



USS Ronald Reagan Public Affairs

FPO AP 96616-2876

Phone: 619-545-4205

POC: LCDR Ron Flanders

flandersrs@cvn76.navy.mil



10-001

February 8, 2010

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**USS Ronald Reagan Sailors Honor Namesake's
Birthday**

*By Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Alexander Tidd
USS Ronald Reagan Public Affairs*

SIMI VALLEY, Calif.- Fifty Sailors from USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) attended the celebration of former President Ronald Reagan's 99th birthday Feb. 6, 2010 at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum.

The ceremony paid tribute to the life and accomplishments of the late president from former U.S. Senator Elizabeth Dole, a 21-gun salute by the Marine Corps Honor Guard from Camp Pendleton, and a wreath laying by Capt. K.J. Norton, Ronald Reagan's commanding officer and Ship's Serviceman 1st Class (SW/AW) Angel Escribano, Ronald Reagan's Sailor of the year.

Norton said, "All of us onboard USS Ronald Reagan take immense pride in being part of the president's living legacy," said Norton. "We're all honored to be here today to celebrate his memory."

“He gave me the image of the model of all that a leader could be,” remarked Dole, the Secretary of Transportation under Reagan. “He was determined and kind in that very American combination. He had a spine of steel and a heart of gold and we loved him for both.”

Ronald Reagan Sailors felt honored to participate in the birthday ceremony of their ship’s namesake.

“Being able to lay the wreath on Ronald Reagan’s tomb was a surreal moment for me,” said Escribano. “He was a great man who accomplished so much. Strong leaders are few and far between, and it’s only fitting we pay tribute to him.”

Melissa Giller, Ronald Reagan Presidential Library director of communications said it was a fitting tribute having Sailors from President Reagan’s namesake ship present at the ceremony.

“It meant a lot to the Library foundation to have Sailors from USS Ronald Reagan present at this ceremony,” said Giller. “They exemplify ‘Peace Through Strength.’”

The motto “Peace through Strength” was a recurring theme throughout President Reagan’s presidency.

After concluding their fourth deployment in the past four years, Ronald Reagan Sailors have a unique appreciation for President Reagan’s policies.

“Ronald Reagan commissioned more aircraft carriers than any other president,” said Escribano. “He made a larger contribution to America’s fighting force and global presence than perhaps any of his predecessors. Our Navy owes him a debt of gratitude, and we’re happy to live up to that.”

At the culmination of the ceremony, Norton and Escribano laid a wreath on his president's tomb. As the bugler sounded taps, a cold rain began to fall. Escribano said there was a positive undertone to that somber moment as he thought of the life and presidency of America's 40th president.

"Ronald Reagan's life and achievements shouldn't fall by the wayside," said Escribano. "It's our duty to help preserve his memory any way we can."

-CVN 76-