



## Lincoln, Coast Guard aid injured sailor

By MC3 KATHLEEN CORONA  
*Penny Press Staff*

USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72) performed a medical evacuation (MEDEVAC) from a Liberian-flagged merchant ship Dec. 13, nearly 300 miles off the coast of southern California.

At approximately 9 p.m., Lincoln received word from the U.S. Coast Guard that a cargo ship, Marie Rickmers, has issued a distress call of an injured sailor on board who needed emergency medical attention.

“We were told the [cargo] ship had an injured sailor and was over 600 miles off the coast,” said Coast Guard Cmdr. Sean Cross, the helicopter pilot who performed the MEDEVAC. “We

didn’t think it would be able to happen because they were just too far away. Then we were told Lincoln was out there and we’d be able to use the ship.”

Abe was on its transit home to Naval Station Everett, Wash., after completing squadron carrier qualifications off the coast of southern California when the call came in.

Through coordination with Lincoln, Marie Rickmers and the U.S. Coast Guard, Abe was positioned between the San Diego Coast Guard station and the cargo ship to act as a lily pad for the San Diego-based helicopter to refuel and expedite the medical evacuation of the injured sailor.

“We were told someone was down on the other ship and needed help,” said Abe’s Senior Medical Officer Cmdr. Ben-

jamin Lee. “We contacted the ship’s captain to find out the status of the patient.”

The Coast Guard helicopter landed on Abe’s flight deck at about 1:30 a.m. to pick up a doctor and a hospital corpsman from Abe and to be refueled before heading to the cargo ship for the rescue, Cross said.

“I was really impressed with Abe’s crew on the [flight] deck,” Cross said. “They had everything tied down and fueled quickly. There were some frustrations at first, with different hand signals and getting everything coordinated, but once everyone got on the phones and were able to talk it all came together quickly.”

At the cargo ship, the helicopter crew realized there was very little space for them to perform their hoists.

“There were a lot of cranes and

things on the deck that made dropping the hoists more difficult,” Cross said.

In all, the helicopter crew performed four total hoists. The rescue swimmer went first, followed by the litter, which held the injured sailor as he was lifted into the helicopter.

After the patient was packaged onto the back board and brought up to the deck of the cargo ship, Coast Guard Aviation Survival Technician 3rd Class Robyn Hamilton, the rescue swimmer on the helicopter, attached the back board to the hoist and the injured sailor was brought up into the helicopter where Abe’s corpsman and doctor took over care.



Photo by MCSA Robert A. Robbins

An injured sailor from Liberian cargo ship “Marie Rickmers” is carried across USS Abraham Lincoln’s (CVN 72) flight deck to a MH-65C Dolphin after receiving treatment from Lincoln’s Health Services Department.

## Local News

# Swift says hello to Lincoln, CSG9

BY MC2 BRAD WAGES  
Penny Press Staff

For Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 9's recently-arrived commander, Rear Adm. Scott Swift, of San Diego, nothing is more important than reaching out and connecting with Sailors. It was in that spirit that Swift sat down with Media Department to share with USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72) and all the Sailors of CSG 9 his guiding principles as a leader and as Commander of CSG 9.

"I have two primary goals," Swift began. "The first is to value Sailors. The second is tactical excellence. Valuing Sailors means being an active listener, really hearing what Sailors have to say."

For Swift, part of valuing the Sailors of CSG 9 means speaking to them in person, introducing himself and listening to any concerns they have.

"I've visited 12 departments on Lincoln so far," Swift said. "And I'm going to continue going around to the various departments until I've met with everyone on the ship. And then, I'll make my way to the other ships of the Strike Group so I can talk with those Sailors. I make it a priority to meet with Sailors face-to-face. My schedule is very busy, but I'll always make time to speak with Sailors so they know that I value their service and the work they're doing."

Swift plans on making the trip over to Naval Station Kitsap-Bremerton where Lincoln will be based during the upcoming Planned Incremental Availability (PIA) period, so he can assess the quality of life for the Sailors who will be stationed there.

"I want to take the ferry to Bremerton, to see what the ferry ride is like for the Sailors who will be making that commute everyday," Swift said. "I want to tour the barracks, to see what living conditions are like for an E-5, an E-3 living there. I want to make the walk from the barracks to the pier where Lincoln will be, to see how long of a walk Sailors living there have to get to the ship everyday. I'm going to tour the barge where many of us will be working to see what conditions are like there. I want to know if there are things that need improvement for our guys living and working there."

Valuing Sailors is something that applies to everyone in Strike Group 9, Swift said.

"I really want to instill this idea in the leadership. But valuing Sailors really applies to everyone. It means taking care of



Photo by MC2 (SW) James Evans

**Rear Adm. Scott Swift speaks with Supply Officer Commander Martin Fields and Food Services Officer Chief Warrant Officer Michael Hill while touring Lincoln.**

yourself. Take care of yourself first, and then use what you have leftover to value your shipmate. For example, if you're out partying, drinking with another Sailor and that shipmate attempts to drive, help them do the right thing. Be proactive, and look out for others."

For Swift, his second goal, tactical excellence is fundamentally tied to the idea of valuing Sailors.

"My second goal is tactical excellence. This is key. We are war fighters; we are a strike group, and we can never lose sight of that. But I believe that we should focus on individual contributions first. By emphasizing the efforts of the individual Sailor, collective success will follow," Swift said. "There is a saying, 'Mission first, Sailor always.' I like to change that around a bit, to 'Sailor first, mission always.'"

To Swift, every job performed on a Navy ship, no matter how small or unglamorous, contributes to overall tactical excellence.

"If any one group of Sailors decided to take the day off, how do you think that would affect the rest of the ship?" Swift asked. "If just one half of the CSs took the day off, how much would people appreciate the job they do? Sometimes we lose sight of how important each job on board the ship is."

Swift said he wants to create an atmosphere of openness when it comes to communicating with sailors.

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# Local News

## SWIFT

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“I would like to be seen as approachable. When you get to the admiral level, there tends to be a bubble that forms around you, a five-foot zone of high pressure that causes people to scatter before it. I don’t want people to feel that way around me. I want to be someone you can approach and talk to.”

Swift has a motto that reflects his feelings about being a leader: “There is no greater virtue than valuing those we serve. There is no greater vice than taking their service for granted.”

“I very nearly left the Navy at the rank of Captain,” Swift said. “I even went to TAP class, in preparation for leaving. There was a whole long list of things I didn’t like about the Navy. But when it came down to it, there was one thing that made me decide to stay. That was the opportunity to serve Sailors in a meaningful way.

“Serving in the Navy is a tough, but noble business. Many people complain about the way things are in the world, but few are willing to swear the oath and take action to improve things. I see my job as supporting those Sailors who took the oath to serve. And I want to prove that everyday.”

Swift began his Navy career in 1979 after graduating from San Diego State University and receiving his commission



Photo by MCSA Robert A. Robbins

**Rear Adm. Scott Swift has been touring Lincoln and meeting face-to-face with Sailors.**

through the Aviation Reserve Officer Candidate program. Swift has served as Commander of Strike Fighter Squadron 97, Commander of Air Wing Fourteen, and as Deputy Commander Naval Forces, U.S. Central Command.

## MEDEVAC

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Hamilton was hoisted back into the helicopter and the crew began their journey back to Lincoln.

After landing on Abe’s flight deck, Health Services Department took over care of the patient, but had help from many different departments on the ship to get the patient down to main medical.

With the help of Abe’s Weapons Department, the patient transited from the flight deck to main medical through various weapons elevators.



Photo by MC2 (SW) James Evans

**The injured sailor is loaded onto a Coast Guard MH-65 Dolphin helicopter after receiving medical attention on board Lincoln.**

“It was great to see all the cooperation with the different departments on the ship,” Lee said. “Everyone played a small role in the bigger picture. From Weapons [Department] to the flight deck crew, everyone knew their part.”

Once with in main medical, Abe’s doctors and corpsman stabilized the patient and prepared him for the next leg of his journey to shore.

The members of the helicopter crew perform three to four MEDEVACs each month, but never as far from shore as this one. For Lincoln, MEDEVACs aren’t a common occurrence, but aren’t a complete rarity.

“We’re not specifically designed for this, like [an amphibious ship] but the corpsman are trained for emergency care,” said Senior Chief Hospital Corpsman Donald Singleton, Abe’s Health Services Department leading chief petty officer.

“It wasn’t out of the realm for us,” Lee said. “We do patient transports and MEDEVACs with other ships in our strike group. This MEDEVAC went very well. In all levels of involvement and coordination, it went very seamlessly. It was just one example of how the Navy is willing to help out an injured sailor anywhere in the world. We changed our course to help the sailor get the medical treatment he needed. This is a great example of how the Navy isn’t afraid to help someone who needs us.”

The patient was transported via Coast Guard C-130 cargo plane to a medical facility in San Diego, Calif., the following afternoon to receive follow-on care as Abe and its crew set sail back toward home.

## Year in Review 2008

# 2008: Lincoln's year in review

By MC3 KATHLEEN CORONA  
Penny Press Staff

USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72) and its crew had an eventful, busy year in 2008 preparing for and completing a seven-month overseas deployment.

Abe kicked off the year at its homeport, Naval Station Everett, Wash., preparing for its upcoming deployment. The flight deck was resurfaced with more than 5,500 sq. ft. of new non-skid and Abe Sailors began their first round of Anthrax vaccinations.

Abe set out from NAVSTA Everett Jan. 17 to begin the last phase of their training schedule with Joint Force Training Exercise (JTFEX).

During Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 2's on load in Naval Air Station North Island, Calif., Jan. 20-22, Abe tested its ability to quickly and properly defend itself with a force protection exercise.

The exercise tested Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 9's Sailors and their ability to retaliate against terrorist activity, whether it would be in a foreign port or at home.

During Abe's JTFEX, Secretary of the Navy, Honorable Donald C. Winter paid a visit Jan. 26 to observe how the Navy conducts anti-submarine warfare (ASW) with the use of sonar.

"It is incredibly important for me to stay current in what is



Photo by MC3 Patrick Bonafede

**Secretary of the Navy Donald J. Winter visits with Lincoln Sailors in January.**

happening and see the changes that are implemented," Winter said. "It's also important to see the impact of marine mammal mitigation activities and be able to understand how we are preparing our Sailors for future deployments."

Abe successfully completed JTFEX Feb. 1, and headed home for maintenance availability and some much needed rest and relaxation.

Rounding up February, three special leaders on board Abe visited the Nation's capital for an up-close look at how their government functions.

The Stennis Center for Public Service hosted Lincoln Leadership award winners Hull Technician 1st Class (SW) Dwaine Bryan, Senior Chief Yeoman (SW/AW) Kevin Martin, Chief Warrant Officer Michael Hill, and Lincoln's Commanding Officer Capt. Patrick Hall for two full days in Washington, D.C. The Sailors and their families spent their time seeing the sights and interacting with key decision-makers.

According to Rex Buffington, Executive Director of the Stennis Center for Public Service, the trip served to recognize and honor the Sailors for their outstanding service and to increase dialogue between leaders in Washington and deckplate leaders in the fleet.

After a comfortable month with family and friends, Abe Sailors packed up and set sail March 13 for their scheduled, seven-month deployment overseas.

Abe's first stop on its deployment was an overnight stay in NAS North Island to pick up nearly 1,600 personnel from the eight aircraft squadrons that make up CVW 2. Lincoln and



Photo by MC2 (SW) James Evans

**Quartermaster Seaman Jonathan Izzett, left, and Quartermaster 3rd Class Richard Nute plot courses and make entries to the ship's position log during JTFEX.**

# Year in Review 2008

## YEAR IN REVIEW

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the newly embarked air wing said goodbye to American soil March 17 and headed west.

March passed at sea for Abe's and CVW 2's crews as a blur of general quarters drills, flight operations, and growing accustomed to life on deployment.

The crews welcomed Abe's new executive officer, Capt. Jeffery Ruth, April 5.

Ruth was more than ready to take on the challenge of being executive officer of this nuclear-powered aircraft carrier with more than 5,000 people on board when deployed.

"I see great things just walking around and checking out the ship, and I know the crew on Lincoln is doing amazing things everyday," said Ruth.

Abe Sailors got their first taste of an overseas port call April 16, when the ship moored in Singapore for a much needed break. For most Sailors visiting the country of Singapore, the trip meant spending money, filling their bellies and relaxing.

Many Abe Sailors did just that, but for more than 170 Sailors, the four-day trip meant giving back to the community.

Lincoln's Religious Ministries Department coordinated nine community relations (COMREL) projects for the Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group and six of those projects were for Lincoln and its crew.

From gardening and clean up to spending time with senior citizens, Abe Sailors spent some of their liberty time leaving a lasting impression on the Lion City and its inhabitants, and hopefully leaving it a little cleaner and a little nicer than when they pulled in.

April 20 came too soon for many Abe Sailors, and before they knew it the ship said goodbye to Singapore, pulled in its mooring lines and set back out to sea.

Abe's first distinguished visitor following Singapore, Davy

Jones, was less than thrilled with what he saw on board and in a meeting with Abe's Commanding Officer Capt. Patrick Hall stated all the slimy "pollywogs" slinking around the decks of Abe needed to be cleansed before entering his territory.

Over 2,000 pollywogs were woken up in their berthings at 4 a.m. April 24, by trusty "shellbacks" determined to make the transition from 'wog to shellback as messy, wet and fun, but safe as possible.

The Lincoln CVW 2 team started flying missions over Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom April 30.

A visit by U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) Director of Operations U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Curtis M. Scaparrotti

and members of his staff, who are based in Tampa, Fla., May 11-12, kicked off Abe's third month of deployment followed by another important guest, Deputy Commander, U.S. Naval Forces, U.S. Central Command Rear Adm. Scott H. Swift May 15, now CCSG 9.

While on board, Swift sat down with a Penny Press reporter to discuss Abe's vital role in Maritime Security Operations in the U.S. 5th Fleet's area of responsibility.

"The strike group is very important in what we are doing operationally at NAVCENT," Swift said. "The effects that we are trying to create from a coalition perspective, the expertise of the strike group naval forces at sea, is security. Through security and careful application of our capabilities, our goal is to reach regional stability."

After more than a month at sea without a port call, Abe's crew was more than excited about pulling into their next overseas liberty port, Jebel Ali, United Arab Emirates, May 23.

While in Jebel Ali and nearby Dubai, Abe and CVW 2 Sailors enjoyed time off the ship and were given a taste of the local culture through numerous tours offered through MWR.

Abe's four-day stay in the United Arab Emirates was a well needed break before pulling in the lines and heading back to



Photo by MC2 (SW) James Evans

**Sailors from USS Abraham Lincoln and USNS Rainer participate in a beach clean-up as part of a Community Relations project at Changi Beach Park in Singapore.**



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## YEAR IN REVIEW

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sea May 27 to continue with its mission.

Abe welcomed the advancement of over 200 petty officers in a frocking ceremony held in Abe's Hangar Bay 2 May 30.

May quickly moved into June and Abe Sailors found themselves sweltering in the heat of a Persian Gulf summer, but with flight operations, general quarters drills and the normal work of operating overseas, everyone stayed busy and watched the months of deployment fly right by.

Capt. John Aquilino, CVW 2's commanding officer, reached a special milestone for a pilot when he made his 1,000th arrested landing, or trap, June 12.

Abe promoted 18 petty officers June 14 after the announcement was made for those Sailors who had taken the late exam.

Another milestone in aviation was made on board Abe in June, recording its 15,000th trap June 21.

Just in time for Independence Day, Abe pulled into Jebel Ali, U.A.E., for another four day port call. Abe Sailors celebrated July 4 in true American style inside Jebel Ali's "Sandbox" where everyone partied to live music and refreshments until late into the night.



Photo by MC3 Geoffrey Lewis

**Seaman Monica Navarro (left) and Storekeeper 3rd Class (SW/AW) Darien Oneal raise the ensign for morning colors in Jebel Ali.**

The Lincoln CVW 2 team started flying missions over Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom July 8.

To break the monotony of daily operations at sea, Abe threw a special party to celebrate being out to sea with a steel beach picnic on the flight deck July 26.

Sailors put work on the back-burner and engaged in various sporting events, listened to music performed by Lincoln's own rock band, Death By Chicken, and DJ Onitap, of KRUZ Radio, and ate barbecue.

After being underway for 45 days without a port call, Abe was ready to let off some steam with another uniquely Navy celebration, Beer Day, Aug. 22.

Each Sailor on board was given the opportunity to enjoy two, ice-cold beers with in the confines of a beer corral on Abe's flight deck as another steel beach picnic raged on around them.

"A beer day is an entitlement for ships once they have been at sea for more than 45 [consecutive] days and are not expected to hit port for five more days," said Chief Navy Counselor (SW) Brian Luckett, MWR's leading chief petty officer.

Abe wrapped up August with a special visit by some very important people.

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Adm. Mike Mullen, Commander, Multi-National Force, Iraq Army Gen. David Petraeus, Commander, International Security Assistance Force Gen. David McKiernan, Commander, Special Operations Command Adm. Eric Olson, Acting Commander, Central Command Lt. Gen. Martin Dempsey and several other high-ranking military officials visited Lincoln Aug. 26-27.

The distinguished visitors toured the ship, attended briefings, visited with Lincoln and CVW 2 crew members and awarded a Helicopter Squadron (HS) 2 Sailor the Navy/Marine Corps Medal.

Aviation Warfare Systems Operator 1st Class (AW) Jesse P. Hubble was awarded for his efforts in rescuing seven crew members in a crash of a Navy HH-60H helicopter off the coast of Southern California in November of last year.

"It was completely unexpected, but extremely appreciated," Hubble, a San Diego native, said. "It's a really big day for me."

Abe and CVW 2 Sailors welcomed September with open arms and lots of excitement. Abe hosted numerous special guests and hit their last foreign port of the deployment in their last full month of deployment.

Cambodian and Thailand military and embassy staff members visited USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72) to tour the ship and meet with the crew, Sept. 10-11.

The visitors included H.E. Gen. Nhek Bun Chhay, Deputy Prime Minister of Cambodia and Deputy Chief of Staff, Royal Thai Navy, Vice Adm. Soopakorn Booranadiloak; as well as

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## YEAR IN REVIEW

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several other military officials and embassy staff members.

Abe moored in Pattaya Beach, Thailand, Sept. 12 for a four-day stay in the beautiful beach city.

Being in Thailand wasn't just a chance for Abe Sailors to immerse themselves in Thai culture, but to showcase life on an American aircraft carrier to many special guests.

Abe hosted a reception for Thai dignitaries, military and law enforcement officials to celebrate 175 years of diplomatic relationships between the U.S. and Thailand Sept. 12.

Fifteen Abe Sailors took time during their port visit to Pattaya to bring a little joy to children affected by HIV and AIDS at the Camillian Social Center Rayong.

September marked a special time in the careers of 46 Abe and CVW 2 Sailors who received their chief petty officer pins in a special pinning ceremony, Sept 17.

During the ceremony, the new chiefs received their anchors and their new khaki combination covers from their sponsors.

The end of September was packed full with celebrations and observances on board Abe.

Abe threw a fiesta to celebrate Hispanic heritage and culture for Hispanic Heritage Month, Sept. 20.

Hosted by Abe's Diversity Council and Hispanic Heritage Committee, the event, themed "Hispanics Making a Positive Impact on American Society," was planned to ensure the members of the Hispanic community on board Lincoln got an opportunity to tell their stories.

Abe Sailors donned their dress whites and gathered on the flight deck to man the rails as the ship pulled into Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, Sept. 30, after supporting Maritime Security Operations, Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom for nearly seven months.

The participants rendered solemn honors by coming to attention and saluting the fallen ship USS Arizona, which was sunk during World War II by Japanese war planes.

Friends and family were waiting as Lincoln finally moored in U.S. waters.

In Hawaii, Sailors were given a chance to enjoy some of the local culture, such as hula dancing, luaus and fire dancing.

Hawaii kicked off the last big event of Lincoln's deploy-

ment; the Tiger Cruise. Sailors not only had the chance to meet family and friends, but bring them on board for the transit to San Diego.

Abe departed Pearl Harbor Oct. 3 with more than 1,000



Photo by MC2 (SW) James Evans

**Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff Adm. Mike Mullen addresses Lincoln Sailors in the hangar bay.**

family members and friends for the ship's Hawaii-to-San Diego Tiger Cruise.

Tigers were treated to an air show, were given an up close look at what Sailors do when deployed and had numerous events including an ice cream social, steel beach picnic and Big Bucks Bingo during their time on board Abe.

They were also treated to an exciting airborne change-of-command ceremony when Capt. John Aquilino handed over the reins of CVW 2 to Capt. Alton Ross, Oct. 6.

Aquilino, flying an F/A-18E Super Hornet from the "Kestrels" of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 137, passed command of CVW 2 to Ross, flying in an F/A-18C Hornet from the "Blue Blasters" of VFA-34, while performing a fly-by of Lincoln.

Abe pulled into San Diego, Oct. 8, to disembark CVW 2 and to say goodbye to the first set of Tigers before picking up over 600 more Tigers for the second leg of Abe's voyage back to NAVSTA Everett.

While in San Diego, Rear Adm. Scott Swift relieved Rear Adm. Scott Van Buskirk as Commander, Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 9 in a change-of-command ceremony Oct. 9.

After seven months away from their home port, the Everett-

# Final Thoughts



## Shipmates

The strength of a warship lies in the hearts and hands of its crew.

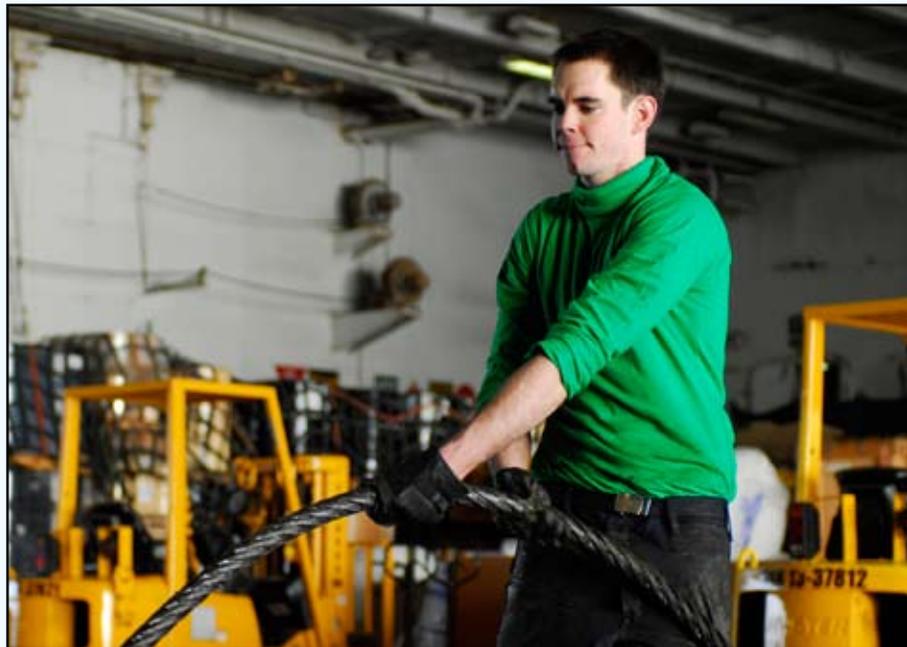


Photo by MCSN Robert A. Robbins

Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Equipment) Airman from Dallas handles an arresting cable in USS Abraham Lincoln's hangar bay.

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based ships of CSG 9 returned home Oct. 12 under sunny skies.

Abe's Commanding Officer, Capt. Patrick Hall said the returning Sailors earned themselves some well deserved time off from the 214 days at sea.

"We traveled over 60,000 miles, 2.3 times around the world," Hall said. "We flew over 9,000 sorties, 26,000 hours total, and supported Sailors, soldiers, airmen and Marines on the ground in both Afghanistan and Iraq."

Once home, Abe set to work on maintenance to bring the ship back into tip-top shape for upcoming at-sea time while many crew members enjoyed the post-deployment leave time they were given to relax and spend time with their families and friends.

After nearly two months in port, Abe pulled in its mooring lines Dec. 1 and headed out to sea for Fleet Replacement Squadron Carrier Qualifications off the coast of Southern California.

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## Editor's Top 10

### Top ten things we'll remember about 2008

10. Giants over Patriots in Super Bowl.
9. The Great Wal-Mart stampede.
8. America's "Big 3" auto companies begging Congress for help.
7. 3/13/08: USS Abraham Lincoln deploys.
6. The big bailout. \$700 billion. That's billion, with a "b."
5. The Beijing Olympics.
4. Shady dealings in the Illinois governor's office.
3. Financial chaos in markets the world over.
2. The Presidential election.
1. 10/12/08: USS Abraham Lincoln returns home- Hallelujah!

Commanding Officer.....Capt. Patrick D. Hall  
 Executive Officer..... Capt. Jeffrey S. Ruth  
 Command Master Chief..... CMDCM (SW/AW) Eric Schmidt  
 Public Affairs Officer..... Lt. Cmdr. Kathleen Sandoz  
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