime security, sea control and deterrence missions around the globe. Currently, Independence-variants USS Charleston (LCS 18) and USS Oakland (LCS 24) are on deployment in the Indo-Pacific.

The LCS class consists of two variants, Freedom and Independence, designed and built by two separate industry teams. Austal USA, which leads the Independence-variant industry team for even-numbered hulls, is a ship manufacturer headquartered in Mobile, Alabama, with service centers in San Diego and Singapore, and a technology center in Charlottesville, Va. Austal USA has earned 21 safety excellence awards.