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USS JOHN F. KENNEDY (CVN 79)

Honoring A Lifetime Of Leadership

A Distinguished History

- John Fitzgerald Kennedy was born May 29, 1917, in Brookline, Mass. He graduated from Harvard University in 1940. In October 1941, he received a commission in the U.S. Naval Reserve.
- Kennedy was assigned to Motor Torpedo Boat Squadron 2, where he assumed command of motor torpedo boat PT 109. During World War II, PT 109 was rammed by a Japanese destroyer in Blackett Strait.
- As the damaged PT boat sank, Kennedy led his men to safety, swimming three miles to a nearby island. One of the men, too badly injured to swim, was towed by the straps of his lifejacket—in Kennedy's teeth.
- Kennedy was elected President of the United States on Nov. 8, 1960. He was assassinated in Dallas, Texas, Nov. 22, 1963.



The Symbolism Behind the Ship's Official Seal

- The 35 stars on the seal represent Kennedy as our nation's 35th president. The two gold stars between "CVN" and "79" symbolize that this is the second aircraft carrier bearing his name and legacy.
- The Roman numeral "CIX", or 109, is a tribute to Kennedy's heroic naval service as commander of PT 109 in the South Pacific.
- The moon backdrop represents Kennedy's instrumental role in the nation's space program.



"I can imagine a no more rewarding career. And any man who may be asked in this century what he did to make his life worthwhile, I think can respond with a good deal of pride and satisfaction, 'I served in the United States Navy.'"

- John F. Kennedy