

USS Beloit (LCS 29) Makes It Home to Mayport

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NAVAL STATION MAYPORT (Dec. 19, 2024) – Freedom-variant littoral combat ship (LCS) USS Beloit (LCS 29) makes it to her homeport in Mayport, Fla., December 19.

After 15 locks, four Great Lakes, three port visits, and over 2,500 nautical miles traveled, USS Beloit (LCS 29) and her mighty crew at last arrived in the Atlantic Ocean, continuing her transit to its future homeport, Naval Station Mayport, Florida.

The road to make it to the Atlantic Ocean included months of preparation from the crew. In less than two months after moving onboard in August, the crew certified in several mission areas required to safely operate and get underway including: Search and Rescue, Navigation, Damage Control, Communications and Engineering.

“The Beloit Badger crew are some of the best Sailors I have served with. They are resilient, strong, flexible and dedicated, and I am blessed to be their Commanding Officer. Almost everything we have done in the past five months has been ‘high risk’ and ‘first time’, but that’s what makes us so unique,” said Cmdr. LeAndra Kissinger, Beloit’s commanding officer. We work hard, pray hard, and lean on each other as a team. We truly are a family, and when a family wants to accomplish a mission, it’s hard to stop them.”

Each evolution, although involving different departments on the ship, required careful coordination and support from each division and Sailor onboard and was necessary for the crew to be able to set sail from Marinette, Wisconsin, towards the

site of its commissioning ceremony in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

On November 23, the crew took the order to “man the ship and bring her to life.” Amongst thousands of onlookers, the ship made its much anticipated transition from pre-commissioned unit to United States Ship and began her sail around home.

Her commissioning festivities included a crew visit to their namesake town of Beloit, a Chairman’s dinner hosted by the Commandant, and a commissioning ceremony who’s audience was filled with veterans from many significant battles. Along the way, she stopped in Cleveland, Ohio, Quebec City, Quebec and Halifax, Nova Scotia, and Norfolk for refueling, stores replenishment and liberty for the crew.

“This crew has shown tremendous resilience in overcoming the last 4 months. Completing difficult consecutive certifications while learning a new ship and being away from family. This team made it look easy and brought a whole new meaning to the term “Beloit Proud,” said Senior Chief David Chisholm, Beloit’s Senior Enlisted Leader. “Watching them perform under pressure and overcoming every obstacle with grace shows just how awesome our team is and their readiness to face the challenges ahead after some much needed and well-deserved family time. It is an honor to be sailing with them and representing the city of Beloit.”

Capt. James Lawrence said it best, “Don’t give up the ship.” And that’s exactly what this crew did to get us home on time!” said Operation Specialist first class petty officer Ernesto Sanchez, USS Beloit’s Sailor of the Year!

With the last port fading in the rear only a few hundred nautical miles remain before Jacksonville is within view, the crew is eagerly awaiting returning to their families and friends, and ready to take on the next mission that will come their way as the Navy’s newest warship join the fleet!

LCS is a fast, agile, mission-focused platform designed for operation in near-shore environments yet capable of open-ocean operation. It is designed to defeat asymmetric "anti-access" threats and is capable of supporting forward presence, maritime security, sea control, and deterrence.