

# Shipbuilding enterprise grows in Marinette

Written by Patti Zarling Press-Gazette Media

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Marinette Marine finishes hull on latest combat sh...: Marinette Marine Corporation completes hull on latest combat ship, the USS Little Rock, the ship will be totally complete in about 15 months according to MMC President Chuck Goddard.

**MARINETTE** —It's full steam ahead as Marinette Marine Corp. continues its task of building structures for one of the U.S. Navy's future Littoral Combat Ships.

On Thursday, Lockheed Martin, the primary contractor working with Marinette Marine, celebrated the opening of a new 16,000-square-foot facility about a mile from the shipyard, which will be used for testing and troubleshooting.

Joe North, vice president of Littoral Ship Systems for Lockheed Martin, said the facility shows the company's commitment to the area. He noted 21 people currently work in that facility alone, and 10 of them are local. Lockheed Martin expects to hire another 29 people to work in the new facility, he said.



The USS Little Rock LCS-9 is shown before the keel-laying ceremony Thursday at Marinette Marine in Marinette. / Lukas Keapproth/Press-Gazette Media

In addition, the company has provided grants and other assistance to bring technology and science and math programs to local high schools.

“Anything to get interest down to that level,” he said. “We love the fact the program is going well.”

Projects are on time and on budget, said Marinette Marine President and CEO Chuck Goddard. The shipyard employs about 1,400 people, he said.

The shipyard has delivered two ships so far —USS Freedom is deployed to Southeast Asia, and USS Fort Worth is based in San Diego. The Milwaukee, Detroit, Little Rock and Sioux are under construction.

Earlier this year, the Navy funded two additional ships. Options call for four more ships by 2015, but Goddard said the Navy has not made any decisions. The service has said it could buy more than 50 of the Littoral Combat Ships.

A different design of the ship is being built in Alabama by Austal USA.

“The feedback I’ve heard about crews on the ships has all been very positive,” Goddard said. “The fleets are happy.”

The shipyard recently celebrated the completion of a \$74 million investment at the shipyard, and completion of a 29,000-square-foot building.

The improvements allow the yard to build the two ships per year required by the contract, Goddard said.

The Navy contract is good for the local economy and is leading to nearby infrastructure improvements, he said. A state grant will fund improvements to an old railway used to haul steel to the shipyard, Goddard said.

“I think people see it as a good place to invest,” he said. “You’ve got a great workforce, great vocational programs at the high school, and a great work ethic.”

— [pzarling@pressgazettemedia.com](mailto:pzarling@pressgazettemedia.com) or follow her on Twitter [@PGPattiZarling](https://twitter.com/PGPattiZarling)