

# The 76er *Lite*

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**REAR ADM.  
PIERCEY**

**LAYS OUT  
HIS PLAN**



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# TO SERVE IS TO GIVE

STORY BY MC3 TORRIAN NEEMAN

Sweat rolled down their brows and burned their squinting eyes. Eight determined oarsmen moved their arms in perfect harmony, rowing towards victory.

Rear Adm. Patrick A. Piercey's military career has been a steady progression toward success, dating back to his days on a championship winning rowing team at the U.S. Naval Academy. A 1985 Academy graduate, Piercey earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Systems Engineering and Masters Degree in Military Arts and Science from the Army Command and General Staff College.

In many ways, the lessons learned from participating in team sports also apply in well to military life. In the U.S. Armed Forces, men and women in uniform live and die by the credo of putting others before self. They are trained and obligated to protect and serve others with honor, valor and loyalty. While Sailors are expected to exhibit physical, mental, and emotional resiliency, they are also charged with being caring and forthright shipmates; across the Navy, fellow Sailors are brothers and sisters in arms who look out for one another.

Going back to the rowing analogy, Rear Adm. Piercey is quick to point out that his sport of choice is just as much about the team, as it is about the contributions of each individuals efforts.

"You don't stop. It's painful, but you don't stop," Piercey said of the ability to push through the searing pains associated with rowing. "If I quit, not only do I let myself down, I let down my teammates - and that is worse than letting yourself down."

As the new commander of Carrier, Strike Group Nine (CSG 9), Rear Adm. Piercey has no intention to let anyone down.

With forthcoming hull swaps, homeport changes and a Planned Incremental Availability (PIA), Piercey realizes that uncertainty looms on the horizon for many of his Sailors.

He carefully planned a clear vision for the future of USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) and her Sailors. Primarily, Rear Adm. Piercey and his leadership team are committed to helping Team Reagan successfully complete PIA on time. After PIA, the Reagan crew will spend the summer getting its sea legs back and the ship operational before executing a hull swap with the USS George Wash-

ington (CVN 73). After the George Washington crew assumes ownership of Ronald Reagan, America's Flagship will weigh anchor and head toward the Far East. After arriving at her new home in Yokosuka, Japan, Reagan will assume the title as America's only permanently forward deployed aircraft carrier.

Rear Adm. Piercey's second priority is maintaining the strike group's tactical proficiency and ensuring that Carrier Air Wing Two and its aviators are able to meet war fighting skill requirements.

Piercey also has his eye on the planning and execution of George Washington, and the USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71) serving as his flagship within months of each other. Reagan's current crew will take ownership of Washington and take her around South America to the Hampton Roads area of Virginia, where she will undergo midlife refueling. During this approximately 90-day transit, Theodore Roosevelt will make its way to San Diego. When the time is right, San Diego based Sailors aboard Washington will head home and report aboard Roosevelt. Roosevelt Sailors will head back to the Norfolk area and take ownership of Washington.

The three-ship hull swap aims to allow Sailors and their families to remain at their current homeport, while balancing the needs of the Navy, which in this case is heavily weighed on the forward-deployed naval forces (FDFN) in Japan.

"Basically, the Sailors that have the opportunity to stay in Yokosuka, Japan, stay in Japan," Piercey said. "Those who want to stay in San Diego can stay in San Diego, and those looking to take the South American tour, will potentially have the opportunity to do that."

However, a handful of rates and specialties are critical to relocating Reagan to Japan in September 2015. Thanks to its advanced propulsion plant, Reactor and many Engineering department personnel are required to stay with the ship and call Japan home.

"Very simply, the USS Ronald Reagan is the number one priority, because it's [Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Jonathan W. Greenert's policy of] war-fighting

first, operate forward,” said Piercey.

“We have a forward-deployed carrier in the Western Pacific for a good reason,” Piercey added. “When that carrier comes out, we have to make sure we get a carrier back in there as soon as possible. There’s a strategic impact in making sure that USS Ronald Reagan gets there on time.”

From Rear Adm. Piercey down to the enlisted Sailor standing fire watch aboard Reagan, many recognize that the day-to-day tasks during PIA may at times feel repetitive and even question their value. However, the admiral wants Reagan Sailors to know that all work during PIA brings the current Reagan team one step closer to pulling off something that has never been done before – a three aircraft carrier hull swap and homeport change. Regardless of what ship a Sailor will have orders to in the end; she must treat each ship embarked upon in as her own.

“You have a responsibility to your ship,” said Piercey. “The ship is a living entity, the crew is manning the ship, the crew is obviously part of the [prospective ship], but the USS George Washington, [USS Ronald Reagan, USS Theodore Roosevelt], needs to be treated with dignity and respect, too. How we maintain and keep the ship clean, is treating it with dignity and respect.”

A sense of ownership, regardless of which specific ship we were assigned to, will help foster a sense of pride.

“One of the challenges during a crew swap is you sort of lose ownership of the ship. For the USS Ronald Reagan Sailors who are going to the USS George Washington and to the USS Theodore Roosevelt, they might be thinking, ‘Hey, I’m not as worried about getting this fixed anymore, because it’s not going to be my ship anymore,’” explained Piercey. “That’s not right!”

“Treat each vessel as if she were your own. Treat her with the respect and dignity that she deserves,” he stressed.

Rear Adm. Piercey is not only concerned with the success of every command within the strike group; he is interested in the success of each Sailor, on an individual level.

Piercey draws inspiration from junior Sailors who join the Navy to make their lives better and find that they enjoy serving something bigger than themselves. He be-

lieves the Navy affords Sailors an opportunity to achieve their dreams. If his Sailors are able to make progress in their personal, professional and educational endeavors, he will consider his time at the helm of CSG 9 a success.

“When our Sailors join the Navy, they volunteer - it was their choice. They weren’t drafted, they volunteered to serve their country, and they’re giving back to our country through their service,” Piercey explained.

“But the reason they did that is that they decided to take charge of their lives. Our Sailors wanted to make their lives different. They wanted to make their lives better and part of that was the decision to give back to our country.”

“Ultimately, the Navy is a way to achieve our dreams,” said Piercey. “These are some really motivated young Americans that really want to make a big difference. I’m here to enable that.”

While he is here to advocate for his Sailors, Piercey expects that they all honorably fulfill their duties. Every Sailor took an oath to serve and fight for American freedoms and its way of life, and as Rear Adm. Piercey points out, doing your day-to-day duty is how you really fulfill that requirement.

Senior leadership, both officer and enlisted, play an integral role in making sure that everything functions on a human resource and tactical level.

“What do I expect from senior leadership?” Piercey posed. “I think leadership recognizes the various challenges Sailors face and they are taking action to address those challenges. Leaders should not be complacent. We should not accept mediocrity. Our country does not expect us to be mediocre, it expects us to be ready,” said Piercey.

As the Reagan crew continues rowing through the waters of PIA, crew swaps and homeport changes, success and forward progress will rely heavily on executing a strategy, developing an efficient stroke, and maintaining a synchronized team cadence, regardless of eyes burning with sweat and backbreaking effort.

Our strike group commander is ready to lead the charge. Are you ready to follow?



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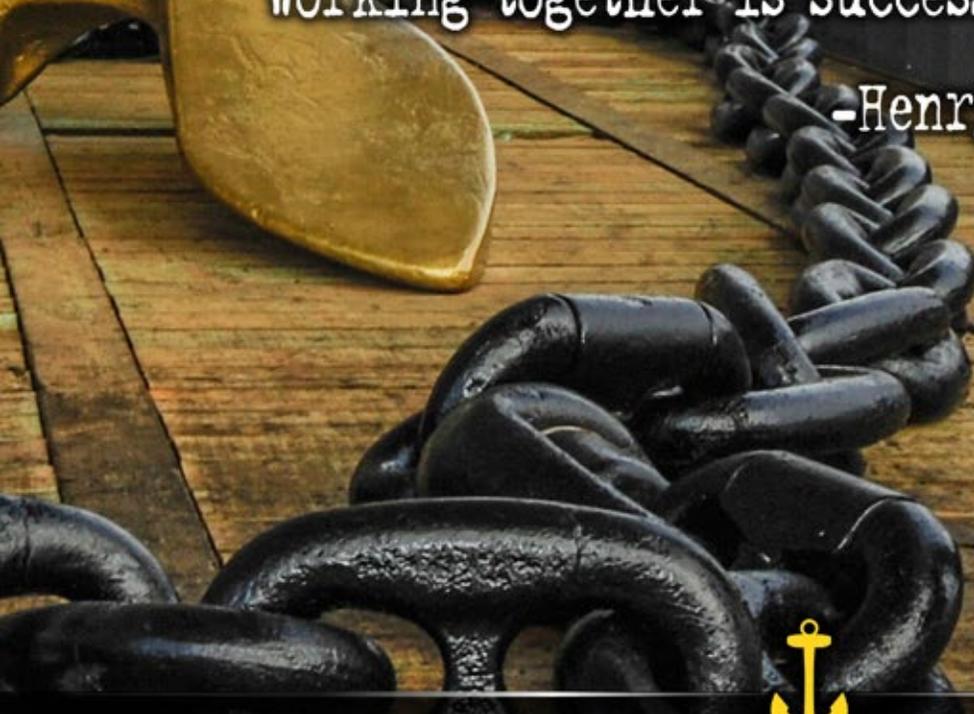
# WARRIOR

# E★T★H★O★S



PEACE THROUGH STRENGTH  
CVN 76

“ Coming together is a beginning.  
Keeping together is progress.  
Working together is success. ”  
-Henry Ford



USS RONALD REAGAN

SAILORS HELPING SAILORS. ONE TEAM. ONE FIGHT.