

## **21. Captain Robert Donel Barbaree Jr. USN 3/9/200 – 8/10/2001**



Captain Barbaree, born in Dothan, Alabama, entered the U.S. Naval Academy in 1973. He received his commission as an Ensign in June 1977 and reported to Attack Squadron (VA) 81 for further assignment to flight training at NAS Pensacola, Fla. Designated a Naval Aviator in February 1979, his first assignment was with Training Squadron (VT) 25 as a flight instructor flying the TA-4J Skyhawk. In November 1980, Capt. Barbaree was assigned to Fighter Squadron (VF) 101 for training in the F-14 Tomcat. He reported to VF-32 in August 1981, where he served as the Avionics / Armament Division Officer, Training Officer and Squadron LSO. While with VF-32, he completed two Mediterranean Sea deployments in USS INDEPENDENCE (CV 62), which included combat operations in support of American forces in Grenada and Lebanon. In April 1984, Capt. Barbaree was selected to participate in the cooperative program with the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School and the U.S. Naval Test Pilot School. He reported to Monterey, Calif., in August 1984 and continued on to NAS Patuxent River, Md., in December 1985. In December 1986, he graduated from the U.S. Naval Test Pilot School with Class 90 and received a Master's of Science in Aeronautical Engineering.

He remained at the Naval Air Test Center conducting various flying quality and performance tests on the F-14 and instructing other prospective test pilots until June 1989. In September 1989, Capt. Barbaree joined VF-102 deployed in USS AMERICA (CV 66) in the Mediterranean Sea. He served as the Operations Officer and assumed duties as the Maintenance Officer in June 1990. In December 1990, he deployed aboard USS AMERICA for combat in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. In July 1991, he joined the Staff of Commander, Tactical Wings Atlantic as Operations Officer. In August 1992, he was assigned to the Staff of Joint Task Force, Southwest Asia as the senior Navy Strike Planner. Capt. Barbaree returned to VF-102 as Executive Officer, and assumed command of the "Diamondbacks" in July 1994. During his command tour with VF-102, he deployed again aboard USS AMERICA for operations supporting NATO forces in Bosnia and American forces in Somalia.

In June 1995, Capt. Barbaree was selected for the Navy's Nuclear Power Program. He reported to the Navy Nuclear Power Training Command, Orlando, FL, in November 1995, and upon completion of 20 months of training, reported to USS NIMITZ (CVN 68) as Executive Officer. Following his tour in Nimitz, he attended the Naval War College, graduating with Distinction in November 1999. Capt. Barbaree assumed command of USS SEATTLE (AOE 3) while deployed in March 2000. During his tour, Seattle completed her 5,000th underway replenishment. She also won the 2000 Battle "E" and became the first

Combat Logistics Force ship to make the Commander in Chief, U.S. Atlantic Fleet's Retention Honor roll. Capt. Barbaree reported to the Commander, 7th Fleet staff as Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, Plans and Engagement in August 2001. He was later assigned as Commanding Officer, USS KITTY HAWK (CV 63) from Sept. 2002 to Feb. 2003.

His decorations include the Legion of Merit, Distinguished Flying Cross with Combat "V", Meritorious Service Medal with two gold stars, two individual Air Medals with Combat "V", six strike-flight Air Medals, the Joint Service Commendation Medal, three Navy Commendations Medals (one with Combat "V"), and various unit citations, campaign medals, and service ribbons.