Navy Surgeon General Commemorates Nurse Corps 104th Birthday

By Janet Tela, Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery Public Affairs

WASHINGTON (NNS) -- The Navy Surgeon General sent a message to the Naval Nurse Corps May 11 in honor of its birthday this Sunday, May 13.

"As the Navy Nurse Corps celebrates its 104th year of service, I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to all Navy nurses on behalf of Navy Medicine and a grateful nation," said Vice Adm. Matthew L. Nathan, U.S. Navy surgeon general and chief, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery.

The Navy Nurse Corps was established by Congress in May of 1908. In October of 1908, the first nurses, later called "The Sacred Twenty," reported for duty at the Naval Medical School Hospital in Washington D.C., which is now home of the Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery.

"Since 1908, the men and women of the Navy Nurse Corps have honorably served in times of peace and war, at home, abroad, and on the front lines," Nathan said. "Today we honor the brilliant achievements, courage, and commitment of Navy nurses who ensure our nation has a medically fit and ready force."

Today, approximately 3,900 active and Reserve Nurse Corps officers serve in the grades of ensign through rear admiral. They care for many patients whose illnesses and injuries are no different from those found in civilian facilities and also care for those in deployment settings with battle injuries.

Navy nurses serve aboard sea-going vessels, pierside, on deployments or humanitarian missions, and at clinics or inpatient facilities. Wherever they are assigned, these nurses find unique opportunities to exercise their knowledge and skills as they care for their patients and family members.

HN Resielyn Jose leads the color guard during the Nurse Corps 103rd Birthday celebration at U.S. Naval Hospital Yokosuka. The Nurse Corps was established May 13, 1908, after the signing of the Appropriations bill by President Theodore Roosevelt.

U.S. Navy photo by MC3 Matthew R. Cole

"Their continued work and dedication have earned them a prominent place in the United States Navy," Nathan said. "To the almost 4,000 active duty and Reservist Nurse Corps personnel, I thank you for your service and for the sacrifice of you and your families. Happy Birthday Nurse Corps!"

As the Navy Surgeon General and Chief, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, Nathan leads 63,000 Navy Medicine personnel that provide health care support to the U.S. Navy, Marine Corps, their families, and veterans in high operational tempo environments, at expeditionary medical facilities, medical treatment facilities, hospitals, clinics, hospital ships and research units around the world.

For more information, visit www.navy.mil, www.facebook.com/usnavy, or www.twitter.com/usnavy.

For more news from Navy Medicine, visit www.navy.mil/local/mednews/.