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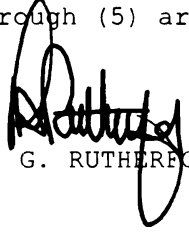
From: Commanding Officer, USS GEORGE WASHINGTON (CVN 73)
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Subj: USS GEORGE WASHINGTON (CVN 73) COMMAND HISTORY FOR CALENDAR YEAR 1998

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12G

Encl: (1) Command Composition and Organization
(2) 1998 Chronology
(3) Narrative
(4) Commanding Officer's photograph and biography
(5) 3.5 inch diskette, Microsoft Word format

1. Per reference (a), enclosures (1) through (5) are submitted as command history for calendar year 1998.


L. G. RUTHERFORD

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USS GEORGE WASHINGTON (CVN 73) COMMAND HISTORY 1998

Short Title: USS GEORGE WASHINGTON
UIC: 21412

COMMAND COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION

USS GEORGE WASHINGTON (CVN 73), sixth of the NIMITZ-class nuclear-powered aircraft carriers, was commissioned on July 4, 1992 at Naval Station, Norfolk, Virginia. Home ported in Norfolk, GEORGE WASHINGTON is an asset of Commander, Naval Air Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet, commanded by Vice Admiral John J. Mazach who was later relieved by Vice Admiral Joseph S. Mobley. At the start of this year, GEORGE WASHINGTON was sailing in the Arabian Gulf under the operational control of the Fifth Fleet, commanded by Vice Admiral Thomas Fargo. After leaving station in the gulf on its return trip home, GEORGE WASHINGTON was under the operational control of Sixth Fleet, commanded by Vice Admiral Steve Abbot while steaming across the Mediterranean. After entering the Atlantic Ocean, GEORGE WASHINGTON returned home as an operational unit of Second Fleet, commanded by Vice Admiral William J. Fallon.

GEORGE WASHINGTON is commanded by Captain Lindell G. Rutherford. GW is tasked with numerous missions, the primary one being to serve as our nation's forward deployed force, ready to conduct sustained combat air operations "Forward... From the Sea." In this role, the ship serves as the flagship for Commander, George Washington Battle Group, commanded by Rear Admiral Michael G. Mullen until he was relieved by Rear Admiral Ronald A. Route.

GEORGE WASHINGTON was near the middle of her six-month deployment when the year began. Carrier Air Wing ONE, commanded by Captain Craig T. Cuninghame, was embarked and was GW's main armament. The air wing provides the capability to conduct sustained offensive air operations against land, surface, and subsurface targets and to defend the battle group in support of assigned missions.

Carrier Air Wing ONE is comprised of 75 aircraft and includes: the F-14B Tomcat flown by the Diamondbacks of VF-102; the F/A-18C Hornet strike-fighter flown by the Thunderbolts of VMFA-251; the F/A-18C Hornet strike-fighter flown by the Marauders of VFA-82; the F/A-18C Hornet strike-fighter flown by the Sidewinders of VFA-86; the E-2C Hawkeye airborne early warning aircraft flown by the Screwtops of VAW-123; the S-3B Viking anti-submarine warfare aircraft flown by the Maulers of VS-32; the EA-6B Prowler electronic warfare aircraft flown by the Rooks of VAQ-137; the ES-3B Raven flown by Det "Bravo" of the Black Ravens of VQ-6; the HH-60/SH-60F helicopter flown by the Dragonslayers of HS-11 and the C-2 Greyhound carrier onboard delivery (COD) aircraft flown by VRC-40.

GEORGE WASHINGTON also assumed other responsibilities as they served as the base of operations for Commander, Destroyer Squadron 26 while in the Mediterranean and Commander, Destroyer Squadron 50 while in the Arabian Gulf.

Encl (1)

USS GEORGE WASHINGTON (CVN 73) LEADERSHIP

CAPT Lindell G. Rutherford	Commanding Officer
CDR Charles E. Smith	Executive Officer
CDR Garry R. White	Executive Officer
CAPT Joseph Krenzel	Reactor Officer
CAPT Christopher C. Cain	Reactor Officer
CAPT James P. Nickols, CHC	Chaplain
CDR [REDACTED], CHC	Chaplain
CDR [REDACTED]	Engineering
CDR [REDACTED]	Air
CDR [REDACTED]	Air
CAPT Michael J. Krentz, MC	Medical
CDR [REDACTED], DC	Dental
CDR [REDACTED], DC	Dental
CDR [REDACTED]	AIMD
CDR [REDACTED]	AIMD
CDR [REDACTED]	Navigator
CDR [REDACTED]	Navigator
CDR [REDACTED]	Weapons
CDR [REDACTED]	Weapons
CDR [REDACTED], SC	Supply
CDR [REDACTED]	Operations
CDR [REDACTED]	Operations
CDR [REDACTED]	Safety
CDR [REDACTED]	Combat Systems
CDR [REDACTED]	Combat Systems
LCDR [REDACTED]	Deck
LCDR [REDACTED]	Deck
LT [REDACTED]	Training
LCDR [REDACTED], JAGC	Legal
LCDR [REDACTED], JAGC	Legal
LCDR [REDACTED]	Administrative
LCDR [REDACTED]	Administrative
Capt [REDACTED], USMC	MARDET
ETCM(SW) Kevin Lavin	Command Master Chief
OSCM(SW) Dale I. Marteney	Command Master Chief

USS GEORGE WASHINGTON (CVN 73) 1998 CHRONOLOGY

January

- 1 Underway on New Year's Day flying missions in support of Operation SOUTHERN WATCH, the enforcement of the No Fly Zone over Southern Iraq. GW/CVW-1 are in the region along with four other vessels from the George Washington Battle Group: USS NORMANDY (CG 60), USS CARNEY (DD 64), USS SEATTLE (AOE 3) AND USS ANNAPOLIS (SSN 760).

- 2 Conducted replenishment at sea (RAS) with USS SACRAMENTO and USNS SPICA. Conducted General Quarters Drill.

- 3 Celebrated halfway point of deployment by holding a Steel Beach Picnic while anchored in the Arabian Gulf.

- 9 Conducted Close-in Weapons System (CIWS) Pre-action Calibration Firing (PACFIRE).

- 15 Inport Jebel Ali, UAE.

- 18 Named winner of Commander, Naval Air Force, U. S. Atlantic Fleet, Silver Anchor Award for command retention and personnel programs.

- 20 Underway from Jebel Ali.

- 26 Crew watched Super Bowl live via Direct To Sailor satellite system. Ship held Super Bowl Party as game was shown on 16' x 17' projection screen in the hangar bay. Food Service Division prepared a traditional football feast including hot dogs, chili, nachos, and hot wings.

Completed COMNAVAIRLANT 3-M Inspection achieving an overall score of 94, a COMNAVAIRLANT record for aircraft carriers.

- 31 Hosted eight members of the media for a daylight embarkation. Group included Reuters, AP, ITN, APTV, and Sky News.

February

- 2 Hosted Barry Iverson of Time Magazine for an ROIN (remain over one night).

- 3 Conducted RAS with USS SEATTLE.

- 4 ET1(SW) John Doyle named Sailor of the Year for 1997.
Hosted ten members of the media for a daylight embarkation. Group included Reuters, BBC TV and Radio, WTN, APTV, and ITN.

- 5 Rear Admiral John Nathman, Commander, Nimitz Battle Group and Rear Admiral Charles Moore, Commander, Carrier Group 5 embarked for ROIN.

February

- 6 Two F/A-18's attached to Marine Strike-Fighter Squadron 251 collided in mid-air during routine flight operations in the Northern Arabian Gulf. Both pilots were recovered. However, Lieutenant Colonel Henry G. Van Winkle, USMC, Executive Officer of VFMA-251, died from injuries sustained in the accident.
Rear Admiral I. A. Forbes, UK Task Group, embarked for day visit.
- 7 Conducted CIWS PACFIRE.
- 8 Held Memorial Service for Lieutenant Colonel Henry G. Van Winkle, Executive Officer of VFMA-251.
- 9 Conducted RAS with USS SEATTLE.
Hosted 12 members of the media for RO1N. Group included CBS-TV, BBC-TV, Reuters TV, WTN, AP, and Reuters.
- 11 Secretary of Defense, William Cohen, embarked for day visit. Senators John Warner (D-VA) and Carl Levin (D-MI) accompanied SECDEF on the visit.
- 12 Inport Jebel Ali.
- 16 Underway from Jebel Ali.
Held E-2/E-3 Advancement Ceremony.
- 17 Hosted 10 members of the media for RO1N. Group included Fox-TV, BBC-TV, Reuters TV, BBC Radio, AP, The Independent, and Navy Times.
- 18 Hosted 12 members of the media for RO1N. Group included CNN, ABC, WAVY-TV, ABC Radio, AFP, and Voice of America Radio.
- 19 Hosted 10 members of the media for RO1N. Group included USA Today, L.A. Times, NBC Radio, Reuters, Virginian-Pilot, ATV, RMF, and Miliyet.
- 20 Hosted 14 members of the media for daylight embarkation. Group included Fox TV, L.A. Times, AP, BBC, WTN, AFTV, The Independent, Navy Times, and All Hands.
- 21 Conducted RAS with USNS GUADALUPE.
- 23 Conducted Medical Mass Casualty Drill.
Held Command Advancement Program (CAP) Ceremony.
- 24 Held National Prayer Breakfast.
Hosted 12 members of the media for RO1N and seven members of the media for a daylight embarkation. Group included CBS-TV, NBC-TV, ABC-TV, USA Today, New York Times, Washington Post, Baltimore Sun, Newsweek, WAVY-TV, Stars and Stripes, and Kuwait TV.
Diplomatic solution reached between UN Secretary General and Iraq.
- 26 Conducted RAS with USNS SPICA.
Hosted 11 members of the media for RO1N. Group included CNN Radio, ABC Radio, Carte Blanche, German TV, and Le Figaro.

March

- 1 Inport Jebel Ali.
- 3 Held E-4 Navy-Wide Advancement Exam.
- 5 Underway from Jebel Ali.
Held E-5 Navy-Wide Advancement Exam.
- 8 ABE1 Clark Binkerstaff passed away in his sleep in his bunk.
- 9 Held Mass Conflagration/Casualty Drill.
- 10 Major General Charles F. Bolden, Jr., USMC, Deputy Commanding General, First Marine Expeditionary Force, embarked for a daylight visit.
Held E-6 Navy-Wide Advancement Exam.
Named winner of COMNAVAIRLANT Battle Efficiency Award. GW garnered all 12 departmental awards.
- 11 Conducted RAS with USNS SPICA.
Brigadier Ahmad Yousef Al-Mulla, Chief, Kuwait Naval Forces, embarked for daylight visit.
Held Memorial Service for ABE1 Clark Bickerstaff.
- 12 Conducted Turnover with USS JOHN C. STENNIS (CVN 74).
Outchop as Task Force 50
- 16 Held E-2/E-3 Advancement Ceremony.
- 17 Held Promise Keepers Rally.
- 18 Anchored, Port Suez.
- 19 Underway to transit Suez Canal.
- 20 Conducted vertical replenishment with USNS BIG HORN.
Reenlisted MM2 [REDACTED] marking over \$1 million of reenlistment bonuses paid out in the six-month deployment.
- 21 Conducted VF-102 Change Of Command.
Held Navy-Marine Corps Relief Big Bucks Bingo.
- 22 Inport Cannes, France.
- 23 Held Evening Reception on board for distinguished visitors from Cannes.
- 26 Underway from Cannes, France.
- 27 Held Prayer Breakfast.
Conducted Safety Standdown.

28 Held Women's History Month Ceremony.

29 Conducted INSURV Inspection.

April

1 Held All Hands Quarters to receive COMNAVAIRLANT presentation of Battle Efficiency Award.

2 Conducted fly-off of Carrier Air Wing ONE.

3 Moored Pier 12 North, Naval Station, Norfolk, completing 1997/98 Mediterranean/Arabian Gulf Deployment.

12 Held Easter Sunday Catholic Mass on board for crew.

May

1 Held Disestablishment Ceremony for GW's Marine Corps Detachment.

4 Underway Virginia Capes (VACAPES) for Ammo off-load.
Conducted VERTREP with USS ARCTIC and USS ENTERPRISE.
Conducted RAS with USS ARCTIC.

5 Conducted RAS with USS ARCTIC.

6 Conducted RAS with USS ARCTIC.
Moored Pier 12 North, Naval Station, Norfolk.

8 RADM Ronald A. Route relieved RADM Michael G. Mullen as Commander, Cruiser-Destroyer Group TWO on board GW.

11 Underway for transit to Norfolk Naval Shipyard, Portsmouth, VA.
Moored Dry-Dock 8 at Norfolk Naval Shipyard, Portsmouth, VA.
Commenced Dry-docking Planned Incremental Availability (DPIA).
Moved ship's services (messing, ship's store, barber shop, etc.) to APL-61 barge.

13 Held an E-1 to E-3 Captain's Call for Engineering/Reactor/ Deck.

18 Conducted E-2/E-3 Advancement Ceremony.

19 Conducted Safety Standdown.

21 Conducted COMNAVAIRLANT Retention Evaluation Site Interviews.

22 Conducted E-8 Frocking Ceremony in the CPO Mess.

June

- 2 Held an E-4 to E-6 Captain's Call for ENG/REAC/OPS/WEPS.
- 16 Held an E-2/E-3 Advancement Ceremony.
- 24 Conducted Safety Standdown.

July

- 4 Celebrated 4th of July by participating in National Bell Ringing Ceremony. GW's sixth birthday.
- 6 Held CMC Call with First Class Petty Officers.
- 7 Commander, Destroyer Squadron EIGHTEEN visit.
- 20 GW Summer Picnic at Busch Gardens, Williamsburg, VA.
- 28 CO hosted Old Dominion University Luncheon.
- 30 Participated in local community relations (COMREL) Project. Over 50 GW Sailors volunteered at the U.S. Junior Olympics.

August

- 5 Admiral Frank L. Bowman, Director, Naval Nuclear Propulsion (NAVSEA 08) visit.
- 14 Received Battenberg Cup and Admiral Flatley Naval Aviation Safety Award during an all hands award ceremony on the flight deck. Vice Admiral John J. Mazach, Commander, Naval Air Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet and Mr. ██████████ presented the awards. Rear Admiral Route, Commander, Cruiser-Destroyer Group TWO, also attended. The following local media covered the event: The Virginian-Pilot, Soundings, WTKR-TV, WAVY-TV, and WVEC-TV.
- 18 Held Safety Standdown.

September

- 4 GW Night at Harbor Park, Norfolk, home of the Triple AAA Norfolk Tides baseball team. 300 GW Sailors and their family members attended ballgame.
- 10 Held E-4 Navy-Wide Advancement Exam.
- 15 Held E-5 Navy-Wide Advancement Exam.
- 16 Conducted E-2/E-3 Advancement Ceremony.

September

- 17 Held E-6 Navy-Wide Advancement Exam.
- 18 Observed POW/MIA Recognition Day with special edition GUARDIAN and displays.

October

- 13 Honored Navy Birthday by holding a Cake Cutting Ceremony in the hangar bay.
- 15 Observed Hispanic Heritage Day with a special luncheon.
- 16 Rear Admiral Route visited.
Conducted E-2/E-3 Advancement Ceremony.
- 28 Hosted Commander, Naval Air Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet, Vice Admiral John J. Mazach and Commander, Cruiser Destroyer Group TWO, Rear Admiral Route, for a DPIA Brief at the 50% completion point.

November

- 24 Held Safety Awareness Day.
- 26 Hosted a Thanksgiving Day meal for crewmembers and their families.

December

- 1 Mr. H. Lee Buchanan III, Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development and Acquisition toured ship as part of his trip to the Norfolk Naval Shipyard, Portsmouth, VA. Mr. Michael Hamre, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development and Acquisition and Rear Admiral Osie V. Combs, Jr., NAVSEA 04, also attended.
- 3 Held Shipboard Life Brief for GW family members at Norfolk Naval Shipyard's Drydock (All Hands) Club.
- 10 Conducted Undocking Evolution.
GW moved to Pier 5 North at Norfolk Naval Shipyard.
- 11 Held GW Christmas Party at Club Pier 26, Norfolk Naval Station.
Musical entertainment included *Xscape* and *Ricochet*.
Announced CTR1(SW/AW) [REDACTED] GEORGE WASHINGTON Sailor of the Year.
- 14 Held Health Fair in Hangar Bay 2.
- 15 Resumed ship's services aboard GEORGE WASHINGTON.

December

- 16 Rear Admiral Henry G. Ulrich, III, CINCLANTFLT Operations Officer, visited for a working lunch with Captain Rutherford.
Held Safety Awareness Day.
Conducted Ship-Wide Safety Zone Inspection.
Held E-2/E-3 Advancement Ceremony.
- 17 Held E-5/E-6 Frocking Ceremony.
- 27 ET3 Colin M. Beebe died through accidental asphyxiation in his parked car while on holiday leave near Baltimore, MD. (Memorial service was held on 11 Jan 99.)

USS GEORGE WASHINGTON (CVN 73) NARRATIVE

When 1998 began, USS GEORGE WASHINGTON (CVN 73) was near the midway point of its 1997-1998 Mediterranean Sea /Arabian Gulf deployment, the ship's third deployment in its short, but active time in service. Together with the embarked Air Wing, Carrier Air Wing ONE, this powerful team was operating in the Arabian Gulf in support of Operation SOUTHERN WATCH, the enforcement of the no-fly zone over southern Iraq.

Also operating in the Arabian Gulf as part of the GEORGE WASHINGTON Battle Group were USS NORMANDY (CG 60), USS CARNEY (DD 64), USS SEATTLE (AOE 3), and USS ANNAPOLIS (SSN 760). These vessels, along with units from the Nimitz Battle Group, made up the two-carrier presence in the Arabian Gulf.

While patrolling and controlling the air and water off the coast of Iraq was their mission, the crew of GEORGE WASHINGTON still found some time to relax and enjoy some fun and recreation by watching the Super Bowl live via the ship's Direct To Sailor satellite system on January 26. The eight-hour time difference didn't keep the crew from having a pre-game party as the Ship's Food Service Division laid out a spread for their shipmates. Hot Dogs, nachos, chili, and wings headed the menu as the crew showed up in force in Hangar Bay 2 to watch the game on a 16' x 17' projection screen.

Proving the crew had been working hard was not difficult. On January 26, 3-M Assist Team from COMNAVAIRLANT completed their examination of GEORGE WASHINGTON and awarded them an overall score of 94, a NAVAIRLANT record for aircraft carriers.

Unfortunately, all of the missions GW/CVW-1 conducted in support of SOUTHERN WATCH weren't without loss. Lieutenant Colonel Henry G. Van Winkle, USMC, Executive Officer of VFMA-251 Thunderbolts, made the ultimate sacrifice when he died from injuries sustained in a mid-air collision on February 6. LtCol Van Winkle was piloting his F/A-18 when it collided with another F/A-18 from the same squadron during routine flight operations in the Northern Arabian Gulf. GW/CVW-1 held a memorial service on February 8 to honor the life and dedicated career of LtCol Van Winkle.

GEORGE WASHINGTON was a much sought-after platform to visit during its time on-station in the Arabian Gulf. Secretary of Defense William Cohen, along with Senators John Warner (D-VA) and Carl Levin (D-MI) embarked for a daylight visit on February 11 to see the young men and women working to support diplomacy in the region as well as to thank them for their efforts.

Interest in the region skyrocketed when the power of the two-carrier presence in the Arabian Gulf was challenged by Iraqi president Saddam Hussein who decided to banish United Nations weapons inspectors from his country, not allowing them to monitor and inspect suspected biological and chemical weapons facilities. At this time, GW was operating at "the tip of the spear" with USS INDEPENDENCE (CV 62) and both were poised to strike. Hundreds of members of the national media were in the region covering this story of worldwide importance and several of them embarked GW to tell the story of Sailors and Marines working together to back diplomacy while deployed to the Arabian Gulf.

With live television newscasts centering on the conflict in the Arabian Gulf, the GW/CVW-1 team were able to watch themselves as well as keeping an eye on the situation they were supporting. On February 23, during a joint news conference, U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan and Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz announced an agreement to end the Iraqi stand-off and once again allow U.N. weapons inspectors into Iraq.

Sunday, March 8 dealt a sad blow to the GW/CVW-1 team when ABE1(AW) Clark K. Bickerstaff passed away in his sleep. Hundreds of Petty Officer Bickerstaff's shipmates gathered in Hangar Bay 2 on March 11 to memorialize to their shipmate.

Upon completion of their assignment to the Arabian Gulf and after turning over with USS JOHN C. STENNIS (CVN 74) on March 12, the "Spirit of Freedom" plotted a course for Cannes, France for some well-deserved liberty. On the way to Cannes, GEORGE WASHINGTON transited the Suez Canal on March 19 marking the end of the Arabian Gulf portion of this deployment. During the Suez transit, many shipmates participated in a "Run the Ditch" event to benefit the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society.

On March 20 GEORGE WASHINGTON, with the help of Reactor Department, achieved another milestone on this deployment. After MM2 [REDACTED] completed his oath of reenlistment in the Navy, he was awarded a Selective Reenlistment Bonus (SRB) that put GW over the \$1 million dollar mark for the deployment.

The powerful GW/CVW-1 team found the beautiful liberty port of Cannes, France to their liking as they enjoyed this opportunity to play in and explore the French Riviera during their four-day port visit. While in Cannes, the crew were treated to many events and activities sponsored by the Cannes community. On March 23, GEORGE WASHINGTON hosted an evening reception onboard for distinguished visitors from Cannes, France.

Just days from returning home, the GW/CVW-1 team were visited by Vice Admiral John J. Mazach, Commander, Naval Air Force, U. S. Atlantic Fleet. He embarked GW April 1 and presented GW and Carrier Air Wing ONE with their Battle Efficiency Awards for 1997. These awards were just the first of many that the GW/CVW-1 team would earn for their actions during 1997. Not only did GW win the Battle "E" award, but so did all 12 departments vying for departmental Battle Efficiency Awards. Those departments included AIMD, Air, Engineering, Operations, Supply, Communications, Damage Control, Deck, Navigation, Weapons, Medical, and Habitability.

On April 2, the mighty GW/CVW-1 team parted ways as as pilots and aircraft of Air Wing ONE flew-off to their home bases.

On April 3, it was GEORGE WASHINGTON's turn for its crew to be reunited with their family and friends. Thousands of GW supporters lined Pier 12 at Naval Station, Norfolk hoping to see their GW Sailor as soon as possible. Reunion was definitely the word for the day.

Forward deployed presence, dominance, and flexibility were key statements that GW made during this deployment proving that they and aircraft carriers are a vital national asset to maintain peace around the world: "Four and a half acres of sovereign U.S. territory, where it's needed, when it's needed." During this deployment, GEORGE WASHINGTON proved that and much, much more. The following statistics generated during the 1997-1998 deployment epitomize the hard work, dedication to duty, devotion to service, and teamwork exhibited by the GW/CVW-1 team:

- Aircraft launches and recoveries: 8,202
- Underway replenishments: 26
- Fuel received: 13,802,128 gallons
- Fuel transferred: 14,038,819 gallons
- Pallets transferred: 4,118
- Naval messages processed: 1,272,721
- Miles steamed: 47,194
- Days underway: 149
- Days in port: 32
- Number of e-mails: 1,827,172

- Other:

- Won Commander, Naval Air Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet Battle Efficiency Award (3rd Award)
- Won Battenberg Cup
- Won Admiral Flatley Naval Aviation Safety Award
- Won Commander, Naval Air Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet Golden Anchor Award (4th Award)
- Won the Best CPO Mess Award for Atlantic Fleet carriers (3rd consecutive award)
- Won a CHINFO Merit Award in the Cruise Book Category
- Awarded Navy Unit Commendation (2nd Award) 97NOV17 - 98MAR14
- Awarded Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal 97NOV17 - 97DEC31
- Sea Service Deployment Ribbon (3rd Award) 97OCT03 - 98APR03

On May 1, GEORGE WASHINGTON bid farewell to its Marine Detachment and the last MARDET to serve on board an aircraft carrier as a deactivation ceremony was held in Hangar Bay 2. Capt [REDACTED], GW's Marine Detachment Officer in Charge, and his company of Marines ended an era in Marine Corps history when his command flag was carried off the ship. "Today marks a sad day," said Goodrich. "But Marine security forces will continue to serve elsewhere in the Navy community."

Norfolk Naval Shipyard, Portsmouth, VA, became GEORGE WASHINGTON's new home on May 11. Moored in Dry-dock 8, GW and her crew started began a ten-month Dry-docking Planned Incremental Availability (DPIA). During their stay in Portsmouth, the ship underwent some major work including: installation of an additional air conditioner unit, modulation change of rod drives for the reactor, enlarging chill water piping, outfitting several berthing spaces for embarking women at sea, and installing a state-of-the-art gymnasium in the mezzanine level of Hangar Bay 1. During the availability, the crew's messing and personnel services were shifted aboard the barge APL-61.

The annual GEORGE WASHINGTON Summer Picnic was held July 20 at Busch Gardens, Williamsburg, VA. Over 3,700 members of the GW family enjoyed a great day of rides, excitement, and a grand picnic.

GEORGE WASHINGTON received two more major awards on August 21. For only the second time in Navy history, an individual ship won the Battenberg Cup and Admiral Flatley Naval Aviation Safety Award in the same year. Vice Admiral John J. Mazach, Commander, Naval Air Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet presented the crew with the Battenberg Cup which is awarded to the best ship in the Atlantic Fleet. This includes exhibiting the highest level of operational readiness and productivity during the competitive 12-month period. [REDACTED], son of Admiral Flatley, awarded GW with the award that goes to the ship with the best aviation safety record. It was the first time in GW history that the ship received either award. Several local media representatives including The Virginian-Pilot, Soundings, WTKR-TV, WAVY-TV, and WVEC-TV covered the ceremony. Adding these two awards to GW winning the Battle Efficiency Award is akin winning the Navy's version of the horse racing's Triple Crown.

Another GW family gathering was held September 4, as it was GW Night at Harbor Park, home of the Triple AAA Norfolk Tides baseball team. Captain Rutherford threw a strike for the official first pitch of the ball game as the Tides split a doubleheader with the Richmond Braves.

October 3 saw the start of the integrated crew on board GEORGE WASHINGTON. Several enlisted female crewmembers checked aboard this day as the first of GW's 500 female Sailors reported aboard for duty.

A traditional cake cutting ceremony was held on October 13 to honor the Navy's 223rd Birthday. AKCS(AW) [REDACTED], the eldest GW Sailor, and AA [REDACTED], a ninth generation Sailor and the youngest GW Sailor, joined Captain Rutherford in cutting the cake.

Thanksgiving was celebrated aboard the services barge APL-61 alongside the ship November 26 as the Supply Department, along with GW's Morale, Welfare and Recreation, treated over 300 family members to a feast.

On December 10, GW ended her stint in dry-dock and successfully completed the undocking evolution and moved to Pier 5 North at Norfolk Naval Shipyard, Portsmouth.

GW threw another grand gala, ship's Holiday Party on December 11. Thousands of crewmembers and their guests jammed Club Pier 26 at Norfolk Naval Station, for a night of musical entertainment and fun. Musical guests included national recording artist *Xscape*, and the winners of the Academy of Country Music's and Country Weekly Magazine's Top New Vocal Group of the Year Awards for 1996, *Ricochet*. The gala also featured the announcement of CTR1(SW/AW) [REDACTED]'s selection as GEORGE WASHINGTON Sailor of the Year for 1998.