

From: Cox, Samuel J SES USN NHC WASHINGTON DC (USA)

It is with deep regret I inform you of the passing of Vice Admiral John Theodore "Ted" Parker, Jr., U.S. Navy (Retired) on 25 June 2021 at age 90(?) VADM Parker entered the U.S. Naval Academy in July 1951 and served as a Surface Line Officer until his retirement on October 1989 as the Director of the Defense Nuclear Agency. His commands included USS ST. CLAIR COUNTY (LST-1096,) USS MCDONOUGH (DLG-8,) USS PIEDMONT (AD-17,) Service Group TWO, and Operational Test and Evaluation Force (OPTEVFOR.)

Ted Parker attended the University of Cincinnati before gaining an appointment to the U.S. Naval Academy, taking the oath of office on 2 July 1951. According to the Lucky Bag he was a firm believer in the Osmosis Theory of studying (place book on desk, place feet on book, lean back and grow wise.) Nevertheless, he excelled at academics and leadership, commanding both 19th Company and 5th Battalion, and was captain of the fencing team, winning All-American honors. He graduated with a Bachelor in Naval Science and was commissioned an ensign on 3 June 1955.

Ensign Parker's first tour was aboard destroyer DOUGLAS H. FOX (DD-779,) deploying to the Mediterranean under U.S. SIXTH Fleet from November 1956 to February 1957. In June 1957, Lieutenant (junior grade) Parker reported to the staff as Operations Officer of Commander Destroyer Division TWO SIX TWO (DESDIV 262,) responsible for four Norfolk-based radar picket destroyers. In August 1958, he reported to the Naval Guided Missile School, Dam Neck, VA for duty under instruction, until he became a department head at the school in November 1958, serving as an instructor on Terrier and Talos surface-to-air missile systems.

In July 1960, Lieutenant Parker attended Fleet Sonar School, Key West, FL and then in September 1960 commenced training at Destroyer Force Schools Group, U.S. Atlantic Fleet. In November 1960, he reported to Headquarters, FOURTH Naval District (Philadelphia.) In April 1961, LT Parker assumed duty as Weapons Officer in the commissioning crew of guided-missile destroyer leader USS DAHLGREN (DLG-12, later DDG-43) for trials, work-ups and a Northern Europe (Kiel, Copenhagen, Oslo) and Mediterranean deployment in June-August 1962. In September 1962, he attended Naval Amphibious School, Coronado, CA before assuming command of landing ship tank ST. CLAIR COUNTY (LST-1096) in November 1962, operating along the U.S. West Coast with multiple deployments to Hawaii and the mid-Pacific for exercises. He was promoted to lieutenant commander in September 1963.

In February 1964, Lieutenant Commander Parker reported to the Bureau of Naval Weapons, Washington DC, as Assistant Head, Short-Range Weapons Control Systems Section. In May 1965 he attended Naval Nuclear Power School, Naval Training Center, Bainbridge, MD and in December 1965 he attended Naval Nuclear Power Training Unit, Schenectady, NY. In June 1966, LCDR Parker reported as Executive Officer to guided-missile destroyer SELLERS (DDG-11,) for a Mediterranean deployment in 1967. He was promoted to commander in March 1968.

In March 1968, Commander Parker assumed command of guided-missile destroyer leader MACDONOUGH (DLG-8, later DDG-39,) for a Mediterranean deployment. In October 1969, he reported to the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research and Development as Special Assistant (Surface.) In July 1972 he attended the Industrial College of the Armed Forces (ICAF,) concurrently earning a Masters Degree in Business Administration from George Washington University. He was promoted to captain in July 1973.

In August 1973, Captain Parker assumed command of destroyer tender PIEDMONT (AD-17) for her last Western Pacific deployment, visiting many ports but mostly servicing WESTPAC ships at Subic Bay, Philippines before returning to Long Beach and then transferring to Naples, Italy via the Panama Canal. In June 1975, he assumed duty as Chief of Staff and Senior Aide to Commander U.S. SIXTH Fleet, homeported at Gaeta, Italy embarked on guided-missile cruisers LITTLE ROCK (CG-4) and ALBANY (CG-10.) In August 1977, CAPT Parker assumed duty in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations as Branch Head, Guided-Missile Nuclear Cruiser/Guided-Missile Destroyer (CGN/DDG) Branch/Program Coordinator. In August 1979, he became Director, Surface Warfare Manpower and Training Requirements Division (OP-39) in the Office of the CNO. He was designated a rear admiral in April 1980 for duty in a billet commensurate with that rank.

In April 1980, Rear Admiral Parker became Director of the Surface Warfare Division (OP-32) in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations. He was promoted to rear admiral on 1 November 1980. In July 1981, RADM Parker assumed command of Service Group TWO, the U.S. Atlantic Fleet combat logistics force, deploying logistics support ships to the Mediterranean and Indian Ocean. In July 1980, he became the Deputy Director of the Office of Research Development Test and Evaluation (RDT&E) in the Office of the CNO. In August 1985, RADM Parker assumed command of the Operational Test and Evaluation Force (OPTEVFOR,) and in 1986 received designation as a Materiel Professional. On 28 August 1987 he was designated a vice admiral for duty in a billet commensurate with that rank, and the same month became Director of the Defense Nuclear Agency, during a period of change as the Cold War ended. Vice Admiral Parker retired in 1989.

VADM Parker's awards include the Defense Distinguished Service Medal, Defense Superior Service Medal, the Legion of Merit (five awards,) the Meritorious Service Medal (two awards,) the Navy Achievement Medal, the National Defense Service Medal (two awards,) the Navy Humanitarian Service Medal, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal (Cuba) and Sea Service Ribbon.

Following retirement from active duty, VADM Parker formed his own consulting company and served on several Boards of Directors, including Elbit Systems of America and the Severn Leadership Group (which focusses on developing leaders of character and serving others before self, and Ted was an active mentor.) He was very active in helping midshipmen, the Naval Academy Chapel, and a number of Class of 1955 projects that were major gifts to the Academy (most notably the restoration of John Paul Jones' crypt and the Cold War Mural.)

Vice Admiral "Ted" Parker served our Navy and nation with extraordinary dedication and distinction as the consummate Surface Line Officer. He aspired to command-at-sea early and got it while still a lieutenant, in command of LST ST. CLAIR COUNTY. As Weapons Officer on destroyer DAHLGREN, he seized the opportunity to set an example of performance that would carry through the life of the ship. His multiple commands were all better for his service. Early on, he became an expert in the development of new weapons systems, an expertise that paid big dividends in his later tours as RDT&E and COMOPTEVFOR, developing and testing new systems for the U.S. Navy, a number of which are still in service. He regarded his most important contribution to the Navy as leading the analytic effort to define the characteristics and requirements for the Arleigh Burke-class AEGIS guided-missile destroyers – the longest shipbuilding program in U.S. Navy history, and arguably one of the most successful. In his final years he led the Defense Nuclear Agency through a period of profound change at the end of the Cold War, laying the groundwork for the Agency's new counter-proliferation mission (not just for nuclear, but for all weapons of mass destruction,) subsequently resulting in a name change to the Defense Threat Reduction Agency and a mission that remains critical to the survival of the United

States. VADM Parker's success required great sacrifice on the part of his family, through many years at sea and in the most demanding of jobs ashore, but our nation is far safer for his service, and the Navy will not forget.

Rest in Peace Admiral Parker

Very respectfully,

Sam