

The Flagship

Serving the Hampton Roads Navy Family



Vol. 17, No. 43, Norfolk, VA

FLAGSHIPNEWS.COM

October 29, 2009



Photo by MC2 Mandy Hunsucker

USJFCOM and USFF presents new building at ribbon cutting ceremony

COMPILED BY
MC2 MANDY HUNSUCKER
Flagship Staff Writer

NORFOLK — U.S. Joint Forces Command (USJFCOM) and U.S. Fleet Forces (USFF) Command presented the Joint Deployment and Maritime Operations Centers (MOC) building to the public at a ribbon cutting ceremony held on Naval Support Activity Norfolk, Oct. 21.

The facility is the brainchild of Adm. Edmund P. Giambastiani, Jr., vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who served as the guest speaker at the event.

"We had a model of this building back in 2004. If you looked at that model today, you would see that it is exactly the same. We did several virtual walk-throughs of this building, then we had a designer design it, then an architect engineer the design," said Giambastiani. "What you see is a successful application of that. The facility is all of what we envisioned and I'm really proud of what's going on here."

Giambastiani commented that Senator John Warner and his staff were "incredibly strong supporters of getting this project approved."

The facility includes two major

components within it: the Joint Deployment Center (JDC) and the MOC.

The JDC provides USJFCOM with a facility that improves the efficiency of global force management and joint force-providing processes through enhanced collaboration, improved coordination, and a state-of-the-art command and control center for tracking the entire joint deployment process.

The JDC is designed to provide a consolidated view of global force requirements and a comprehensive understanding of the availability of forces to meet the war fighting requirements of the combatant commanders in a technologically advanced, collaborative and ergonomic work environment. It supports USJFCOM's execution of tomorrow's global force management and joint force-providing mission.

The new MOC provides the commander of U.S. Fleet Forces Command with a state-of-the-art facility to provide command and control (C2) of forces in its role as Joint Forces Maritime Component Commander North.

This new facility provides global

See CEREMONY, A15

Navy commissions energy-efficient amphibious assault ship Makin Island

PRESS RELEASE

From Department of Defense

WASHINGTON — The Navy commissioned the amphibious assault ship Makin Island Oct. 24, during a 10 a.m. ceremony at North Island Naval Air Station, Coronado, Calif.

Makin Island is named for the daring raid carried out by Marine Corps Companies Alpha and Bravo, Second Raider Battalion, on the Japanese-held Makin Island, in the Gilbert Islands, on Aug. 17-18, 1942. The raid was launched from the submarines USS Nautilus and USS Argonaut and succeeded in routing the enemy forces based there, gaining valuable intelligence. Twenty-three Navy Crosses were awarded for actions during the raid, including to the raid's leader, Marine Corps Lt. Col. Evans Carlson, and executive officer, Marine Corps Maj. James Roosevelt (son of President Franklin Roosevelt). Marine Corps Sgt. Clyde Thomason was awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously for heroism during the raid and was the first enlisted Marine to be so honored during World War II. One previous ship, a Casablanca-class escort aircraft carrier (1944-1946), has borne the name Makin Island, and received five battle stars for World War II service.

Adm. Patrick Walsh, commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet, will deliver the ceremony's principal address. Silke Hagee, wife of former commandant of the Marine Corps Gen. Michael Hagee, will serve as ship's sponsor. In the time honored Navy tradition, she will give the first order to "man our ship and bring her to life!"

Makin Island is the eighth Wasp-class amphibious assault ship. Second only to an aircraft carrier in size, LHDs embark, transport, deploy, command and fully support an expeditionary unit of 2,000



Photo courtesy of Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding, Gulf Coast

Marines. Makin Island can accommodate three landing craft air cushion, a squadron of AV-8B Harrier II aircraft, and a full range of Navy/Marine Corps helicopters and amphibious vehicles to perform sea control and limited power projection missions.

Makin Island is the first Navy amphibious assault ship to replace steam boilers with gas turbines, and the first Navy surface ship to be equipped with both gas turbines and an auxiliary propulsion system. By using this unique propulsion system, the Navy expects over the course of the ship's life-cycle to see fuel savings of more than \$250 million, further demonstrating the Navy's commitment to energy awareness and conservation.

Makin Island is fully equipped with command, control, communication, computers and intelligence systems for flagship command duty. The afloat capability of Makin Island's medical facility is

second only to the Navy's hospital ships. The ship is armed with two NATO Sea Sparrow surface missile systems for anti-air warfare protection, two rolling airframe missile systems and two Phalanx close-in-weapons systems mounts to counter threats from low flying aircraft. Six missile decoy launchers augment the anti-ship missile defenses.

Capt. Robert Kopas, born in Cleveland and raised in Phoenix, is the ship's commanding officer. Built by Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding, Ingalls Operations in Pascagoula, Miss., the ship is 844 feet in length with a 106-foot beam, and has living areas for nearly 3,200 crew members and embarked forces.

Upon commissioning, the ship becomes a member of U.S. Pacific Fleet as part of Expeditionary Strike Group 3 and will be homeported in San Diego.

For more news from the fleet, visit www.navy.mil



Photo by MC3 Jeffrey Stewart

The aircraft carrier USS George Washington (CVN 73), middle, and the guided-missile destroyer USS Fitzgerald (DDG 62) transit behind the Republic of Korea guided-missile destroyer SeJong the Great (DDG KDX 991) during a bilateral exercise.

Record Year for Navy's i-ENCON Program

PRESS RELEASE

From Naval Sea Systems Command
Office of Corporate Communications

WASHINGTON — Naval Sea Systems Command's (NAVSEA) Incentivized Energy Conservation (i-ENCON) initiative announced Oct. 19 that Navy ships realized a record 1.36 million barrels of oil in fuel avoidance during fiscal 2009.

The banner year savings represent an increase of 10.35 percent more than the previous high of 1.23 million barrels of fuel avoidance during fiscal 2006.

"These efforts increase Fleet readiness by enabling Sailors at sea to train or deploy longer while spending the same amount of money on fuel," said Hasan Pehlivan, i-ENCON program manager.

These savings also increase Fleet readiness by providing enough fuel to support 27 Arleigh Burke-class destroyers (at an average of 2,500 underway hours) per year.

The i-ENCON program is a "Meet-the-Fleet" initiative

See RECORD, A15

INSIDE:

TRAINING

USS Bush Air Department continues training

Sailors of the USS George H.W. Bush Air Department continue to train and keep their warfighting skills sharp.



A8

FRONT & CENTER

Fitting New York into Norfolk

The amphibious transport dock PCU New York (LPD 21) arrives at its home port of Naval Station Norfolk.



B9

OFF DUTY

Real Pirates

The Untold Story of the Whydah from Slave Ship to Pirate Ship organized by National Geographic.



C1

NavAdmin states permanent makeup uniform policy for officers, enlisted

Naval Administrative Message (NavAdmin) 304/09 announces the process and procedures for obtaining cosmetic permanent makeup as announced in NavAdmin 217/09. Cosmetic permanent makeup is an elective procedure obtained by female service members at their individual expense and during personal off duty time. For more information regarding permanent makeup procedures and policy in the form of frequently asked questions (FAQ), visit: www.npc.navy.mil/commandsupport/us-navyuniforms/.

Effective Nov. 1, cosmetic permanent makeup is authorized for female sailors. Permanent makeup is authorized for eyebrows, eyeliner, lipstick and lip liner only. It shall be in good taste, blend naturally with the skin tone and enhance a natural appearance.

Exaggerated or faddish cosmetic styles are not authorized. Approved permanent makeup colors are as follows: eyebrows shall be shades of black, brown, blonde or red that matches natural hair color. Eyeliner shall be shades of black, brown, blue or green to match natural eye color and not extend past the natural corner of the eye. Lip liner and lipstick shall be the color of the natural lip or shades of pink and moderate reds only.

Female service members assigned to their permanent duty station shall submit a special request/authorization (1336/3) form to their commanding officer expressing their desire to obtain permanent makeup.

Included with the special request form shall be a description of the procedure facility and desired feature enhancements.

Commanding officers are to review permanent makeup notification requests to ensure description of



The Navy Naval Administrative Message 304/09 announces the advent of the Navy's policy on permanent makeup.

enhancements is in compliance with cosmetic policy requirements and that requesting sailors are counseled prior to obtaining permanent makeup. Additionally, commanding officers will ensure requests for permanent makeup are annotated in member's medical record and medical entries are made after permanent makeup is obtained. Counseling of sailors requesting the procedure should include the following topics: personal financial impact, need to obtain permanent makeup via qualified licensed electrologist, esthetician or state board certified technician, consequences of permanency and risks associated with procedures, procedure cannot interfere with the performance of military duties, planned

leave to facilitate healing and return to full duty, permanent makeup not available via military treatment facilities, and explain grounds for possible administrative separation if permanent makeup is non-compliant with cosmetic policies.

Commanding officers of members who have obtained permanent makeup that is not in accordance with existing policies shall document the condition on a Administrative remarks form (NavPers 1070/613). Navpers 1070/613 for enlisted personnel will be submitted to the local personnel support detachment for inclusion in the field service record. The navpers 1070/613 for officer personnel will be mailed to Commander Naval Personnel Command (Pers

312) for inclusion in the electronic service record. Members not complying with permanent makeup policy requirements may be subject to administrative or disciplinary action. If removal or alteration of non-compliant permanent makeup conditions is determined by a military medical healthcare provider not to be feasible, the member may be processed for involuntary separation, if deemed appropriate by the commanding officer.

Commanding officers and officers-in-charge shall review the service records of all reenlistment eligible sailors to determine if a NavPers

1070/613 was previously issued. If so, the commanding officer or officer-in-charge shall ensure the member has complied with the NavPers

1070/613 before executing the reenlistment.

Uniform policy changes are a direct result of fleet feedback and staffed research.

The next navy uniform board is scheduled to convene fall 2009.

File this NavAdmin until changes are incorporated into the quarterly Bureau of Personnel directive CD-ROM change containing Navy Uniform Regulations. In the interim, for more information on uniforms and uniforms policy, visit the navy uniform matters Web site at www.npc.navy.mil/commandsupport/usnavyuniforms/.

For more information on this NavAdmin contact Mr. Robert B. Carroll, head, Navy Uniform Matters Office, (703) 614-5076/dsn 224, or E-mail at robert.b.carroll@navy.mil. or CMDCM(AW) Jerry Featherstone, deputy head, Navy Uniform Matters Office, (703) 614-5075/dsn 224, or e-mail at jerry.featherstone@navy.mil.

THE FLAGSHIP'S LEeward SHOUT

What the Navy's new policy allowing permanent makeup?



CTTSN
Ben Pearson
USS Enterprise

"I feel that the policy should stay the same, because there's no harm in keeping it the same."



AN
Shiela Martin
USS Dwight D. Eisenhower

"If you get permanent makeup, it's like getting a tattoo on your face. So if you're going to get that done, I suggest that you know you want it, like, for good."



CSSA
Samantha Piekarski
USS Dwight D. Eisenhower

"It'd be easy to have and to maintain, and it wouldn't get on your apple when you take a bite, but if you wear the wrong clothes it's going to clash and you'll really look bad."



LTJG
Brian Petak
USS Oak Hill

"If people choose to permanently enhance their eyebrows or lips through a color tattoo, then it has to look like a natural thing, and not a faddish thing."



SN
Chloe Wilson
USS Dwight D. Eisenhower

"If the ideas that those woman come up with for their permanent makeup match the ideas that they come up for their civilian clothing, we are going to end up with some really ugly looking women."



AE2
Lorenzo Mitchell
BRC 40

"I don't believe there should be permanent makeup, makeup should be for special occasions, not all the time."

Commander Navy Region
Mid-Atlantic is:
Rear Adm. Mark S. Boensel

The Flagship

The Flagship® is produced by Commander Navy Region Mid-Atlantic staff. The editorial content of this newspaper and any supplement is prepared, edited and provided by the public affairs office of Commander Navy Region Mid-Atlantic.

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Questions or comments can be directed to the public affairs officer or the editor. The Flagship® can be reached at 322-2865 (editor), 322-2864 (assistant editor). The fax number is 444-3029 or write Commander, Navy Region, Mid-Atlantic, The Flagship®, 1510 Gilbert St., Norfolk, VA 23511-2737. All news releases should be sent to this address. Stories may be submitted via e-mail to news@flagshipnews.com. You can visit The Flagship's Web site at www.flagshipnews.com.

The Flagship® is published every Thursday by Flagship, Inc., whose offices are at 143 Granby St., Norfolk, VA 23510. Minimum weekly circulation is 45,000.

Flagship, Inc.

General Manager
Laura Baxter, 222-3964

Creative Director

Tricia Lieurance, 222-3968

Free Classified Advertising, 222-3967

Distribution, 446-2881

Home Delivery, 222-3965

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Deployed Maritime Civil Affairs Team uses Facebook to further mission

BY LT. MATT GILL

Maritime Civil Affairs and Security Training Command Public Affairs

DJIBOUTI — The Navy's Maritime Civil Affairs Team (MCAT) 104 is using Facebook while deployed to help tell the story of what they are doing in the Horn of Africa to improve relationships with the countries vital to U.S. interests.

“Our MCATs in the field serve as the liaison between the operational commander, U.S.

country team, host nation military and civilian entities and other key players to enhance the collaboration of defense, diplomacy and development,” said Capt. Claudia Risner, commanding officer, Maritime Civil Affairs and Security Training Command. “Their focus is on the civilian populace and how to align the efforts of all these different groups to meet the needs of the local population. That’s ultimately the key audience for any military or diplomatic civil affairs effort.”

Senior Chief Mass Communication Specialist Jon McMillan’s MCAT 104’s Facebook page gathers “fans” and followers daily.

“When we’re meeting people in the different countries we’ve worked in, it’s helpful for us to point them in the direction of our Facebook page because it shows them what we’re doing in Africa and it gives them a better sense of who we are,” said McMillan. “It’s one thing to tell people what you do and why you’re in their country and it’s another thing for them to see an online history of what

we’ve been doing.”

MCAT 104 is in the Horn of Africa to support the Operation Enduring Freedom missions of the Combined Joint Task Force. “Our role is to support the commander through an understanding of the complex socio-cultural [and] civil-military relationships in the countries we’re assigned,” said Lt. Darren Denyer, MCAT 104 team leader.

MCAT 104’s Facebook page has been an important tool in maintaining these relationships. “We’ve worked in Djibouti, Rwanda and Uganda for shorter periods of time,” said McMillan. “That means we’ve had to maximize the relationships we’ve started building and Facebook is one way we’ve done that.”

“The MCAT 104 Facebook page helps the team keep families and friends updated on what we’re doing,” said McMillan, but, since its inception, it has grown into something more. “Maintaining our Face-



Photo by Maritime Civil Affairs Team (MCAT) 104
Hospitalmen 2nd Class Porfirio Nino makes a brick during and MCAT 104 visit to the Mucwini Secondary School. MCAT 104 was at the school conducting leadership engagements and an assessment of an engineering project to be conducted there as part of Exercise Natural Fire.



book page is an important part of our mission. It adds a level of transparency to what we are doing and that makes our job easier.”

Internet connectivity can be a challenge at times, but for the most part keeping the page updated is relatively quick and easy, said Denyer.

“The most time-consuming

aspect is selecting and posting our photo albums,” said McMillan, “but the feedback we’ve been getting on our albums makes every hour spent on it well worth the effort.”

“It’s critical for our Sailors to leverage all the available communication tools,” said Risner. “They’re on the front lines of American engagement, and the

capability provided by social media gives them an excellent means of making that diplomacy effective.”

For more news from MCAT 104, visit www.facebook.com/pages/Djibouti/Maritime-Civil-Affairs-Team-104/111420992320?ref=nf.

For more news from Navy Expeditionary Combat Command, visit www.navy.mil/local/necc/.

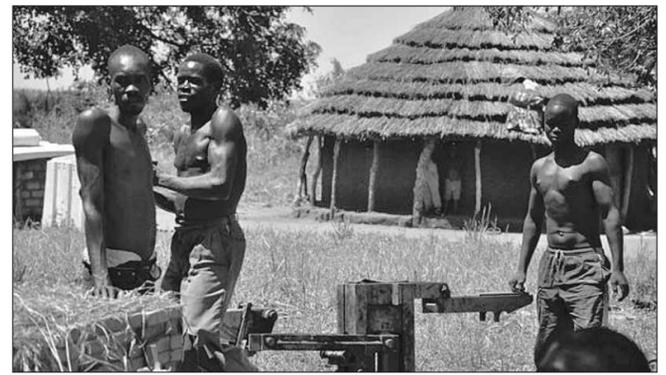


Photo by Maritime Civil Affairs Team (MCAT) 104
Workers make bricks at the Mucwini Secondary School in Northern Uganda. MCAT 104 was at the school conducting leadership engagements and an assessment of an engineering project to be conducted there as part of Exercise Natural Fire.

Local service times

LDS PROGRAMS

JEB Little Creek Chapel Worship Schedule:
Noon — Sun. Worship (Chapel Annex Classroom 4)
8 p.m. — Wed. Bible Study
(Chapel Annex Classroom 4)

NAVAL STATION NORFOLK

ROMAN CATHOLIC

Our Lady of Victory Chapel

Mass Schedule:

5 p.m. — Sat.

(fulfills Sunday obligation)

10 a.m. — Sun.

11:45 a.m. — Mon.- Fri.

(except holidays)

Confessions:

4:15 p.m. Sat.

PROTESTANT

David Adams Memorial

Chapel Worship Services:

10:30 a.m. — Sun.

Worship

Wednesday Services:

8:30 - 10:15 a.m. — Bible

Study Noon "Lunch

with the Lord"

**For more information call
Naval Station Norfolk Chapel 444-7361**

JEWISH PROGRAMS

Commodore Uraih P. Levy Chapel: Jewish services are at Norfolk chapel in Building C7 on the Second Floor every Friday at 7:30 p.m. Building C7 is located at 1630 Morris St. on Naval Base Norfolk. For more information call 444-7361 or 7363.

MUSLIM PROGRAMS

Masjid al Da'wah

2nd Floor (Bldg. C-7): Muslim services are at Norfolk chapel every Friday at 1:30 p.m.

JEB LITTLE CREEK CHAPEL

ROMAN CATHOLIC

Mass Schedule:

5 p.m. — Sat.

(fulfills Sunday obligation)

9 a.m. & 12:15 p.m. — Sun.

11:30 a.m. — Tues. - Fri.

(except holidays)

Confessions:

3:30 - 4:30 p.m. — Sat.

PROTESTANT

9 a.m. — Sun. School

(4 years-Adult)

10:30 a.m. — Sun.

Divine Worship,

Children's Church

(Ages 4-10)

PWOC: Bible Study at the Chapel Annex Every Wed.

Fellowship: 9:30 a.m. Bible Study: 10 a.m. - noon

PWOC: Evening Bible Study Every Mon.: 7 p.m.

Latter Day Saints

11:30 a.m. — Sun.

Coffeehouse

6 p.m. — Sun.

**For more information call JEB
Little Creek Chapel 462-7427**

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Sometimes it's best to go against common knowledge

Everyone knows that all plants need leaves and roots. It is common knowledge, based on science. But a plant in my back yard, and another in my office, disprove this. I live in an old house, built in 1920. Every year in the fall a flower shows up in odd locations. A stem appears, growing straight up over a foot high. No leaves, just a green stem the thickness of a finger. On top is a ball that opens up into a multi-petaled flower of deep, bright red. It blooms for a few days, then just as suddenly disappears for another year. How can there be photosynthesis without leaves? And how does it make its way up through the massive amount of soil for its few days of glory? One single plant was in the center of my yard, and I tried unsuccessfully to dig down deep enough to get the bulb to transplant it. It was deeper than I could dig, without killing the plant.

Many years ago somebody had planted these bulbs. Owners have come and gone, the yard has been torn up a few times, but the flowers survived. And I rejoice in all of its strangeness. I picture it being interviewed by experts who point out to it why its existence is impossible.

In my office I have a very young *Tilandsia* (aka air plant.) Again, no roots and not so much leaves as rigid tentacles. It takes in water through its skin, so to speak. Without roots or leaves, how does it qualify to be a plant? Again, picture it being interviewed: "You call yourself a plant? How do you rate being called a plant? You don't have what it takes!" Yet a plant it is, existing, growing, making oxygen, as alive as any sunflower.

A few years ago I took a Tai Chi class. In true beginner fashion, I stood in the back row as I tried to follow the instructor's movements. In the row with me was a slender young man in his early 30s. He was a little stiff, but did everything correctly along with the rest of the class. I assumed he was a fellow beginner. But later I learned that a year before, he had suffered a massive stroke that left him partially paralyzed. He was given physical therapy, then the doctors told him that he had improved as much as could be expected. He should accept that this was what he would be like for the rest of his life.

Though they were the experts, he decided not to buy in to the verdict. A friend told him about the Tai Chi class, and he got permission from the instructor to take part, with the understanding that he would simply do what he could. Now, a year later, the only evidence of the paralysis was a slight stiffness in movement.

Experts have their place, but they are not God. Around us all too often are messages telling us what we are not, how we lack. Scientific "common knowledge" may even be brought in to support the claims, just like politicians who refer to unnamed "surveys" that prove their statements. We can be in awe of the expertise and crawl into a corner to wither, apologizing for using the air. Or we can open our eyes to see a greater reality than that affirmed by "common knowledge." We are wondrous as a creation of God's, with more going for us than the experts can know or fathom.



Navy Chaplain Corps school relocates

FT JACKSON, S.C. — The U.S. Navy Chaplain Corps recently relocated and consolidated its chaplain and enlisted religious program specialist (RP) training schools from Newport, R.I. and Meridian, Miss. to a new facility at Fort Jackson in Columbia, S.C.

The new facility, Naval Chaplaincy School and Center, is collocated with the Air Force Chaplain Corps College and the U.S. Army Chaplain School and Center at the Armed Forces Chaplaincy Center.

Although the center will hold its official dedication ceremony sometime in early 2010, it is already hosting new students.

Collocating the three military chaplaincy schools satisfies a decision by the 2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission.

According to the Armed Forces Chaplaincy Board of June 2006, "The three chaplain schools will prepare chaplains and chaplain assistants/religious program specialists to serve in their respective wartime and peacetime service-unique roles and missions... providing necessary service-unique training, the center will consolidate training where appropriate."

In 2007, the Navy Chap-

lain's School transitioned from a department within Officer Training Command, Newport to a shore activity under the auspices of Naval Education and Training Command, Naval Personnel Development Command, and the Center for Service Support in order to support its relocation to Fort Jackson and its collocation with the Army and Air Force schools.

Along with chaplains, religious program specialists will also be trained at the Chaplaincy Center.

Religious program specialists, who provide administrative and technical support for chaplains, were previously trained at Naval Support Activity Mid-South, Meridian, Miss.

The Navy Chaplain Corps' mission is to maintain a chaplain corps and religious program specialist rating which deliver religious accommodation, care, and advisement, to strengthen faith, values, and virtues, so that Sailors, Marines, Coast Guardsmen, Merchant Marines and their families may best serve our country. The Naval Chaplaincy School and Center is responsible for training chaplains and RP's to perform this vital mission.

For more news from Chaplain Corps, visit www.navy.mil/local/crb/.

Hispanic-American Heritage Month at NMCP

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
MC2 (SW/AW) WILLIAM HEIMBUCH
Naval Medical Center Portsmouth

PORTSMOUTH — Staff at Naval Medical Center Portsmouth celebrated Latinos' culture and contributions to the United States in an Oct. 6 ceremony as part of Hispanic-American Heritage Month.

The focus of this year's Hispanic-American Heritage Month celebration was, "Hispanic Americans: Making a Positive Impact in American Society".

"Overall I think it was a great event and also a great tool for education," said HM2 Bernard Morales, of NMCP's POMI office. I can only hope that other commands are as motivated to share diversity as we do here at the hospital."

Guests were entertained by traditional Latin dances performed by NC1 Arneida McDonald and a dance team from the USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77).

This year's celebration added a new element to the festivities: ethnic food sampling. More than 16 different dishes originating from 11 Latin nations were available for tasting.

"I was very impressed with the variety and diversity of the food samples. I think it really highlighted the various contributions that each of the Hispanic and Latin-American countries provide to American cuisine," said NMCP Deputy Commander Capt. Craig Bonnema.

Ceremony attendees received a souvenir recipe book compiled by NMCP staff members which contained recipes from 21 Latin-influenced countries.

With the Navy reflecting the ever-changing makeup of society, diversity is a major issue. The United States continues to be enriched by the international cultures and backgrounds of its citizens.

The U.S. Navy is a leader in recognizing ethnic and cultural differences as strengths, and through this emphasis, the service aims to eradicate discrimination. Former CNO Adm. Mike Mullen said, "Diversity is a strategic imperative for the U.S. Navy. We thrive on the infusion of new ideas and the diversity of thought."

"NMCP's Command Diversity Committee is committed to leading NMCP staff, beneficiaries and local communities in understanding the benefits that a diverse environment can bring to an organization," said HMC(FMF) Albino Decastro. "They all have unique skills that bring synergy to



Hospital Corpsman Chief Petty Officer (AW/SW) Edgar Rivas, NMCP's Command Drug and Alcohol Program Advisor, speaks to the crowd at the medical facility's Hispanic Heritage Month Ceremony, Oct. 2.

our work place, increasing efficiency and productivity in meeting the command's mission.

"It is important for us to understand that accepting our differences can only bring unity and success in achieving excellence in our organization," added Decastro.

"Diversity is America. Unlike many established countries that came from a single background the United States is a great melting pot," said Bonnema. "We are made stronger by our diversity, not weaker, so we celebrate and revel in each of the components of that which makes America great."



A dance team from USS George H.W. Bush's (CVN-77) entertains attendees of the Hispanic American Heritage Month Ceremony at Naval Medical Center Portsmouth, Oct. 2. The medical facility recently celebrated the Hispanic-American culture with a celebration in its auditorium which included ethnic food, entertainment and speeches from NMCP Hispanic-American staff members.

Flu Season Preparedness



Photo by SA Brian Auker

AOC Roy Castetter receives the FluMist spray from a corpsman. The mist form of the vaccine contains live flu virus, as opposed to the more common shot which contains a dead virus. Anyone in good health between the ages of 2 and 50 can safely get the FluMist vaccine.

DC Academy provides vital training for Sailors

STORY AND PHOTO BY
MC2 (SW) CHRISTOPHER KOONS
USS Wasp Public Affairs

CARIBBEAN SEA — Aboard any Navy ship, one of the most important skills that all members of the crew must learn is the ability to conduct successful damage control in case of an emergency. To that end, USS Wasp's (LHD 1) Damage Control Academy (DCA) teaches the methods that lead to success in the fight against potential catastrophe.

"Our purpose is to give crew members a general knowledge of damage control so that they will be able to fight fires and other hazards without getting hurt," said Damage Controlman 3rd Class (SW) Samuel Moore, one of DCA's instructors. "We also give them a general knowledge of the ship as a whole."

Sailors who complete Wasp's command indoctrination program are generally sent to the academy the following week, which both officers and enlisted personnel attend. The class is five days and includes classroom instruction and hands-on practice, such as donning a self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA). It concludes with students taking a 50-question test on which they must score an 80 percent or above to pass the course. Once minimum requirements are met, the Sailor becomes basic damage control qualified, and is eligible to fight casualties aboard the ship.

"We teach basic firefighting skills, such as how to properly wear an SCBA, as well as survival skills if you are caught up in an emergency," Moore explained. "These skills allow you to become more well-rounded as a Sailor and better able to take care of the ship and its equipment."

Although Wasp's damage control team members respond to emergencies first, one of the purposes of DCA is to train the rest of the crew to be able to provide adequate back-up.

"If an emergency happens and you dial 9-1-1, we're the ones who respond," said



Damage Controlman 2nd Class (SW) Kevin Fischbach, an instructor for USS Wasp's (LHD 1) Damage Control (DC) Academy, helps students put on Self Contained Breathing Apparatuses during a hands-on class exercise. DC Academy, which is open to both officers and enlisted personnel, is designed to educate Sailors on the basics of damage control and allow them to become qualified to fight fires aboard Wasp, which is deployed to the 4th Fleet area of focus on Southern Partnership Station-Amphib with Destroyer Squadron 40 and a Security Cooperation Marine Air Ground Task Force embarked. Southern Partnership Station is part of the Partnership of the Americas Maritime Strategy that focuses on building interoperability and cooperation in the region to meet common challenges.

Damage Controlman 2nd Class (SW/AW) Adrian Edwards, Wasp's DC office work center supervisor. "But we also train the rest of the crew to fight fires because there's always the chance that we could be incapacitated in some way."

One of the most important skills taught at DC Academy is how to don emergency protective gear because it could mean the difference between life and death, Edwards explained.

"If we come under enemy attack, and you don't know how to put on an SCBA or emergency escape breathing device, you could get killed," he said.

Edwards cited the example of the terrorist attack on the USS Cole (DDG 67) in 2000, in which the damage control training of the crew allowed them to prevent the ship from sinking, as a perfect example of why the kind of training provided by DCA is essential in today's

Navy.

Wasp is deployed to the 4th Fleet area of focus on Southern Partnership Station-Amphib with Destroyer Squadron 40 and a Security Cooperation Marine Air Ground Task Force embarked. Southern Partnership Station is part of the Partnership of the Americas Maritime Strategy that focuses on building interoperability and cooperation in the region to meet common challenges.

USS Wasp helps stop domestic violence

STORY AND PHOTO BY MC1
(SW/AW) ANDREW MCCORD
USS Wasp Public Affairs

CARIBBEAN SEA — October is observed nationwide as Domestic Violence Awareness Month. The Navy is working to raise awareness of the issue and to find better ways to prevent it. The deployed multipurpose amphibious assault ship USS Wasp (LHD 1) is ensuring the word gets out to its crew.

"Domestic Violence Awareness Month is designed specifically to bring attention to a problem that doesn't normally get addressed," said Chief Information Systems Technician (SW/AW) Kristina Montgomery, Wasp's Family Advocacy Program (FAP) coordinator. "In reality, domestic

violence only really started getting seriously looked at because of several high profile cases in the 90s. Those cases gave attention to the situations, to the circumstances, and showed the results of what unattended domestic violence can lead to."

Domestic violence is generally viewed as physical abuse; however, there are many varieties of abuse encompassing not only physical, but emotional and mental abuse as well. The Navy maintains FAP coordinators at each of its commands to help raise awareness with their Sailors. According to Montgomery, establishing these programs Navy-wide is a common sense decision, and not one that is dictated because military personnel presumably incur a higher rate of do-



USS WASP (LHD 1) Family Advocacy Program (FAP) coordinator ITC (SW/AW) Kristina Montgomery discusses the importance of domestic violence awareness and the opportunities available to Sailors and their families through FAP.

mestic violence.

"The Navy is a high-stress world than it is outside – but that doesn't mean that there's more or less domestic violence

going on," said Montgomery. "The difference is that there are a lot of younger Sailors who are getting married, but who haven't really caught up in terms of emotional maturity. They're deploying, and they're gone, and they have to adjust, which is sometimes hard. And that's where FAP can help."

FAP coordinators are ultimately responsible for receiving domestic violence complaints, determining their viability, and then reporting to the commanding officer with a recommendation. FAP is also responsible for counseling, and for informing the command of the issues and solutions surrounding domestic violence.

"One problem with domestic violence is the fact that there are a number of men out there being do-

mestically abused," said Montgomery. "The larger number of cases are against women, mostly because men don't come forward to report it because of the stigma attached."

FAP has been perceived as having the potential to damage careers and break up families, according to Montgomery. In reality, the program exists to provide guidance and assistance and to ensure that the violence stops, she said.

"FAP is here to help Sailors and their families, not to tear them apart," she said. "We're looking for positive resolutions. You need to understand that an abuser is going to continue abusing until the cycle is broken."

Wasp and the Security Cooperation Marine Air Ground Task Force are working alongside Mayport-based Destroyer Squadron 40 during a three-month deployment to build and instill interoperability and cooperation between U.S. and partner nation naval forces through a variety of exercises as part of Southern Partnership Station.

Soldier beats breast cancer with early detection

BY AIR FORCE LT. COL. ELLEN KRENKE
Special to American Forces Press Service

ARLINGTON, Va. — A California Army National Guard supply noncommissioned officer diagnosed with breast cancer is cancer-free today, and she credits early detection with her new lease on life.

With a yearlong deployment right around the corner when she got her diagnosis, Army Staff Sgt. Elizabeth Cowie opted for an aggressive treatment plan that would get her back to her unit quickly.

“As soon as people hear the word ‘cancer,’ they have the worst thought in mind,” Cowie said. “That’s really not the case these days. There are treatments available, and with early detection, everything can happen with a little better outcome. So, early detection is really the key.”

Her gamble paid off.

“I went from diagnosis to cancer-free in 30 days, with very little interruption in my life,” Cowie said. She deployed with her unit to Kuwait in 2007, and since that time has followed up every six months to ensure she’s still OK.

During pre-mobilization training at Camp Atterbury, Ind., Cowie had an ultrasound after something was spotted on her mammogram. Through the Tri-care military health care plan, she found a breast care specialist in Indianapolis, who did a biopsy. Three days later, she found out that she had Stage 0 breast cancer, “which is very, very early,” Cowie said.

The specialist said breast cancer usually is caught at Stage 2 or 3. “I thanked



With a year-long deployment just around the corner, Staff Sgt. Elizabeth Cowie opted for an aggressive treatment plan for her breast cancer that would quickly get her back to her unit. Cowie, who is a 15-year veteran of the Army Reserve and the Army Guard, beat the early-stage cancer and deployed with her unit to Kuwait in 2007. Since that time, Cowie has gotten a follow-up every six months and remains cancer-free today.

my lucky stars that someone looked close enough at the mammogram,” Cowie said.

Once diagnosed, Cowie discussed her timeline with her surgeon and oncologist. Her unit would be leaving Camp Atterbury in 30 days.

The doctors explained the options

available to her, which included a new treatment available “that I was a good candidate for,” Cowie said. MammoSite is a five-day targeted radiation therapy that uses a high daily dose of radiation.

“So, that is what I chose to do,” Cowie said. “I was really committed to my deployment, being so far into the training. It was not an option for me personally to back out and say, ‘Hey, I have to go home.’ I made a commitment to these troops and to this unit to see this through as long as the military would let me.”

Cowie was treated twice a day for 15 to 20 minutes for five days. “It was pretty aggressive, but ... I consider myself pretty lucky to have caught it so early,” she said. “I am a perfect example of [early detection].”

Throughout her ordeal, Cowie said, she was supported by her biological family and her Guard family.

“My family understands my dedication to duty,” she said. “But the call to Mom was a little scary for me. I put it off until I absolutely had to. I didn’t want them to worry. They are already worrying that I’m deploying, so now I had to give them something else to worry about.”

Cowie said her family offered support and didn’t get overly emotional. “That was the support that I really needed, because I wanted to stay focused. I didn’t want to go into the negative thoughts. ... I just couldn’t go there.”

With her Guard family, it was a little different. Cowie’s commander and first sergeant were men. “It was a little tricky at first,” she said, “but they were so great.”

After explaining her situation, Cowie said, her Guard leaders told her it was

her decision and that they would support her either way. “I thought about it for two seconds, and said, ‘I’m staying,’” she recalled. “They were a big, big help to me.”

The hardest part was continuing to lead her soldiers, Cowie said. “As an NCO, you always have to lead from the front. With this, that’s a little difficult. There were days that were a little harder for me. But I knew my soldiers looked up to me. I had to make sure that I was still [there] for my soldiers, and at the same time still taking care of myself.”

Cowie, who is a 15-year veteran of the Army Reserve and the Army Guard, said the experience gave her a greater appreciation for the research being done to cure all forms of cancer. “Little did I know how much new treatments would mean to my life,” she said.

Throughout her battle, Cowie was in contact with her surgeon and oncologist every day.

“I was committed to making this happen,” she said. “The whole team knew what our end goal was.” Being cancer free was paramount, she added, “but also to not totally lose what I had going on with the deployment.”

Cowie said she knew she may have to follow the unit later if she wasn’t able to stick to the timeline, but that she had no other doubts about the path she chose.

“When things fall into place, you have to believe that someone is out there watching out for you, and that there is a plan ahead of you and you are on the right course,” she said.

Editor’s Note: Air Force Lt. Col. Ellen Krenke serves at the National Guard Bureau.

Naval Safety Center seeks nominations for safety program panel

PRESS RELEASE

From Naval Safety Center
Public Affairs

NORFOLK — The Naval Safety Center (NSC) is seeking participants for the fourth semiannual Sailor-to-Sailor Safety (S2SS) Program, an innovative discussion panel

that allows young, first-term Sailors to take a lead role in mishap prevention efforts.

NSC administers the program in an attempt to get Sailors involved in positive peer mentorship.

Nominations are now being accepted for the

panel set to convene at NSC headquarters Nov. 17-19. Five Sailors will be selected.

Ideal candidates for S2SS are those who have suffered from a lapse of judgment during their careers but are now committed to helping

shipmates make better decisions.

“Past participants have had DUIs or other off-duty incidents and they were very passionate about letting their peers know how these decisions affected not only their careers, but their lives,” said April Phil-

lips, S2SS coordinator at the Naval Safety Center.

S2SS is comprised of candid discussions about risk management and an assessment of current safety products and policy. Panelists also tell their personal story on video for use in training across

the Fleet.

NSC fully funds temporary duty orders for the Sailors selected. Details on the nomination process can be found at safetycenter.navy.mil/messages/alsafe/files/2009/ALSAFE09-055.txt.

USS George Bush Air Department continues training

BY MCSA DANIEL S. MOORE

USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) Media Department

NEWPORT NEWS — Even though living and working in a shipyard can make operational readiness a challenge, Sailors of the USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) Air Department continues to train and keep their warfighting skills sharp.

“We are in fact keeping with the Navy’s vision of training, and I do believe we have taken the proactive steps to exceed those standards,” said Chief Aviation Boatswain’s Mate (Handling) (AW/SW) Anthony J. Alexander, the leading chief petty officer of Crash and Salvage. “We’ve taken advantage of every training opportunity.”

Many members of the Bush Air Department trained alongside members of USS Carl Vinson’s (CVN 70) Air Department, performing aircraft firefighting and rescue drills aboard Vinson, Oct. 20. The Bush Air Department will also be training with the USS Harry S. Truman’s (CVN 75) Air Department in the future.

“It ultimately means that the Bush is performing the same training as the Vinson, the Roosevelt, and etc.,” Alexander said. “In the big picture, it means that there’s standardized training throughout the fleet, that means that everybody is on the same page.”

When training aboard Truman, the Sailors will be performing drills with the Mobile Aircraft Firefighting Trainer (MAFTI), a trainer aircraft that is set on fire to simulate aircraft firefighting.

“Our crash team is always ready to go and our Air Department is ready to go,” said Aviation Boatswain’s Mate (Handling) Airman Michael P. King, a crew member of Bush’s Air Department’s V-1 Crash and Salvage Division. “The training that we are doing now is just brushing the dust off.”

According to King, the Bush Air Department frequently sends Sailors to other ships to gain experience during “on the job” training and improve the department.

“The base line is to establish a foundation of training and get us in an operational mode to be prepared to deploy,” said Chief Warrant Officer Larry Dean, Bush’s air boatswain. “In the future, what we will do is intensify our training to a point that when we have our own assets aboard the ship. We will be able to go out and actually perform those tasks that need to be done.”

With the Bush still in the shipyards and tough training conditions still around, Air Department Sailors refuses to be anything but ready for sea.



Photo by MCSA Daniel S. Moore

Lt. j.g. Carl C. Thomsen, USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70) Air Boatswain, briefs USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) and Vinson Air Departments before beginning a joint training aboard Vinson, Oct. 20. Members of the Bush Air Department performed aircraft firefighting and rescue training alongside Vinson’s Air Department in an effort to improve training.



Photo by MCSA Daniel S. Moore

Chief Warrant Officer Larry Dean, USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) Air Boatswain, speaks to Air Department members from Bush and USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70) during a combined training aboard Vinson, Oct. 20. Members of the Bush Air Department performed aircraft firefighting and rescue training alongside Vinson’s Air Department in an effort to improve training.



Photo by MC3 Kasey Krall

USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) and USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75) Sailors work together to put out a fire during training with the Mobile Aircraft Firefighting Training Device aboard Truman Oct. 23. Bush Sailors took advantage of the chance for some extra training while their ship is at Northrop Grumman Newport News Shipyard for post-shakedown availability.



Photo by MC3 Kasey Krall

USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) Sailors conduct joint training with the Mobile Aircraft Firefighting Training Device aboard USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75) Oct. 23. Bush Sailors took advantage of the chance for some extra training while their ship is at Northrop Grumman Newport News Shipyard for post-shakedown availability.

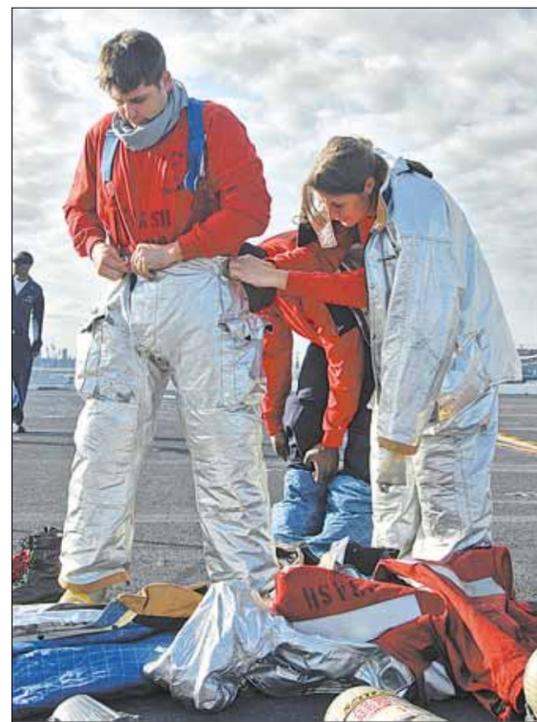


Photo by MC3 Kasey Krall

USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) Sailors don firefighting gear as they prepare to enter the Mobile Aircraft Firefighting Training Device aboard USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75), Oct. 23. Bush Sailors took advantage of the chance for some extra training while their ship is at Northrop Grumman Newport News Shipyard for post-shakedown availability.



Photo by MC1 Scott Taylor

Members of a visit, board, search and seizure team from the guided-missile cruiser USS Anzio (CG 68) and U.S. Coast Guard Maritime Safety and Security Team 91104 prepare to board a skiff. The vessel was carrying four tons of hashish in the Gulf of Aden. Anzio is the flagship of Combined Joint Task Force 151, a multinational task force established to conduct counter-piracy operations off the coast of Somalia.

USS Anzio seizes four tons of narcotics

BY LT. IAIN JONES, ROYAL NAVY
CTF 151 Public Affairs

USS ANZIO, Gulf of Aden — USS Anzio (CG 68), operating as part of the Combined Maritime Forces, a U.S.-led coalition supporting maritime security operations in the region, seized approximately four tons of hashish found aboard a skiff Oct. 15 in the Gulf of Aden, with an estimated street-value of \$28 million.

The skiff was located approximately 170 miles southwest of Salalah, Oman when it was spotted traveling at a high speed by Anzio's crew.

Following a brief chase, the skiff was boarded by Anzio's visit, board, search, and seizure (VBSS) team, including officers from the U.S. Coast Guard and U.S. Navy.

The drugs seized by naval forces could have helped to fund the insurgency fighting coalition forces in Afghanistan as well as contribute to instability in the region.

"The seizure of these drugs takes money out of the hands of those financing terrorists in the region," said Rear Adm. Scott E. Sanders, commander, Combined Task Force (CTF) 151, embarked aboard Anzio. "Yesterday these Sailors were hunting pirates, today they have sent a message to all would-be smugglers that we won't tolerate pirates or drug traffickers in these waters."

Coalition Sailors discovered the drugs in the dhow along the 'Hash Highway.' The drugs were thrown overboard and destroyed. This is the first seizure of narcotics that Anzio has conducted.

"At first we had no idea what the skiff was

doing out here in these waters, we were wary that they could have been pirates," said Capt. Frank J Olmo. "My VBSS teams are trained to handle these situations safely and efficiently."

Naval Forces assigned to the Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) have seized more than 22 tons of narcotics during 2009, highlighting the continual presence in the region and the commitment to creating and maintaining a lawful maritime order. In 2008, CMF forces seized more than 53 tons of narcotics.

Anzio is the flagship for CTF 151, and has

been operating in the region for five months. CTF 151 is a multinational task force established in January 2009 by the CMF headquartered in Manama, Bahrain. They conduct counter piracy operations under a mission-based mandate to actively deter, disrupt and suppress piracy in order to protect global maritime security, and secure freedom of navigation for the benefit of all nations.

For more news from Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command/Commander, U.S. 5th Fleet, visit www.navy.mil/local/cusnc/.



Photo by MC1 Scott Taylor

Members of a visit, board, search and seizure team from the guided-missile cruiser USS Anzio (CG 68) and U.S. Coast Guard Maritime Safety and Security Team 91104 search a skiff in the Gulf of Aden that was found to contain four tons of hashish.



Photo by MC1 Matthew Bash

Members of a visit, board, search and seizure team from the guided-missile cruiser USS Anzio (CG 68) and U.S. Coast Guard Maritime Safety and Security Team 91104 dispose of bags of illegal narcotics.

In the zone: TR Sailors and Northrop Grumman shipyard workers

BY MC2 (SW/AW)
JEREMY FREEHLING

USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71)
Public Affairs

The fourth Nimitz-class supercarrier USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71) is beginning its four-year Refueling Complex Overhaul at Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding in Newport News, Va. In order to make this mission a success several TR Sailors have taken on the role of zone managers.

The ship is divided into 12 distinct zones covering every space from the bilge to the bridge. After the zones were set, zone managers were picked for each area.

“Zone managers are responsible for the status of every job that is going on, on the ship,” said Lt. Cmdr. Ken Cregar, TR’s Lead Zone Manager.

All zone managers are responsible for tracking the jobs being conducted via the ship’s force information management system (SFIMS). This program tells what jobs are ongoing, the progression of the job, what jobs have been completed and when jobs are about to begin. This pro-

gram is the main tool for zone managers to communicate with contractors in making sure that the work is being done in a timely manner.

“As zone managers, it is very important for us to have an open dialogue with the contractors. SFIMS gives us that integration aspect that is essential for us,” said Assistant Lead Zone Manager, Lt. Jarrod Mosley. “I see us as mediators between the individual departments and the contractors, which we resolve any conflicts that may arise while the work is being conducted.”

In addition to maintaining the work schedule for their zone, these managers also perform daily walkthroughs around the ship. These walkthroughs are viewed as the most important aspect of what zone managers do. Beside getting visual confirmation of the work that is going on, managers can also check for safety hazards, fire boundaries, and cleanliness, and make sure personnel protective equipment is being worn.

“Each manager walks his zone daily to monitor and check the

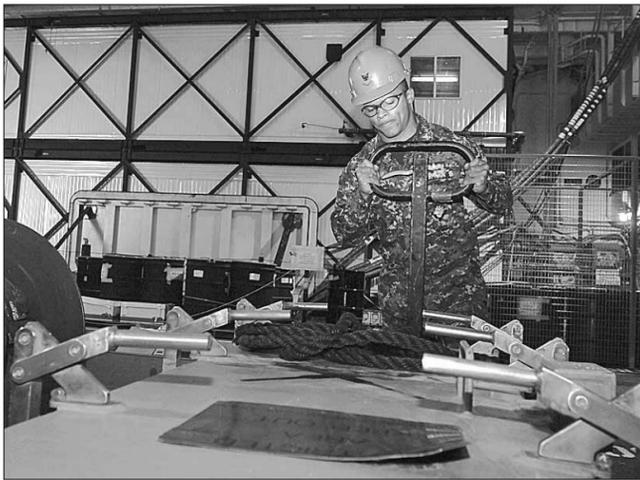


Photo by MC2 (SW/AW) William Weinert

Gunners Mate 3rd Class (SW) Michael Rogers helps unload a gun locker for Weapons Department in preparation for rehabbing their spaces aboard USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71). This type of work is coordinated through zone managers in Work Control.

status of the work being done and to see if there is anything the contractors need,” said Cregar.

These walkthroughs also allow for planning of future work that will take place and identifying possible issues that might come up.

“Zone managers are the main

point of contact for the contractors to gain access to the spaces that they need to enter to do their job,” said Chief Aviation Ordnancemen (AW/SW) Quarry Dinkins, zone 6 manager. “It’s our primary job to make sure that jobs start on time, and by walking the spaces we can ensure the

jobs are being completed, if not we can assist the contractors.”

All zone managers realize that the ship’s work schedule is in flux and any number of issues may arise at any moment. It is because of this that being a zone manager and maintaining one’s zone work schedule daily is such an important part of TR having a successful overhaul period.

“It is important to remember that even though we are in the shipyard, the individual departments are still responsible for maintaining their spaces. This is a critical part in the shipyard process,” said Cregar. “By every Sailor taking ownership of their space, it will go a long way to making sure that TR leaves the yard safely and on time.”

Theodore Roosevelt, a Nimitz-class aircraft carrier, was commissioned Oct. 25, 1986. The 1,092-foot ship is currently undergoing a planned refueling complex overhaul at Northrop Grumman Newport News Shipbuilding.

Learn more about America’s Big Stick at www.tr.surfor.navy.mil

Sailors support command delivered leadership training in Navy quick poll

BY SUSAN LAWSON

Center for Personal and Professional Development Public Affairs

VIRGINIA BEACH — A recent Navy Personnel Research, Studies, and Technology (NPRST) quick poll returned positive feedback from Sailors regarding Command-Delivered Leadership Training (CDLT).

NPRST distributed 966 requests and received 327 valid responses for a return rate of 36 percent, which falls within the Navy’s average for quick poll responses.

“The poll ran from September 1 through September 15, and those Sailors who received quick

poll requests were asked questions about CDLT in the areas of instructor quality, training content, training materials, estimates of ability to apply the material in the work environment, prior knowledge of course content, and opinions of overall course rating,” said Cmdr. George Michaels, director of training for the Center for Personal and Professional Development (CPPD).

“CPPD develops personal, professional and leadership training for the fleet, which is why this feedback is extremely important. These quick polls provide us with a gauge to measure the fleet’s assessment of our courses,

and in turn, help us understand the level of effectiveness our training offers our Sailors,” said Michaels.

NPRST received an 88 percent rating for the course’s “good or better” rating. Specifically, Sailors returned a 37 percent response rate indicating the course was deemed “good;” 41 percent of respondents rated the course as “excellent;” while another 10 percent responded called the course “outstanding.”

“These are all great indicators that our courses are succeeding in the fleet,” said Michaels. “It also helps us develop a baseline for future updates and revisions

to our courses. Perhaps even more importantly, is the information we received from this quick poll regarding leadership development at the command level.

Approximately 78 percent of respondents indicated that their command leadership courses play an active role in the professional development of junior Sailors,” said Michaels.

The poll also underscored the successes of CDLT’s course development and delivery methods. More than 85 percent of the Sailors who responded to the quick poll agreed that the training environment enabled them to meet their training objectives

and that the course materials were presented in a way that enabled them to meet their training objectives.

Additionally, 84 percent indicated that their instructor was prepared and provided additional assistance when needed; 87 percent agreed that their instructor answered their questions and explained the learning objectives; and 86 percent were confident in their ability to successfully apply the knowledge and skills learned in the course.

For more information about Command-Delivered Leadership Training, visit www.nko.navy.mil and select the Leadership tab.

Weakened auto industry provides opportunity for local Marine

STORY AND PHOTO BY
STAFF SGT. LUIS AGOSTINI

Regimental Combat Team-7,
1st Marine Division Public Affairs RSS

HELMAND PROVINCE, Afghanistan – Within a week of arriving in Afghanistan's Helmand Province, Lance Cpl. Gary Mishoe is prepping his motor pool for his unit's take-over of counterinsurgency operations in Afghanistan's Helmand province.

From preventive maintenance to headlight and tire checks on the unit's humvees and 7 ton trucks, Mishoe is helping ensure his fellow Marines will operate safe and operable vehicles throughout their deployment.

Mishoe, a 27 year old from Virginia Beach, is currently deployed as a motor transport operator with Regimental Combat Team 7, which will conduct counterinsurgency operations in support of the Afghan national security force throughout the Helmand province.

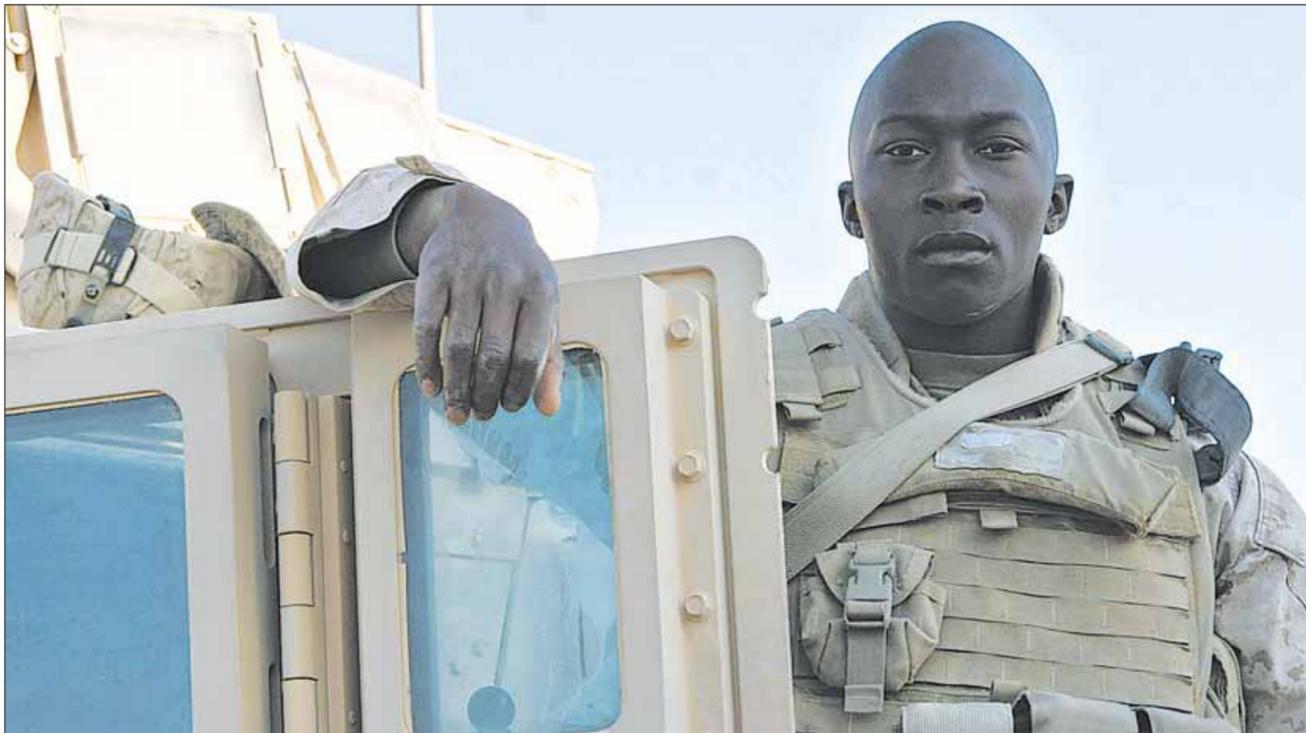
Mishoe's path from Virginia Beach to Afghanistan was not a simple high school to boot camp route.

Within a year of graduating Open Campus High School in 2002, Mishoe secured a spot on the assembly line at the Chassis Ford Assembly Plant in Norfolk. His job was simple: assemble drive shafts. The task earned him about \$75,000 a year. Life was good.

"I felt very secure. I had a good job, an apartment, bought a new car and had a family," said Mishoe. "I thought I was going to retire there."

Four years later, the same assembly plant at which Mishoe's mother had worked at 10 years earlier, could not escape a weakened economy and suffering auto industry. He received three months notice that the plant was shutting down.

"I got a \$100,000 severance



Lance Cpl. Gary Mishoe, a motor transport operator with Regimental Combat Team 7, went from assembling drive shafts at a Ford Plant in Norfolk, to preparing humvees and 7-ton trucks for counterinsurgency operations in southern Afghanistan. Mishoe, 27, from Virginia Beach, is currently deployed in Afghanistan with RCT-7.

package. But I still needed a job," said Mishoe, who had a wife, a toddler and a child on the way at the time.

The Virginian's life revolved around the auto industry as far back as he can remember. His mother worked at the same assembly line 10 years earlier.

"When I was in high school, I would wash some of my mom's co-worker's cars. I was a kid, washing these people's cars, and then I found myself working right next to them on the assembly line," he said.

Following the layoff, Mishoe traveled up and down the East Coast, securing modeling gigs at New York fashion shows, and eventually following his wife to Atlanta.

While in the Atlanta area, Mishoe made the decision to accept a commitment he's always had on his mind: enlist as a U.S. Marine. He knew the challenge

ahead.

"I knew it was going to be hard, I knew I had to work for it. But I was willing to do it," he said.

Mishoe also enlisted in a wartime Marine Corps, and fully aware of the chance that he may deploy to either Iraq or Afghanistan.

"I wanted to come out here and do what Marines do. I've been training since boot camp to do this and here I am," he said.

Mishoe enlisted in the Marine Corps Aug. 11, 2007, and after graduating from Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island, S.C., Mishoe completed follow on training at Camp Geiger, N.C., and Fort Leonardwood, Mo., where he learned how to become a Marine motor transport operator.

While helping him gain familiarity on the vehicles, Mishoe compares and contrasts his

work and life experiences between the assembly line and the Marine Corps.

"Working for Ford was tougher, not because of the job itself, but because of the lack of a team attitude. I was doing the job by myself," said Mishoe. "There's a lot more pride in the Marine Corps. If you're struggling, there's always someone to help. There's always that team spirit."

That team spirit was developed by Mishoe's small unit leaders, his noncommissioned and staff noncommissioned officers.

Now in Afghanistan, Mishoe will eventually head out of the forward operating base and into the country roads, driving convoys and leading Marines.

"I want to learn about the Afghan culture, what they've been through. I believe that we are helping them in a turning point in their civilization. It's good

that we are here," he said.

Mishoe also hopes to do some soul searching as well.

"The Marine Corps has helped me become a better father, husband and person. Now I want to learn about myself, about my limits," said Mishoe, who is starting to grip the mental and physical challenges of operating in a combat environment.

After completing his yearlong deployment, Mishoe hopes to secure a spot at the Marine Inspector/Instructor staff at Chesapeake, approximately 15 miles from the Chassis Ford Plant. The days of the lucrative assembly line are a distant memory, if not a blessing in disguise.

"I'm thinking about the here and now, and the future," he said. "My prayers were answered. I got what I wanted. I'm a Marine."

USFF FLTCM addresses Fleet Reserve Association

CDMCM Tom Howard discusses Navy's current status, 'Top 5' with national convention

PRESS RELEASE

From U.S. Fleet Forces Public Affairs

VIRGINIA BEACH — U.S. Fleet Forces (USFF) Fleet Master Chief (SW/AW) Tom Howard, addressed members of the Fleet Reserve Association (FRA) Oct. 21 at their 82nd Annual National Convention held in Virginia Beach, Va.

Howard discussed with FRA members the current status of the Navy, as well as the operations and missions Sailors are carrying out today.

"As of this morning, 147 of our 285 ships are at sea where 116 of them are on deployment," said Howard. "That's 45,000 men and women on ships and an additional roughly 20,000 with what we refer to as 'boots on ground' deployed around the globe."

He also shared the "top five" issues the Navy is focusing on in the enlisted force. These include stress on the force and family; 'Brilliant on the Basics'; family support to our deployed and IA



Photo by MCC Michael Lewis

U.S. Fleet Forces Fleet Master Chief (SW/AW) Tom Howard addresses members of the Fleet Reserve Association (FRA) at their 82nd annual national convention.

Sailors; warfare qualifications and communication from the senior enlisted to the entire fleet. "We have been involved in the global war on terror, now

known as the 'Overseas Contingency Operations' for eight years and the operational tempo of our units and Sailors tends to be higher than many can remember in years past," Howard said. "Combine those with the number of Sailors who have lost their lives in combat related activities and the even higher non-combat related incidents such as private motor vehicle and motorcycles and suicides and the stressors become greater."

Another topic Howard said that Navy leaders are concentrating on is enlisted warfare qualifications.

"We're looking at making warfare pins mandatory for all hands thus ensuring our enlisted force is mission ready," Howard said. "The warfare device itself is a symbol that the Sailor has the baseline knowledge to do the right thing, at the right time, for their ship and shipmates. It is every Sailor's responsibility to be an expert on their platform."

Howard also shared some initiatives in communication from senior enlisted leaders to the entire fleet.

"We are using every means available to us from traditional word of mouth at quarters to the use of social media," Howard said. "Facebook, Twitter and everything in between. If we don't keep up with the latest and great-

est social media and technology, we are missing the opportunity to communicate with our Sailors and their families."

While the Navy's role in global operations is a top priority, Howard reminded the group that our Sailors and their families remain the core of our mission accomplishment.

"Billions of dollars spent on ships, submarines, aircraft, weapons, communications and equipment, are useless without the Sailor," said Howard. "In no other Navy in the world is the success undeniably based on the men and women that wear the uniform."

FRA members advocate for enlisted members of the sea services to congressional, state, and national leaders on behalf of retirees and active duty Sailors, Marines and Coast Guardsmen.

"Having Fleet Master Chief Howard speak at our national convention is incredibly valuable to our members," said Joe Barnes, FRA national executive director. "His insight and information shared with us today is critical to what we do everyday in support of our sea services. We're beginning our 85th year, and it's really significant that he is here and we are very honored to have him speak with us."

The FRA is a congressionally chartered, non-profit organization that represents the interests of the Sea Service community before the U.S. Congress; the Association's membership comprises current and former enlisted members of the U.S. Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard. FRA was chartered as the Fleet Reserve Association in 1924 and after more than 80 years, FRA remains dedicated to its primary mission of serving the interests of current and former enlisted Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard personnel.

For more news from U.S. Fleet Forces Command, visit www.navy.mil/local/clf/.

Pier 3 gets a face lift



Photo courtesy Naval Weapon Station Earle Public Affairs

(L-R) Lt. Jeff Dennison, NWS Earle Port Services Officer; Cmdr. David Latini, Construction Manager for the Pier 3 project; Capt. Gary Maynard, CO, NWS Earle; Lt. Cmdr. Keith Barkey, OIC Facilities Engineering and Acquisition Division and Richard D. MacDonald, Senior Vice President Weeks Marine, Inc, cut the ribbon marking the opening of the \$147 million Pier 3 at Naval Weapons Station Earle, Oct. 23.

Hundreds join Old Ironsides' for 212th Birthday

BY MC1 ERIC BROWN
USS Constitution Public Affairs

ABOARD USS CONSTITUTION — The oldest commissioned warship afloat in the world, USS Constitution, performed an underway demonstration for the first time in more than a decade to celebrate the anniversary date of its launch, Oct. 21, 1797.

The last time 'Old Ironsides' spent a birthday at sea was in 1997, in celebration of its bicentennial. This year, more than 300 people were aboard for the events; they included USS Constitution's crew, and members of the Naval History and Heritage Command, Boston's National Park Service and the USS Constitution Museum.

"Today marks the day when USS Constitution began her legacy of honor and service to our nation," said the ship's 71st and current commanding officer, Cmdr. Timothy Cooper, shortly after the vessel got underway. "Over two centuries of service, she has used both force and diplomacy to advance American interests all over the world. She is the most visible reminder of the beginnings of our Navy and her rich heritage continues to exemplify the finest traditions of honor, courage and commitment that define our service."

While underway, the ship fired shots from port and starboard saluting batteries in honor of the 16 states that comprised America when USS Constitution was launched in the late 18th century;



Photo by MC1 Class Eric Brown

The oldest commissioned warship afloat, USS Constitution, went to sea on her 212th birthday with her crew of 75 Sailors and more than 200 guests aboard. Constitution has not gone to sea on the anniversary of her 1797 launching since her 1997 bicentennial.

one additional shot was fired in honor of the ship.

In accordance with a tradition among modern USS Constitution Sailors, on the ship's birthday two crew members were recognized by their shipmates and received

the 2009 Command Leadership Award and the 2009 Berenson Award.

Builder 1st Class Juanita Esquivel was the recipient of the

2009 Command Leadership Award. "Petty Officer Esquivel's selection by a vote of her peers shows she has earned the respect and trust of each and every crew

member, junior and senior," noted the award citation.

"Petty Officer Esquivel's professionalism and selfless devotion to duty reflected credit upon herself and were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service."

Airman Mark Alexander was named the 2009 Berenson Award recipient. "Selection by the crew as the top tour guide from the crew, Airman Alexander's has earned the respect and trust of all crew members, junior and senior," his citation reads. "Known for giving extremely informative and creative tours, he represented USS Constitution, as well as the Navy, proudly and with enthusiasm. Each tour sends people away with a sense of pride in our Navy and its glorious history."

In her years of active service, from 1798 - 1855, the three-masted wooden frigate fought in the Quasi-War with France, the Barbary Wars and the War of 1812. Today, Old Ironsides' is the oldest commissioned warship afloat in the world, has a permanent crew of about 75 active duty U.S. Navy Sailors, and is visited by nearly half a million people every year.

"This morning, we are again calling upon USS Constitution to perform her duty," Cooper said shortly before the ship returned to Pier One at the Charlestown Navy Yard. "While I don't expect that we will be fighting any battles or negotiating any treaties, I do think that we will be proving that USS Constitution continues to do her part for our country."

To learn more about USS Constitution, visit www.history.navy.mil/ussconstitution.

For more news from USS Constitution, visit www.navy.mil/local/constitution/.

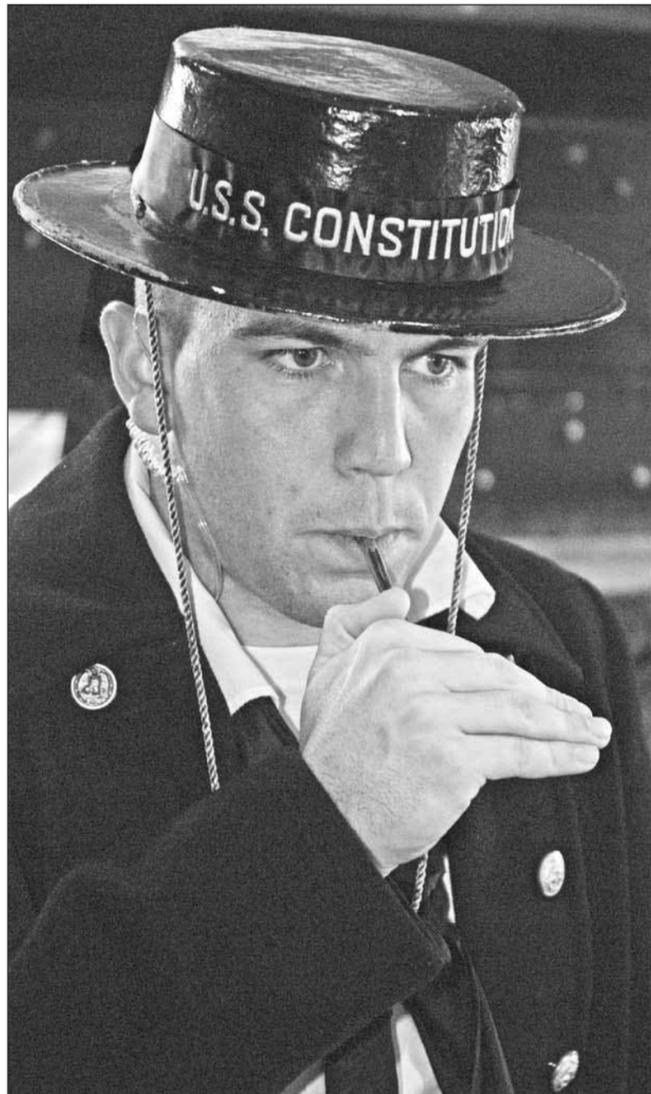


Photo by Airman Mark Alexander

(Above) Airman Trina Pardo attaches a monkey fist to a mooring line aboard the USS Constitution as she performs an underway demonstration in honor of the three-masted wooden frigate's 212th birthday.

(Left) Boatswain's Mate 2nd Class Philip Gagnon demonstrates the use of the boatswain's pipe during the underway. The boatswain's pipe (originally termed a call) dates back to the days of sail. Men high on the royal and top gallant yards could hear the pipe under weather conditions that would cause the human voice to be unintelligible.



REMEMBER:

DST Ends in the US Nov. 1, when clocks are set back one hour at 2 a.m. local daylight time, which becomes 1 a.m. local standard time.



Photo by MC2 Mandy Hunsucker

(L-R) Retired Adm. Edmund Giambastiani, Jr., vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Maj. Gen. David Edgington, chief of staff, United States Joint Forces Command (USJFCOM) and Rear Adm. Gerald Beaman, deputy chief of staff, Global Force Management and Joint Operations U.S. Fleet Forces Command (USFFC) cut the ribbon to the new Joint Deployment and Maritime Operations Centers building during a ceremony, Oct. 21. The building will provide state-of-the-art technology in an ergonomical environment to better support the missions of USJFCOM and USFFC.

CEREMONY: Joint Deployment and Maritime Operations Centers building presented to the public, Oct. 21

Continued from page A1

MOC to MOC collaboration and robust C2 capabilities to the commander with improved situational awareness and assists U.S. Fleet Forces in facilitating its unique relationships with USJFCOM and U.S. Northern Command.

The cost of the construction and cabling of the facility totaled \$19 million. \$13 million was awarded to the project by

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Atlantic. The facility became operational September 1.

Some of the facility's key attributes include: vertically raised walls that enable a 50 or more person combatant and maritime component command crisis response center; state-of-the-art data, communications and audiovisual collaborative network made up of miles of fiber and cabling, and interactive shared displays;

blade server technology that eliminates desktop PCs, centralizes IT service and secures hard drives; optimizes ergonomic and lighting human factors to null effects of a windowless, secure facility; and custom designed, reconfigurable furnishings among others.

For more information about USJFCOM visit www.jfcom.mil. For more information about USFF Command visit www.cffc.navy.mil.

RECORD: Navy ships realized a record 1.36 million barrels of oil in fuel avoidance during fiscal 2009

Continued from page A1

spearheaded by NAVSEA to reduce ships' energy consumption. Program sponsors conduct routine meetings with ship operators to review specific fuel-saving procedures and recommend quarterly awards for ships with the most fuel-efficient operations.

One of the ways NAVSEA's i-ENCON measures fuel usage and cost avoidance is through underburn, the reported fuel rate for the quarter that is below the ship class' average burn rate. One hundred thirty-one Pacific and Atlantic Fleet ships reported an underburn for fiscal year 2009.

"The cumulative underburn was 14.6 percent of fuel consumption for fiscal 2009, which exceeded the i-ENCON goal of 10 percent by a wide margin," said Pehlivan. "This underburn translates into a fuel cost avoidance of \$123 million (based on average fuel costing \$90 barrel)."

For fiscal 2008, \$136 million in fuel cost avoidance was realized when fuel costs reached an average of \$130 barrel.

The performance may be attributable to ships receiving \$2 million in cash awards distributed in the fourth quarter of each fiscal year by Commander, Naval Surface Forces, according to Pehlivan.

i-ENCON rewards leading fuel conservers among underway surface ships with special recognition and cash incentives up to \$67,000. In fiscal 2008, 148 ships received incentive cash awards. According to Pehlivan, award money is routed to each commanding officer's discretionary

funds, that are often used to buy items like damage control gear or to augment the ship's welfare and recreation programs.

"These incentives are very important to i-ENCON's success," Pehlivan added. "It's a voluntary program that requires real commitment from ships' commanding officers, chief engineers and main propulsion assistants. I receive calls and e-mails from ships every day wanting to know how they can participate and improve their fuel performance."

For more news from Naval Sea Systems Command, visit www.navy.mil/local/navsea/.

DARPA program brings Sci-fi capability to warfighters

BY DONNA MILES
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — Moviegoers were captivated as they watched a metallic assassin morph before their eyes in "Terminator 2." The villain turned to liquid before assuming new forms capable of squeezing through narrow openings and transforming its arms into bladed weapons and solid metal tools.

Scientists at the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency were wowed too. Now they're working to deliver that same kind of technology to support the good guys: warfighters on the battlefield.

Mitchell R. Zakin, program manager for DARPA's Programmable Matter division, said he's convinced the concept depicted for decades in blockbuster movies and comic books has real-life applications.

He's leading up the effort to develop "programmable matter," which he calls "the ultimate adaptable material." It will be capable of changing size and shape and taking on new properties for one use, he explained, then adapting to a whole different form for another use.

Zakin clarified that he's not out to change warfighters themselves, just the equipment they use, the clothing they wear and the loads they carry.

"Warfighters carry an incredible amount of stuff and they don't have any more room to carry more," he said. "Yet they are facing much more complicated battle spaces. They're going into caves and working in cities. They need more sophisticated tools to deal with these environments, yet they can't carry them."

The logistical challenge of getting equipment to remote areas such as Afghanistan exacerbates the problem, he said.

Enter the concept of programmable matter, a convergence of the fields of chemistry, information, mathematical theory and engineering.

Zakin envisions a day when warfighters will be able to reach into their kit, pull out a lump of programmable matter and form it into whatever they need.

Think of it as carrying a paint can with a bunch of particles inside, he advises anyone struggling to understand how it all would work. The particles could be different shapes and sizes, be made up of different materials and have different functions.

Depending on the requirement, the warfighter would instruct the particles to become whatever was needed at the moment — a wrench, a hammer, a spare part. The particles would then organize themselves to form it. After using the device, the warfighter would return it to the bucket, where it once again would become a bunch of particles until instructed to become something else.

The same principle would work for uniforms, which could change their thermal insulating properties according to the climate: the deep freeze of the Afghan mountains, the blast furnace of summertime in the Middle East.

Fantastic as this all sounds, it's on its way to becoming a reality.

Five university-led teams are participating in DARPA's Programmable Matter pro-

gram, and by the middle of next year, at least one is expected to emerge with a demonstration project. Halfway through the program's second and final phase, all five teams are making convincing progress that it's all possible.

The teams began the first phase of the program doing computer modeling, but got so excited by the project that they jumped headfirst into the second phase and began building actual prototypes, Zakin said.

By the end of the second phase, they're expected to demonstrate that they can take a single set of building blocks and create five different geometric shapes with the strength of engineering plastic.

"Everyone is making progress toward meeting these goals in a very meaningful way," Zakin said. "I'm confident that most, if not all the teams, will succeed."

The ultimate benefit to warfighters would be mind-boggling. "Imagine the possibilities: an entire toolbox originating from a single material form, or flexible clothing or equipment that can adapt to the immediate and changing needs of the warfighter, perhaps even 'smart' bandages embedded with diagnostic sensing capabilities," Zakin said. "The possibilities are endless."

In the simplest terms, programmable matter would bring warfighters "maximum capabilities with minimum carry weight," he said. "It would give them the ability to carry a little amount of stuff and do a lot with it. It creates a whole new paradigm in flexibility for the warfighter."

But the implications go far beyond warfighting, Zakin said. Aircraft wings built of programmable matter could change in flight to provide the best aerodynamic properties. Everything from computers to televisions to cars could be programmed to automatically update themselves with the newest features and configurations. Clothing could morph into the latest fashion styles.

In a nutshell, nothing would ever have to become obsolete.

"This is not fantasy, actually," Zakin said. "Aspects of this already are being done in this project."

Programmable matter also has the potential of turning the entire manufacturing process on its head. No longer would one design and one manufacturing process be needed for every single consumer product.

"Personal manufacturing" could take over. Consumers could go online, buy a blueprint for whatever they need, download the instructions, then feed them into a personal assembler that makes the product before their eyes, he said.

In some ways, Zakin said he's been preparing for the Programmable Matter program since he first saw as a young boy the concept depicted in the 1950s sci-fi movie, "The Blob."

"Most of my programs come out of the movies or comic books," he said. "It's what I do for a living."

Decades later, he said, it's gratifying to be at DARPA, where he's on the leading edge of helping bring fantasy to life.

"It allows us to do something very, very important, and something no one else has ever done before," he said. "It's very DARPA-like."



Gate 6 to close Nov. 2

Naval Station Norfolk will close Gate 6 beginning Monday, Nov. 2 in order to relocate limited manpower to higher security priority locations.

FRONT & CENTER

SECTION B

FLAGSHIPNEWS.COM

October 29, 2009

A different kind of GQ for Sailors

BY MC2 MANDY HUNSUCKER

Staff Writer

NORFOLK — Gentlemen's Quarterly Magazine featured seven Sailors in the Nov. 1 issue, modeling peacoats from top designers Burberry, Prada and J. Crew, among others.

The Sailors were scouted out by the magazine during this year's Fleet Week New York in New York City. Two of the seven Sailors, who are stationed in the Hampton Roads area, were recently interviewed by local media after the publication reached the stands.

Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Tommy Doerflinger, USS Iwo Jima (LHD 7), was out enjoying Fleet Week when he was approached by a GQ Magazine scout.

"They had a bunch of model scouts from GQ out trying to recruit Sailors to do their photo shoot," said Doerflinger. "I wasn't going to do it at first because it seemed silly to me, but one of my buddies from the ship said 'let's go', so we went."

Master-at-Arms Seaman Apprentice Marcus Wilson, Maritime Expeditionary Security Squadron Six, saw a flyer about the GQ shoot while out and about in the city and thought it was something he'd like to do.

"The next day, after seeing the flyer, I was approached by the GQ staff and they asked me if I'd be interested in being in the magazine. I said absolutely," said Wilson. "They took some pictures and the next day they called me."

The shoot began at 5 a.m. on board the guided-missile destroyer USS Roosevelt (DDG 80),



Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Tommy Doerflinger and Seaman Apprentice Kirk Albert Jr. show their stuff in Gentlemen's Quarterly or "GQ." Seven Sailors modeled outfits for during Fleet Week New York featured in the Nov. 1, issue, two of seven were from Hampton Roads.

Photos by Ben Watts / GQ

See GENTLEMEN'S QUARTERLY, B13

Battle of Yorktown 228th anniversary

BY MARK O. PIGGOTT

Naval Weapons Station Yorktown
Public Affairs

YORKTOWN — Sailors from Naval Weapons Station (NWS) Yorktown and Marines assigned to the 2nd Fleet Anti-Terrorism Security Team (FAST) Company commemorated the 228th anniversary of America's decisive Revolutionary War victory at Yorktown, Oct. 19, during "Yorktown Day" festivities in Yorktown, Va.

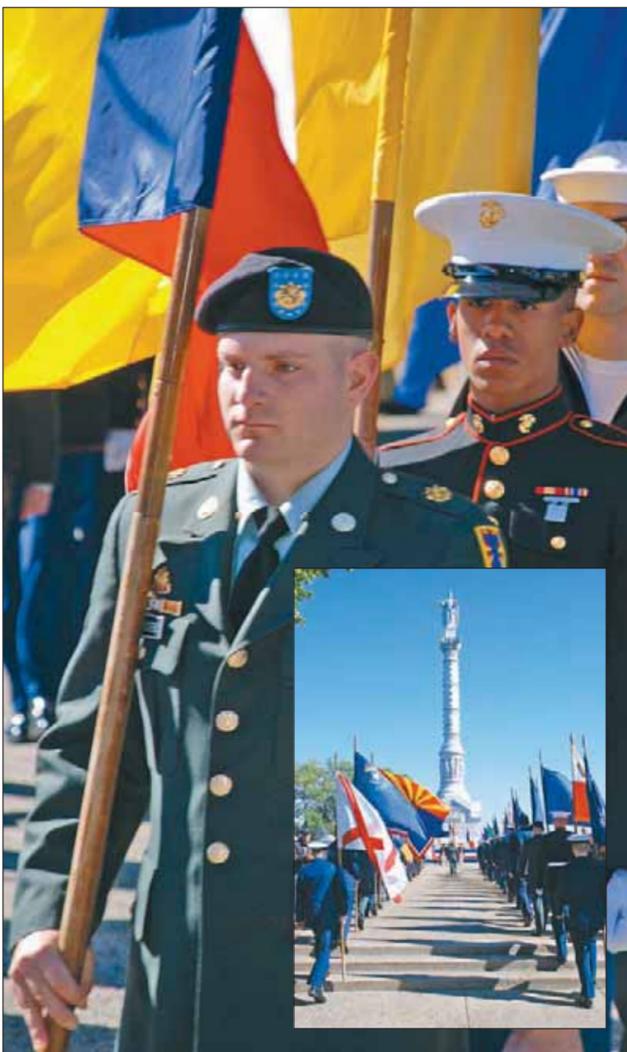
In 1781, following a nine-day bombardment, British forces in Yorktown under Lord Charles Cornwallis surrendered more than 8,000 Soldiers and Sailors to the combined American and French armies, commanded by General George Washington.

"This engagement represented the close of the last major military action of the American Revolution, ending the fighting phase of the war and effectively granted independence to the American colonies following a six-and-a-half-year military struggle," said Mike Litterst, Public Affairs Officer, Colonial National Historical Park at Yorktown.

Every year since the British surrender, there have been patriotic observances held in Yorktown on the anniversary of the surrender. The modern day observance traces its roots to 1922, when the Daughters of the American Revolution began an annual wreath-laying ceremony, which set the tradition upon which the current Yorktown Day is based.

Today, the Yorktown Day Association, comprised of 13 civic, patriotic and government organizations, coordinates the traditional commemorative events.

"Naval Weapons Station Yorktown is proud to partner with



Photos by Mark Piggott

Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines from military installations across the Hampton Roads peninsula participate in "Patriotic Exercises" to commemorate the 228th anniversary of America's decisive Revolutionary War victory at the Battle of Yorktown, Oct. 19, at the Yorktown Victory Monument. Military service members took part in the annual pageant of flags, a colorful display that includes the American and French national colors, the flags of the 50 states and the District of Columbia, and the flags of the 13 Yorktown Day Association members.

the Yorktown Day Association," NWS Yorktown Executive Officer Lt. Cmdr. Tim Shipman, cer. "Being a part of the 'Historic

See YORKTOWN, B13



Photo by MC2 John Stratton

Navy Reserve Cmdr. Matthew Lee, executive officer and instructor for the Naval Justice School in Newport, R.I., and founder of Tocci, Goss & Lee PC, speaks to local area command representatives at the 2009 Mid-Atlantic Joint Services Immigration and Naturalization Symposium held aboard Naval Station Norfolk, about the basics of immigration laws as they pertain to the Navy.

Mid-Atlantic Navy Legal Service Office hosts local immigration, naturalization conference

BY MC2 JOSEPH R. WAX

Navy Public Affairs Support Element-East

NORFOLK — The Mid-Atlantic Region Navy Legal Service Office (NLSO) hosted an immigration and naturalization informational conference for all local command representatives, judge advocate general (JAG) officers and civilian employees Oct. 16 on board Naval Station Norfolk.

NAVADMIN 113/08 requires that all commands have "a command representative responsible for providing hands-on assistance to service members" who may be dealing with immigration and naturalization issues. The presentations at the conference focused on teaching command representatives the different forms and procedures necessary to help their shipmates obtain United States citizenship. It also spotlighted some problems they could encounter and how best to deal with them.

For Debra Parker, a supervisory paralegal specialist at NLSO Mid-Atlantic and one of the event's organizers, the goal was simply education.

"We want them [command representatives] to understand the basics of filing for citizenship and how to help their shipmates," she said.

According to Parker, most if not all of the normal fees associated with naturalization are waived while someone is in the military. The fee waiver, unfortunately, does not apply to family members and de-

See NATURALIZATION, B13

SPOUSE SPEAK!



Murphy's Law – for military spouses

BY CASEY SPURR

Navy spouse, Southeastern Virginia Chapter
Director for Blue Star Families

I like to think of it as Murphy's Law for Military Spouses: when our spouses are away, everything that can go wrong, likely will. The dishwasher breaks, the car gets a flat, the kids get the chicken pox, the dog rips a hole in the carpet – and all at the same time, no less. You name it, and there is a military spouse who can top it with a tale of her own.

Just the other day I was on the verge of a meltdown over an unfortunate combination of events when the humor of my own self-pity occurred to me. My husband hadn't been away from home twenty-four hours, and as I sat on my sofa, out of the corner of my eye I saw a flash scurrying across the floor. As I turned my head to investigate, I laid my eyes upon the most enormous and repulsive bug I'd ever seen and gasped in horror. I jumped to my feet, my heart racing, and tried to decide exactly what I was going to do. Call me old-fashioned, but I consider the eviction of such unwanted tenants a task far better suited for my husband than me.

Ten minutes later, I found myself frustrated and worn out from unsuccessfully chasing this insect-rodent hybrid with a rolled magazine in hand and more scared of it than it was of me. I know this because it would taunt me by pausing briefly as if to instigate me and then bolt on an unpredictable path each time I took a swing. Eventually, it ran behind a piece of furniture and out of sight for good. I eased my way back to my place on the sofa certain it might show its gnarly little face again at any moment.

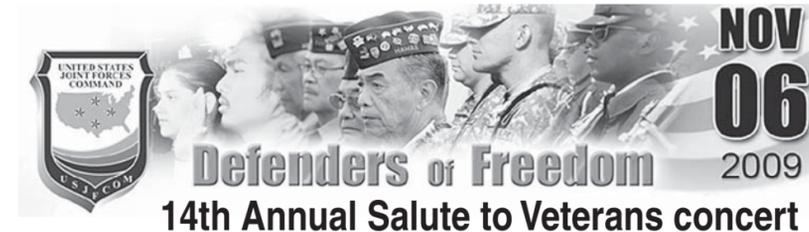
This incident alone would not have been enough to make me believe the laws of nature were working against me, but this was just the cap on a day full of fun little surprises. Earlier that afternoon as I jumped into my car to go pick my son up from preschool, I was stunned to find it wouldn't start. I had just driven the car thirty minutes earlier, but suddenly when I had somewhere important to be and

my husband was in no position to help, it was dead as a doornail. A new battery, an alternator, and a week in a much too compact loaner car, and I would eventually be all set. The only other time we have ever had a car break down? His car, another alternator, and he was deployed, of course.

After making other arrangements to pick my son up that afternoon, several attempts at jumping the vehicle, and transporting it to the repair shop, I finally made it home just in time for one of the bulbs in our family room's recessed lighting to blow out. Clearly, a blown out bulb is no tragedy. In our house, however, it has become almost comical that bulbs decide to meet their demise each time my husband leaves home. And not just any light bulb. No, a simple lamp would be too easy. It's always the lights that are irritatingly just out of reach (and of course, would be no problem for my husband at 6'6") that require me to drag out the ladder. The bulbs that really seem to have their lifespan in sync with my husband's detachment schedule are the outdoor lighting over our garage and every recessed light bulb between our kitchen and family room. And let's not forget those hallway ceiling lights that also require unscrewing and detaching the bulky globes just to change the bulb. Now, don't get me wrong, I'm perfectly capable of changing a light bulb. The irony of their timing just never ceases to amaze me.

So when my friend, the insect-rodent hybrid, decided to play his game of cat and mouse with me that evening, it was just the finishing piece of a perfect day to finally make me laugh out loud at a day full of these little quirks of fate that had occurred yet again when my husband was away from home. None of this should have surprised me, you see, because this type of evolution happens each time he is gone.

One time in particular that always echoes in my mind was during a deployment. One night precisely at the moment my head touched the pillow after a long, grueling day at work, the smoke detector



TIP of the week

U.S. Joint Forces Command will host its 14th Annual Salute to Veterans concert on Nov. 6 at 7 p.m. at Norfolk's Chrysler Hall. The event is free and open to the public. This performance features a combined military band, made up of select members from the each Hampton Roads military band. The concert is free but tickets are encouraged to help ensure seating. Tickets may be obtained through the Ticket and Tours offices at each base and through the Chrysler Hall Box Office. Download and print a ticket at www.jfcom.mil/newslink/storyarchive/2009/pa081709.html. Call 836-2118 to validate the ticket after it is printed by providing your name and the number of tickets printed. Individuals without tickets will be admitted after 6:45 p.m. as space is available.

Admission: Free
Event Dates: Nov. 6, 2009 • 7 p.m.
Event location: Chrysler Hall,
215 E. Brambleton Ave. • Norfolk
More contact information,
call 836-2118.

in the hallway outside our bedroom began chirping. Low battery – of course, why not? I lied there for about five minutes convincing myself that I could fall asleep and deal with it in the morning. As the minutes went on, however, the chirping seemed to only grow louder and louder. The idea of me drifting off to sleep in spite of this noise was becoming highly improbable.

I was too tired and too lazy to get a ladder, so I grabbed the chair from our home office. I was equally lackluster in my desire to go downstairs to get a new battery. Instead, I thought, I'll just take out the old battery and change it in the morning. It couldn't chirp if there was no battery at all, right? Wrong. Still unwilling to fetch a new battery, I buried the smoke detector in a pile of laundry, surprising even myself at the extent of my laziness. Finally, silence and a night of peaceful rest.

Fast forward twenty-four hours, at nearly the exact same time the next night. Just as I laid my head down to sleep, there it was again – more chirping. Only this time, it was louder, more intolerable, and entirely impossible to ignore. It couldn't possibly be the same smoke detector as the previous night because I had changed that battery in the morning. It quickly occurred to me that this new chirping was coming from the smoke detector in the very room where I was sleeping. And this time, the solution wouldn't be nearly as easy as the previous night because this smoke detector was firmly affixed to the uppermost point on our 15-foot cathedral ceiling. So there I was at midnight dragging a 50-pound Little Giant ladder up the stairs just so I could get some sleep (which prompted a mental note:

Must get a lighter ladder. Insult meet injury.). It is worth noting here that no smoke detector has ever chirped since that day when my husband is home. Like our light bulbs, those pesky little batteries have clearly worked out a deal with my husband to only die when he is hundreds of miles from home. Clearly, there is a conspiracy.

Over the years, I've been lucky enough to deal with everything from firing and suing a negligent home improvement contractor to fixing a toilet that overflowed enough to flood a bathroom and leak through to the floor below. For all of these unexpected episodes, however, I've learned not to sweat the little things and try to find humor in even the most unexpected inconveniences. Sometimes that's not so easy, but I have to remind myself to not let these things ruin my day. Otherwise, my life would be far more stressful than I think I could handle. As military spouses, we all live with the fact that we have to deal with these hassles on our own much of the time, and often times the "when it rains, it pours" philosophy certainly applies. It's how we respond to them that ultimately determines how we let these events affect us.

And so, now I simply wait for the next time my husband is away and what adventure next lies in store for me. For now, I must get the ladder. There is a light bulb to change.

Casey Spurr is a Navy spouse and the Southeastern Virginia Chapter Director for Blue Star Families. She lives in Virginia Beach with her husband and their 2-year-old son. To contact Casey, you can e-mail her at casey.spurr@gmail.com.

Survive the holidays without going broke

With the official start to the holiday season about a month away, it won't be long before walking through any store means being accosted by tempting displays of holiday merchandise and the indecision of whether or not to purchase this gift or that gift. Stores are counting on impulse purchases, but that can be quite taxing on your pocket book. Consumers spend more on presents, travel, and entertaining during the holidays than at any other time of the year.

And much of that buying is done on credit, which can lead to major debt problems for months or even years to come. Now may be the time to start planning for the season with both a budget and a gift list so you can enjoy the holidays to their fullest. You can be generous without inviting disaster, and here are some of the ways to stay on track.

SET UP YOUR BUDGET

Review last year's expenses. The best starting point to determine what you can afford this season is to review what you spent last year. Be honest and thorough, and include items like holiday cards, postage, gifts, food, travel and special occasion clothing. Purchases such as teacher gifts, children's parties, pic-

tures with Santa, entertainment for kids while school is out, babysitting and extra child care expenses and decorations should be included.

Was last year on target? If it was right, you might have your budget target for this year also. If it caused too much debt, scale back the number to what will work without creating financial hardship. Factor in job changes or new purchases that impact available cash.

Who to buy for? Once you have known how much you can spend total, then you can determine who to buy for and how much to spend on each person. This will help you avoid the temptations of last-minute impulse buying. The easiest way to reduce how much you spend during the holidays is to exchange gifts with fewer people. For extended family, have everyone draw names out of a hat so that you each shop for only one member of your family. You might even talk to some people in advance and agree that you won't exchange gifts, but will get together to do something you both enjoy – such as taking a stroll downtown to see the holiday lights.

Create expectations and family buy-in to the budget. Now that you have got your magic number, it is not going to work unless ev-

eryone is willing to stick to it. The key is to communicate with family members and begin planning now to avoid last-minute weaknesses and over-buying. Minimal lifestyle changes such as skipping dessert in a restaurant, packing a lunch, or renting less movies can help to save money that can be earmarked for the holidays. Even setting aside \$10 or \$20 a week throughout the year will add up to help offset costs. Kids can contribute to a coin jar and learn about the value of saving as well.

SHOP SMART

Get started early. Buying presents throughout the year, will allow you to spread out your funds and not have to purchase them all at one time. Good deals are often available before the official holiday shopping season starts on the day after Thanksgiving. Prices are usually lower, you have more time to take advantage of mail order bargains, and you can find some great deals on models that are being phased out toward the end of the year.

Find alternatives to purchased gifts. Be creative with alternatives to purchased gifts. A coupon for your services (such as babysitting), pre-addressed and stamped envelopes so an older person can

easily keep in touch, a family photo or a tax-deductible contribution to a charity are all thoughtful gifts. If you enjoy crafts, art or cookery, put your talents to good use and give personal, handmade gifts that will be treasured.

Look for good gifts that are also good buys. When searching for those perfect gifts make sure to do your research and find the best deal on that item. Studies have shown major price variations – often 50 percent or more – in the same area for identical products, especially audio-video and computer equipment. Do not assume that prices are always lower in catalogs or on television shopping channels, no matter what their ads claim.

Do the research. Learn about the features and options available on particular products, especially expensive items such as cameras, video equipment, sporting goods, stereos, and computers. Read up on different makes and models so you won't be swayed by the more costly recommendations of zealous (and commission-hungry) salespeople.

Buy gift wrap early or after the holidays. Gift wrap tends not to be as expensive if bought in advance or immediately following the

holidays. Buy early and save money this year or buy in bulk at clearance prices and save it for next year.

Plan a potluck. When celebrating holiday dinners with your family or friends, plan a potluck so that everyone will be responsible for a dish.

Avoid buying unnecessary warranties. Resist the pressure to buy an extended warranty or service contract for most products. Extended warranties often duplicate the product's existing warranty and rarely are worth the extra cost. For every rule, there's an exception, however: Consumer Reports does suggest that you consider extended warranties for laptops and some types of TVs: LCD, plasma flat panels, and some rear-projection TVs.

Say no to last-minute temptations. Stores know the temptation of exquisite decor displays that lead to impulse purchases, and with it, a case of buyer's guilt later. Be strong and don't give in. If it's not on your "approved" list, then the answer is no. Shopping with someone who can provide the voice of reason is the best way to keep from overspending. Exceptions can occur, of course, on last-minute party invites or occasions, but keep a close watch on overall costs.

SWDG helps midshipmen develop tactical understanding

BY LT. ABIGAIL DRYDEN
Surface Warfare Development Group

Coffee, Mountain Dew, and even a laptop open at 6 a.m. to “stay better engaged.” Naval Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (ROTC) midshipmen at Old Dominion University and Commander Skip Shaw, Chief Staff Officer at Surface Warfare Development Group (SWDG), exchanged ideas and talked at weekly drill. As a 1988 graduate of Old Dominion, Shaw had a captive audience of about 75 future Surface Warfare Officers ranging from new midshipmen to senior officer

candidates. “Twenty-three years ago I was right where you are and let me tell you the journey you are taking will be amazing,” Shaw told the eager students.

After a brief introduction Shaw introduced a simple tactical acronym, R*IS*K. This acronym (developed by Captain Stan DeGeus) is a simple tool used to frame basic tactical scenarios. Range, Intelligence/intent, Speed/direction and Knowledge/evaluation can be referenced to think through and tactically react to threats. This model provides the midshipmen and officer candidates a straightforward



Naval ROTC midshipmen at NROTC Hampton Roads Old Dominion University and Commander Skip Shaw, Chief Staff Officer at Surface Warfare Development Group (SWDG), exchanged ideas and talked at weekly drill.

ward tool that can be used to work through scenarios they will most certainly encounter in their future training and real-world

tactical scenarios. After wrapping up his R*IS*K portion of the brief, Shaw moved on to candid discussion with the future Surface

Warfare Officers. “Repeat this phrase after me ‘I don’t know.’” Shaw conveyed that it is OK not to know everything when you first arrive

at your ship. However, he made it clear that trying hard and the phrase, “I’ll find out for you Sir,” is one of the best things any junior officer can tell his/her CO, Shaw said.

Ending the morning another candid question/answer session with questions including, “how can I best be prepared for the fleet?” CDR Shaw provided up-front answers to all questions and closed the morning with the following advice, “it’s not easy to be the newest officer in a wardroom. But eventually, with hard work, there are exceptional rewards.”

SWOS set to teach material readiness to perspective COs

BY STEVE VANDERWERFF
Naval Education and Training Command Public Affairs

PENSACOLA, Fla. — The Surface Warfare Officers School (SWOS) in Newport, R.I. is prepared to welcome more than 30 prospective commanding officers (PCO) scheduled to attend the newly created Senior Officer Ship Material Readiness Course (SOS-MRC) this January.

The course is designed to increase their knowledge of material readiness and ensure that the ships they will command are always ready to sail into harms way.

The five-week course will focus on core shipboard systems, how to self assess the health of a ship’s system, and how to maintain a high state of material readiness.

The four-week shore portion of the course consists of classroom, labs and shipboard simulators to bring the PCOs rapidly up to speed on the latest in material readiness, damage control procedures, damage control equipment, engineering programs, and focus on specific platform engineering plans, equipment operations,



Photo courtesy NETC Public Affairs

Surface Warfare Officers School (SWOS) in Newport, R.I.

material self assessment and equipment operations. All of the instructors will have previous experience of command at sea.

During their final week, called PCO Ship Rides, each PCO will go aboard the type of ship they will command for hands on training.

“We’ll go to the class of ship that they’re going to command

and spend a week on the water with them to re-enforce what was taught in the classroom,” said William Scardina, SWOS deputy director Command at Sea Department. “We’ll point out stuff and have them participate in the material assessment of its spaces to increase their ability to self assess.”

The new course is an updat-

ed and condensed version of a 13-week course that used to be taught in the 1980s and 1990s. The revised course is being offered by SWOS because it was determined by the surface warfare community after reviewing recent results of Board of Inspection and Survey (INSURV) assessments and ships material reports, that ships throughout the fleet were apparently not meeting the Navy’s shipboard material readiness standards.

“There has been a degradation of material readiness out in the fleet,” said Cmdr. Angel Cruz, SWOS SOSMRC instructor. “We are linking poor material readiness to a lack of fundamental shipboard system knowledge. This course will provide PCOs with the tools to walk into a space and be able to quickly assess the health of a shipboard system.”

To attend the course, students must have an engineering background, earned their Surface Warfare Officer pin and be screened for command. They will attend SOSMRC prior to taking the traditional PCO course.

“It’s part of the pipeline,” said Scardina. “They’re still going to

get the PCO course. When SOS-MRC is implemented January fourth, they’ll get four weeks of classroom and simulator training up here in Newport, one week on the waterfront, and then return to Newport for eight more weeks of PCO training.”

INSURV is a congressionally mandated periodic inspection that determines a ship’s fitness for further service.

The board works to review and inspect the material condition and readiness of a ship to ensure that the ship and her crew are properly equipped for prompt, reliable and sustained missions at sea.

Inspectors evaluate the ship’s habitability, operations department, deck department, engineering spaces and other remote areas on the ship.

SWOS will teach SOSMRC to PCOs four times a year. SWOS expects to teach approximately 140 PCOs per year.

To learn more about Surface Warfare Officers School visit <http://www1.netc.navy.mil/swos/>.

For more news from Naval Education and Training Command, visit www.navy.mil/local/cnet/.



Photo by MC2 Kristopher Wilson

Marines assigned to the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) grapple during a physical training session in the well deck of the amphibious dock landing ship USS Fort McHenry (LSD 43). Fort McHenry is currently deployed with the Bataan Amphibious Ready Group (ARG) in support of Maritime Security Operations (MSO) in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations.



Photo by MCSN Ash Severe

Marines from 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit (22nd MEU) move tie-down chains inside the well deck of the amphibious dock landing ship USS Fort McHenry (LSD 43).



Photo by MC2 Kristopher Wilson

Fire team members begin to make their way into a smoke-filled boat deck space while responding to a simulated fire during a damage control drill aboard the amphibious dock landing ship USS Fort McHenry (LSD 43). Practicing firefighting techniques is an integral part of everyday life aboard Navy ship's and it is required for personnel to get qualified to fight fires and maintain those qualifications.

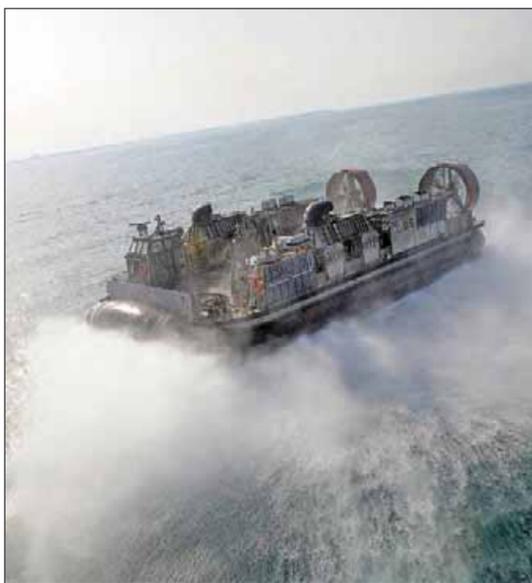


Photo by MC2 Kristopher Wilson

Landing craft air cushion (LCAC) 71, assigned to Assault Craft Unit 4 (ACU 4) prepares to head back to the Kuwaiti shore to pick up another load of equipment and Marines from the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU).

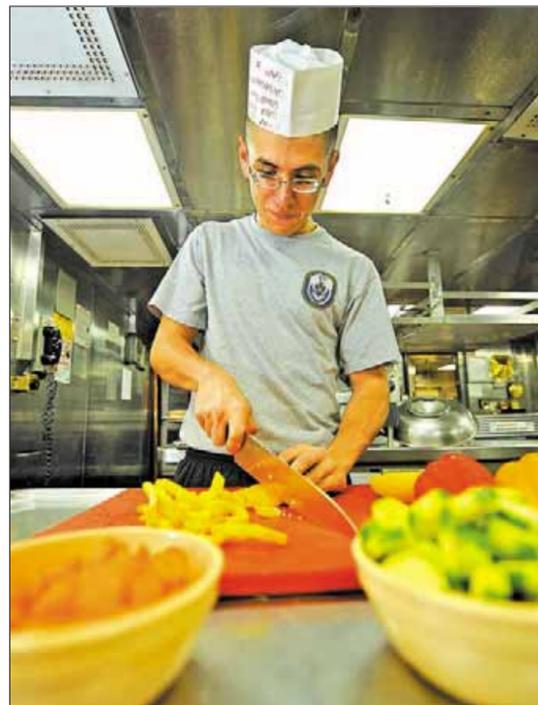


Photo by MC2 Kristopher Wilson

Culinary Specialist Seaman Paul Serna chops fresh vegetables for the salad bar while preparing lunch for the crew in the galley aboard the amphibious dock landing ship USS Fort McHenry (LSD 43).



Photo by MC2 Kristopher Wilson

A landing craft air cushion (LCAC) assigned to Assault Craft Unit (ACU) 4 speeds towards shore after departing the multipurpose amphibious assault ship USS Bataan (LHD 5) during an amphibious assault demonstration in Alexandria, Egypt, as part of Bright Star 2009.

USS Fort McHenry

USS Fort McHenry (LSD-43) is a Whidbey Island-class dock landing ship of the United States Navy. She was named for Fort McHenry, in Baltimore, Maryland, the 1814 defense of which inspired The Star-Spangled Banner.

USS Fort McHenry (LSD-43) was laid down on June 10, 1983, by Lockheed Shipbuilding, Seattle, Wash. She was launched on Feb. 1, 1986 (sponsored by The Honorable Helen D. Bentley), and commissioned on Aug. 8, 1987 in Seattle, with Commander George S. "Dusty" Rhodes in command.

Fort McHenry's maiden deployment was from June 1988 to the Western Pacific. Following her return, Fort McHenry participated in the cleanup of the Exxon Valdez oil spill from April 28 – June 22, 1989. In recognition of the crew's effectiveness during the cleanup operation, Fort McHenry was awarded the Meritorious Unit Commendation and the Coast Guard Special Operations Service Ribbon.

On May 13, of this year the USS Fort McHenry left her homeport at Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek for a regularly scheduled deployment as part of the Bataan Amphibious Ready Group (BATARG) and 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit (22nd MEU), including more than 4,000 Sailors and Marines. The BATARG/22nd MEU will support maritime security operations, provide crisis response capability and increase theater security cooperation and forward naval presence in the 5th and 6th Fleet Areas of Operation.

The BATARG is com-

prised of the multi-purpose amphibious assault ship USS Bataan (LHD 5), the amphibious dock landing ship USS Fort McHenry (LSD 43), and the amphibious transport dock USS Ponce (LPD 15). The 22nd MEU includes a ground combat element, battalion landing team from 3rd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment; an aviation combat element, part of Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 263 (reinforced); a logistics combat element from Combat Logistics Battalion 22; and the MEU's command element.

Fort McHenry

The history of the fort began in 1776 during the Revolutionary War. The people of Baltimore feared an attack by the British and wanted to build a fort for protection. Anticipating an attack at any time, a fort of earthen mounds was constructed quickly. Originally, it was called Fort Whetstone, because of its location on Whetstone Point.

The Revolutionary War ended without an attack on Baltimore, but improvements to the fort continued. In 1798, a French engineer was directed by the Secretary of War to draw plans for a new fort on Whetstone Point. These plans were expensive, and it was difficult for the people of Baltimore to raise money for construction. However, James McHenry, a well known politician, was instrumental in raising funds for the new fort. The fort was renamed "Fort McHenry" in his honor.

Fort McHenry became famous when the British tried to attack Baltimore during



Photo by MCSN Ash Severe

Boatswain's Mate 3rd class Jonathan McNeil signals an MH-60S Knighthawk from the "Sea Knights" of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 22 down onto the flight deck of the amphibious dock landing ship USS Fort McHenry (LSD 43) while Boatswain's Mate 3rd class John Randell steadies him against the helicopter's rotor wash.



Photo by MC2 Kristopher Wilson

Hospital Corpsman 1st Class David Ancheta, right, asks Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Ambar Vega what steps she'll take while responding to a simulated personnel casualty on the boat deck of USS Fort McHenry (LSD 43) during a damage control drill aboard the amphibious dock landing ship.

the War of 1812. When the 1,000 soldiers defending Armistead. Just prior to the attack, Sept. 13, 1814, there were officer was Major George Francis Scott Key, a well-

known lawyer, met the Royal Navy in the Chesapeake Bay to effect the release of Dr. William Beanes, a British prisoner and close friend of Key's. Key and his friends watched the British bombard Fort McHenry.

After 25 hours of continuous bombing, the British left, unable to destroy the fort as they had hoped. Realizing the British had ceased the attack, Key looked toward the fort to see if the flag was still there. To his relief, the flag was still flying! Quickly, he wrote down the words to a poem which was soon handed out as a handbill under the title, "Defence of Fort McHenry". Later, the words were set to music, and renamed, "The Star Spangled Banner".

WASP Sailors graduate intense security training

BY MC1 AMIE GONZALES
USS Wasp (LHD 1) Public Affairs

USS WASP — Twenty-five Sailors aboard USS Wasp (LHD 1) graduated from the two-week training course Security Reaction Force-Basic (SRF-B) Friday. The training began with classroom instruction before moving on to a practical portion, which involved hand-to-hand combat training, and concluded with an Oleoresin Capsicum (OC) spraying combined with a challenging end-of-course exercise.

According to Master-at-Arms 1st Class (SW/AW) Reginald Allen, SRF-B is designed to teach Sailors how to create and analyze tactical situations, and to prepare for unforeseen events while they are standing security watches.

“We want our watch standers to be ready for anything that may occur while they are standing their watch,” said Allen, one of Wasp’s SRF-B instructors.

“I think this course is important because we stand watches we aren’t really prepared for, said ITC Kristina Montgomery, a recent graduate of the SRF-B course. “This course isn’t a Per-



Operations Specialist 3rd Class Carla Pisecco, a Sailor attached to USS WASP (LHD 1) simultaneously defends herself against an opponent while counter striking only minutes after having been sprayed with Oleoresin Capsicum, better known as pepper spray.

Photo by MC1 (SW/AW) Andrew McCord

sonnel Qualification Standard (PQS), it really gets you prepared to defend yourself and others.”

The class covered a multitude of topics including the use of deadly force, proper handling of weapons onboard ship and prop-

er watch standing.

“It was interesting to learn the different take-down moves and learning to use a baton, but I didn’t care much for the OC spray,” said Montgomery.

“It was a great learning experience and I learned a lot

of valuable information,” said MM3 Kelly Christie, one of the recent graduates. “I wouldn’t want to go through it again, because there is nothing that you can do to prepare yourself, mentally or physically for the pain you experience [during the end-of-course

exercise].”

Christie added it was her determination and support of her shipmates that helped get her through the OC-spray course.

“You have to adapt to your circumstances and overcome them by knowing it is possible. In the end though, it’s an experience I’ll never forget, and it gives you an amazing sense of accomplishment,” said Christie.

The Navy requires all Sailors to take the SRF-B class, Allen said. He noted that everyone onboard a ship is responsible for its security and training like SRF-B plays a major role in keeping Sailors ready to defend their shipmates in an environment where terrorist threats are always a possibility.

Wasp and the Security Cooperation Marine Air Ground Task Force are working alongside Mayport-based Destroyer Squadron 40 during a three-month deployment to build and instill interoperability and cooperation between U.S. and partner nation naval forces through a variety of exercises as part of Southern Partnership Station.

MAREXCMDCON Division 24 prepares for deployment

BY MC2
MADDELIN ANGEBRAND
Navy Operational Support
Center Norfolk Public Affairs

WILLIAMSBURG — The Navy Operational Support Center (NOSC) Norfolk mobilized 57 Reservists of Maritime Expeditionary Command and Control (MAREXCMDCON) Division 24 to support overseas contingency operations in Kuwait.

Division 24 conducted training and participated in a Marine Corps Combat Fitness test (CFT) at Naval Weapons Station Cheatham Annex to integrate the unit in preparation for their



Photo by MCSN (SW/AW) Maddelin Angebrand

Sailors from Maritime Expeditionary Command and Control (MAREXCMDCON) Division 24 take off sprinting during the run portion of the Marine Corps Combat Fitness Test, Oct. 24.

upcoming deployment, Oct. 24.

Approximately 35 of the 57 Reservists mobilized are working outside of their normal units in order to support MAREXCMDCON’s mission. NOSC Norfolk

mobilized the entire unit after receiving notice that the unit needed more Sailors to support their mission.

“This has been our biggest group to date. We came together as a NOSC in order to get them mobilized,”

said Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Dona Hubbard. “Usually it’s just the mobilization department and PSD that gets them ready for NMPS (Navy Mobilization Processing Site) but with this group, it was a concerted effort from different departments.”

Division 24 must now properly train the additional Reservists who have come from other drilling units in order to pass upcoming inspections required for the unit to deploy. They participated in the Marine Corps Combat Fitness Test (CFT) at Ft. Eustis as part of their integration and training.

“I initially thought it

would be challenging to integrate the new group coming in, but they are really working well together,” said Lt. Cmdr. Adam Bellin, Executive Officer of MAREXCMDCON. “The combat fitness test not only gets them ready for the heat and conditions of where we are going, but it focuses on team building as well.”

Sonar Technician 1st Class Jamie Hudson, who normally drills with MAREXCMDCON, trained some of the Reservists who came from other drilling units.

“We want to get everybody on the same page, that means everyone must know how to use the equip-

ment, know what it does and how to fix it,” said Hudson. “Today, we are stowing our TSPs (Trailer Sensor Platforms) and tearing down the large tents. It will help us when we are on deployment to know each other and how we work together.”

MAREXCMDCON supports contingency operations as part of Operation Enduring Freedom by providing surface surveillance capabilities in littoral operating areas, harbors and offshore economic areas. They also provide law enforcement, intelligence collection and communication support.

Siblings deploy with ARG on Ponce, Bataan

BY MC2 (SW) KORY KEPNER
USS Bataan Public Affairs

USS PONCE — Normally, a deployment means months away from loved ones as a service member sacrifices time with family and friends to answer their call-to-duty.

Yet, sometimes a deployment can bring family members together, relieving some of the stress of being thousands of miles from home for several months.

Ensign Jennifer Winn, the Main Propulsion Two division officer aboard amphibious transport dock USS Ponce (LPD 15), and her brother, Marine Capt. Christopher Winn, platoon commander for the Light Armored Reconnaissance Platoon of Battalion Landing Team 3/2, 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit, had a chance to spend time together aboard Ponce, Oct. 11.

"I had a choice of ships to choose from and I chose (Ponce) in hopes we would be near each other," Jennifer said. "I didn't think we would be deploying together, it's absolutely great."

Jennifer said even though her brother is embarked aboard the



Photo by MC2 (SW) Kory Kepner

Brother and Sister, Marine Captain Christopher Winn and Navy Ensign Jennifer Winn, had a chance to visit each other onboard USS Ponce (LPD 15), Oct. 11. Both are deployed with Bataan (LHD 5) Amphibious Readiness group to the 5th and 6th areas of operation, Christopher on Bataan and Jennifer on Ponce.

multi-purpose amphibious assault ship USS Bataan (LHD 5), it is great having him in the same Amphibious Ready Group (ARG).

"We are going through roughly the same stuff," Jennifer said. "We

e-mail each other all the time, it's just really nice to have him here. He has been really helpful with this being my first deployment and all."

Unfortunately for the two, they

have not had a chance to enjoy a liberty port together. The two ships have only had one concurrent port visit, and due to operational considerations they were not able to spend time in the

port city.

"Our ships were bow-to-bow so we had to stand out there and yell from ship-to-ship in order to talk to each other," said Christopher. "We don't know if we are going to get a port visit together but we are hoping for the best."

Both of them knew from an early age that the military was in their blood and in their futures.

They are third generation military members as their father was a Navy Dentist and their grandfather, Air Force Brig. Gen. David Winn (ret), was a pilot in the Army Air Corps who later received his commission at the inception of the U.S. Air Force. They also have a middle brother, Capt. Alex Winn, who is an Air Force F-16 pilot stationed at Shaw Air Force Base, S.C.. In addition, they have a sister-in-law who is a Captain in the Air Force, and is currently deployed to Afghanistan.

USS Ponce is deployed with the Bataan ARG, conducting Maritime Security Operations in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations. The 22nd MEU, embarked on the ships of the Bataan ARG, is serving as the theater reserve force for U.S. Central Command.



Photo by MC2 (SW) Kiona Miller



Photo by MC3 Ryan Steinhour

The Marines have landed!

Above: Marine Lt. Gen. John R. Allen, Deputy Commander, U.S. Central Command, salutes side boys from the multi-purpose amphibious assault ship USS Bataan (LHD 5) during a visit with military leaders participating in the multi-nation exercise Bright Star.

Left: Marines assigned to the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), along with Marines from Kuwait and Pakistan, storm the coast of Egypt during an amphibious assault demonstration during Bright Star 2009. The multinational exercise is designed to improve readiness, interoperability, and strengthen military and professional relationships among U.S., Egyptian and other Coalition forces. Bright Star is conducted by U.S. Central Command and held every two years. The 22nd MEU is serving as the theater reserve force for U.S. Central Command.



Photo by MC1 Julie R. Matyascik

The amphibious transport dock PCU New York (LPD 21) arrives at its home port of Naval Station Norfolk for the first time. New York is the fifth of nine San Antonio Class amphibious transport dock ships, but the first to be named after a state instead of a city in remembrance of the victims of the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. The ship has 7.5 tons of World Trade Center steel in her bow, and is scheduled for commissioning on Nov. 7, 2009 in New York.

Fitting New York into Norfolk

Damage Controlman 1st Class (SW/AW) Paul Bershers is greeted by his family at Naval Station Norfolk. Bershers is attached to the amphibious transport dock PCU New York (LPD 21) which arrived at its home port of Naval Station Norfolk for the first time. New York is 111 feet longer than her battleship namesake. She will carry sea-based platforms, including the V-22 tilt-rotor Osprey aircraft, three types of helicopters, 14 expeditionary fighting vehicles (EFVs) and/or several air-cushioned landing craft (LCACs) for across-the-beach deployments of U.S. Marine Corps and Special Forces personnel.



Bush Sailor proves to be an 'Ironman' at Triathlon

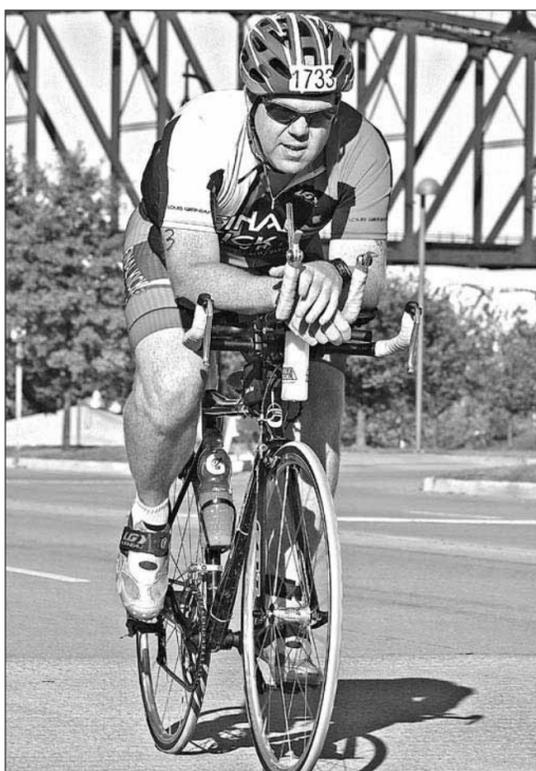
BY MCSN JOSHUA D. SHEPPARD
USS George H.W. Bush

NEWPORT NEWS — Completing a grueling 140.6-mile Ironman Triathlon is a feat of physical conditioning and endurance designed to test the very extremes of an individual's mental and physical toughness. Athletes train for months, logging thousands of miles on a bicycle, and hundreds of miles both running and swimming to prepare their minds and bodies for up to 17 hours of pain on race day. All of this just to complete the course in the allotted time.

Now, imagine balancing the preparation for an Ironman Triathlon with the demands of a naval career and a family of three.

Lt. Eric W. Edge, IM3 division officer assigned to USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77), completed the Ford Ironman in Louisville, Ky., Aug. 30. Edge completed the 2.4-mile swim, 112-mile bike ride and 26.2-mile run event in 14 hours, 55 minutes.

"The Ironman is an endurance event like no other and was an experience that



U.S. Navy Photo

Lt. Eric W. Edge competes in the second stage of the 140.6-mile Ford Ironman Triathlon in Louisville, Ky., Aug. 30. Edge, the IM3 division officer assigned to USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77), completed the event in 14 hours, 55 minutes.

I wanted to complete before my 40th birthday," Edge said.

Race day began at 3:50

a.m. with the hopes of being one of the first competitors in the water for the swim, Edge said.

"I was in the churning water of the Ohio getting wacked, smacked and clawed by 3,000 of my best friends," Edge said.

After the swim, competitors moved to the transition area for the 112-mile bike ride portion of the triathlon. With the exception of some minor quadriceps cramping during the bike ride, Edge passed his second test of the competition.

"I hit the second transition area, changed clothes, and headed out on the run course knowing that the next 26.2 miles were going to be the toughest part of my day," explained Edge.

Edge's original strategy for the run was to run three minutes and walk one minute. This changed three miles into the run when he started experiencing stomach cramps. Edge settled into a rhythm of walking until he could stand to run, then running until he had to walk.

"At mile 25 I heard the party at the finish line and I started picking up the pace a bit," Edge said. "I hit the cobble stone stretch and knew

that in less than one minute I would be a first-time Ironman."

After finishing his first Ironman, Edge is more than willing to attempt another one.

"Without the support of my wife and two children, my parents, and the words of encouragement and patience of the chain of command, allowing me to train every morning, I could not have completed a challenge of this magnitude," Edge said.

Edge, who turned 40 Sept. 3, began preparing for this grueling event 30 weeks before race day.

Training encompassed much more than physical activity, it included nutrition management, mental stamina building and pace setting, Edge said.

Edge averaged approximately 11 hours of training per week, peaking at 20 hours when his scheduled allowed. Edge took advantage of every possible opportunity to train. By 4:30 a.m. each day Edge would be at the gym running for two hours before work. He would take extended lunches whenever

possible and train. After his workday, Edge would stop on the way home and train on his bicycle.

"My average week consisted of 13,000 meters of swimming, 240 miles of biking and 35 miles of running," Edge said.

Edge also devoted between eight and 14 hours to training each weekend.

If training for an Ironman triathlon was not difficult enough, training while assigned to the nation's newest aircraft carrier presented Edge with an additional set of unique challenges.

"One of the hardest times during my training was when we went underway for a month. I had to adjust my training regimen and continue my training without being able to swim," Edge explained.

"As I crossed the finish line and heard my name called out, my mind flashed back to all of the training and sacrifice that I and my family had gone through over the past seven months, and at that moment, we realized that it was all worth it," Edge said.

USS Arleigh Burke returns from African Partnership Station

BY MC3 (SW) BRIAN GOODWIN
Naval Public Affairs
Support Element - East

NORFOLK — The guided missile destroyer USS Arleigh Burke (DDG 51) returns to homeport Naval Station Norfolk after completing a six-month deployment recently.

Burke deployed April 25 of this year to the coast of the United Kingdom, Eastern Africa and the Mediterranean in support of Exercise Joint Warrior and African Partnership

Station (APS).

"We were building partnerships and friendships with the countries overseas and leaving a good impression," said Cmdr. Brian Moum, commanding officer of Burke. "It's all about how my crew was helping to build good coalition with the nations overseas. I can't say enough good things about my Sailors and their accomplishments."

"It was hard waiting here at home with the kids not really knowing what was happening while he was

gone," said Kim Gill, wife of Chief Gas Turbine Technician (Electrical) Gill

"It was very lonely while he was gone, but now that he's home, we're going to catch up on what we've been missing out on," said Amanda Williams, girlfriend of Engineman 1st Class Brian Shreckengase.

"The hardest part of a deployment is seeing your family on the pier as you leave," said Operations Specialist 2nd Class Lorenzo Garcia. "The most rewarding part is them here when you come off the ship."



Photo by MC3 John Suits

Information Systems Technician 1st Class (SW) Edwin Rodriguez receives a welcome-home kiss from his fiancée, Lisette Montanez, after returning to Naval Station Norfolk, Oct. 21, from a six-month deployment in support of Exercise Joint Warrior and African Partnership Station (APS) aboard the guided-missile destroyer USS Arleigh Burke (DDG 51).

President Obama in Norfolk



Photo by MC2 Mandy Hunsucker

President Barack Obama flew into Naval Station Norfolk's Chambers Field on Air Force One. The President greeted some Norfolk based Sailor's before heading to a speaking engagement at Old Dominion University Tuesday.

WASP Sailors strive for their surface warfare pins



Photo by MC3 Andrew Rivard

Senior Chief Electronic's Technician (SW/AW) Larry Novak pins Electronic's Technician 3rd Class (SW) Tiffany Chatman with her Enlisted Surface Warfare Pin September 19, 2009.

BY MC1 AMIE GONZALES
USS Wasp Public Affairs

CARIBBEAN SEA

— The Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialist (ESWS) qualification designation signifies that a Sailor has achieved a level of proficiency in surface ships and is competent with general knowledge in the areas of ship damage control, engineering, deck and combat systems, to name a few. Those who earn their ESWS are considered by many to be significant contributors to the surface force.

“It’s important because it is a major career milestone,” said Cryptologic Technician (Collection) 1st Class (SW/AW) Jill Violini, Wasp’s ESWS Program Coordinator. “Earning your surface pin is a big accomplishment it establishes you as a person who has initiative and who takes their career seriously.”

The program is open to enlisted personnel permanently assigned to Wasp, enlisted personnel serving on Type 2 or 4 sea duty who are assigned to a U.S. Navy or Military Sealift Command afloat staff, or to commands that deploy aboard Wasp for a minimum of 90 consecutive days.

Qualifying for ESWS requires Sailors to complete Personnel Qualification Standards (PQS) and be knowledgeable in the areas of Ship’s Maintenance and Material Management (3M) System; Advanced Damage Control; Deck Watches for in port and underway, and an ESWS core and platform specific PQS.

“I suggest setting small, attainable goals,” said Violini. “Don’t stress yourself out about the process. There is a lot of information to retain and you’re not going to learn it overnight.”

Once all PQS requirements have been signed off and a written exam is completed with a passing grade of 80 percent or higher, Sailors have 10 days to complete their “walk-through” with required departments. The final steps to earning an ESWS pin consists of two oral boards. A “murder board,” given by qualified Wasp First Class Petty Officers, is conducted as a precursor to what Sailors can expect at the final step, the Chief’s Board.

At these boards, Sailors must display a general knowledge of the ship’s overall mission, engineering plant capabilities, combat systems, and basic deck equipment among others areas.

The ship conducts training Monday through Saturday nights under-

way in its Library Media Resource Center. Wasp Sailors can go to the ship’s web page for a detailed schedule. The site also lists subject matter experts for Sailors to get in touch with for any additional questions they may have.

Violini added Sailors must route a request chit through the Command Master Chief to start the program. Those in pay grades E-1 to E-4 must complete all in-rate training requirements before they can begin their ESWS qualification.

Wasp currently has 72 Sailors enrolled in the program. Five Sailors have earned their initial qualification and three have re-qualified since Wasp deployed Oct. 4.

ESWS qualification may only be obtained through the formal qualification program, Wasp Instruction 1414.2C provides specific details on the ESWS program, and can be found on the ship’s web page under ESWS/EAWS.

Wasp and the Security Cooperation Marine Air Ground Task Force are working alongside Mayport-based Destroyer Squadron 40 during a three-month deployment to build and instill interoperability and cooperation between U.S. and partner nation naval forces through a variety of exercises as part of Southern Partnership Station.

GENTLEMEN'S QUARTERLY: Sailors scouted out for magazine shoot

Continued from page B1

the day after the Sailors received the call letting them know they were chosen. Both Sailors had duty that day, but after receiving permission from their chain of command, both were able to participate in the shoot.

"They put make-up on us. I've never put make-up on before," said Wilson. "They said it was to make us look more tan. It felt weird and sticky."

Once the Sailors were in their chosen wardrobe with hair and make-up done, the posing began.

"The shoot it's self was crazy," said Doerflinger. "One minute they told me to walk and then they told me to run. When I ran, I guess it was too fast so

they told me to 'fake run'. I was like, how do you fake run?"

"The photographer was really funny. He had an Australian accent. He was calling all kinds of ridiculous commands like, 'act like Tom Cruise in Mission Impossible' and 'be the Bourne Identity,' said Wilson. "I was like, 'Ok I'll try, I guess'".

"Every time we got done with a couple of pictures, the clothing the guy would run up and adjust the clothes on me," continued Wilson.

"The clothes were tight. I mean, I wear my clothes a little tight already, but these clothes were like skin tight," said Doerflinger. "They hemmed them up while we were wearing them. I had a hard time maneuvering

like they wanted me to in them."

Both Sailors recalled the heat of the day, agreeing it was too hot for the clothes they modeled.

Wilson, 20, is from Cincinnati, Ohio. He said the GQ Magazine shoot was the best day he had while visiting New York City and he'd do it again, if given the chance. In his spare time, he likes to study cars and says German engineering is the best.

Doerflinger, 24, is from Sterling Heights, Michigan. In his spare time he likes to hang out with friends or goes fishing. He said if given the chance to do something like the GQ Magazine shoot again, he'd probably pass on it.

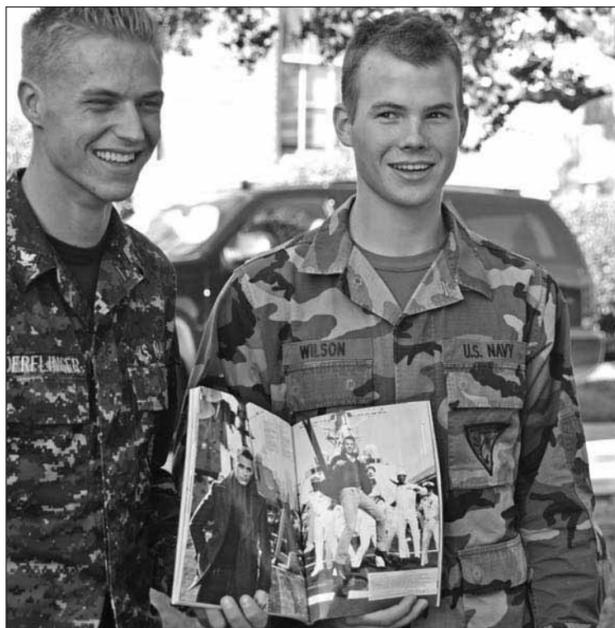


Photo by MC2 Mandy Hunsucker

Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Tommy Doerflinger from USS Iwo Jima and Master-at-Arms Seaman Apprentice Marcus Wilson, Maritime Expeditionary Security Squadron Six were two of seven Sailors that made it into GQ magazine.

YORKTOWN: Revolutionary History and heritage celebrated

Continued from page B1

Triangle' makes you understand and appreciate the history and the heritage of Yorktown."

The Historic Triangle in Virginia — Yorktown, Jamestown and Williamsburg — is recognized as the birthplace of America, where American Indians, Europeans and Africans lived together and became the seed of America.

The official Yorktown Day parade stepped off along Yorktown's Main Street and passed in front of the Yorktown Victory Monument. The monument was erected in 1881 to commemorate the military victory a century before. Included in the parade were representatives of all branches of the U.S. military, fife and drum corps, JROTC and NJROTC and patriotic organizations.

Following the parade, "Patriotic Exercises" at the Yorktown Victory Monu-



Photo by Mark Piggot

Members of the Deep River Junior Ancients Fife and Drum Corps from Deep River, Conn., march in the annual Yorktown Day parade.

ment kicked off with the annual pageant of flags. The pageant is a colorful display that includes the American and French national colors, the flags of the 50 states

and the District of Columbia, and the flags of the 13 Yorktown Day Association members.

"It was a wonderful experience to be a part of and

commemorate history," said Yeoman Seaman Daniel J. Haas, NWS Yorktown Administration, "especially the reason why America became America."

NATURALIZATION: NLSO gives advice, tips to future citizens

Continued from page B1

pendants.

"This is a very good deal for the service members, but if they don't know about it they can't use it," said Michael S. Cole, the Office of the Judge Advocate General in the Legal Assistance Policy Branch (Code 16) immigration and naturalization Navy liaison.

Cole advises any non-citizen in the military to file. "There are certain rates and ranks they may be excluded from," said Cole. "They could be denied the opportunity to expand their horizons."

The training given to the command representatives also dealt with helping service members families. Everything from naturalizing spouses met while overseas to obtaining citizenship records for children once the adults are naturalized was discussed at length.

"This is essential training to have and command representatives won't get it anywhere else," said Dena Panecaldo, a reserve lieutenant commander in the JAG Corps and subject matter expert for immigration and naturalization issues at NLSO Mid-Atlantic. "This training will give the command representatives a good understanding of how the process works and how the forms work."

For more information or to inquire about the next immigration and naturalization conference contact NLSO Mid-Atlantic at 444-4424.

FRONT & CENTER

SECTION B

FLAGSHIPNEWS.COM

October 29, 2009

A different kind of GQ for Sailors

BY MC2 MANDY HUNSUCKER

Staff Writer

NORFOLK — Gentlemen's Quarterly Magazine featured seven Sailors in the Nov. 1 issue, modeling peacoats from top designers Burberry, Prada and J. Crew, among others.

The Sailors were scouted out by the magazine during this year's Fleet Week New York in New York City. Two of the seven Sailors, who are stationed in the Hampton Roads area, were recently interviewed by local media after the publication reached the stands.

Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Tommy Doerflinger, USS Iwo Jima (LHD 7), was out enjoying Fleet Week when he was approached by a GQ Magazine scout.

"They had a bunch of model scouts from GQ out trying to recruit Sailors to do their photo shoot," said Doerflinger. "I wasn't going to do it at first because it seemed silly to me, but one of my buddies from the ship said 'let's go', so we went."

Master-at-Arms Seaman Apprentice Marcus Wilson, Maritime Expeditionary Security Squadron Six, saw a flyer about the GQ shoot while out and about in the city and thought it was something he'd like to do.

"The next day, after seeing the flyer, I was approached by the GQ staff and they asked me if I'd be interested in being in the magazine. I said absolutely," said Wilson. "They took some pictures and the next day they called me."

The shoot began at 5 a.m. on board the guided-missile destroyer USS Roosevelt (DDG 80),



See GENTLEMEN'S QUARTERLY, B13

Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Tommy Doerflinger and Seaman Apprentice Kirk Albert Jr. show their stuff in Gentlemen's Quarterly or "GQ." Seven Sailors modeled outfits for during Fleet Week New York featured in the Nov. 1, issue, two of seven were from Hampton Roads.

Photos by Ben Watts / GQ

Battle of Yorktown 228th anniversary

BY MARK O. PIGGOTT

Naval Weapons Station Yorktown
Public Affairs

YORKTOWN — Sailors from Naval Weapons Station (NWS) Yorktown and Marines assigned to the 2nd Fleet Anti-Terrorism Security Team (FAST) Company commemorated the 228th anniversary of America's decisive Revolutionary War victory at Yorktown, Oct. 19, during "Yorktown Day" festivities in Yorktown, Va.

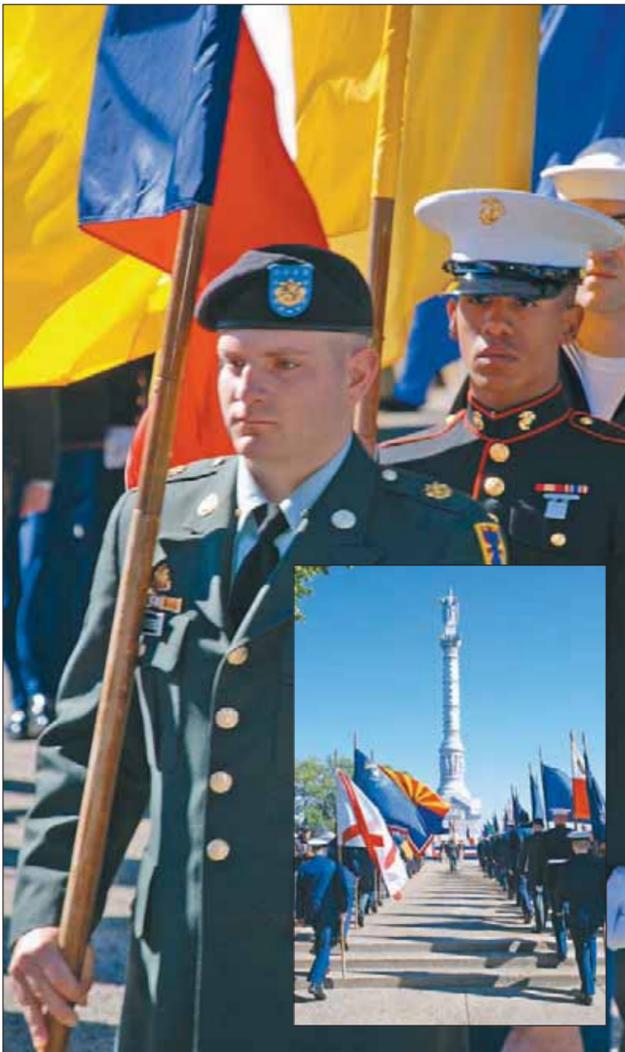
In 1781, following a nine-day bombardment, British forces in Yorktown under Lord Charles Cornwallis surrendered more than 8,000 Soldiers and Sailors to the combined American and French armies, commanded by General George Washington.

"This engagement represented the close of the last major military action of the American Revolution, ending the fighting phase of the war and effectively granted independence to the American colonies following a six-and-a-half-year military struggle," said Mike Litterst, Public Affairs Officer, Colonial National Historical Park at Yorktown.

Every year since the British surrender, there have been patriotic observances held in Yorktown on the anniversary of the surrender. The modern day observance traces its roots to 1922, when the Daughters of the American Revolution began an annual wreath-laying ceremony, which set the tradition upon which the current Yorktown Day is based.

Today, the Yorktown Day Association, comprised of 13 civic, patriotic and government organizations, coordinates the traditional commemorative events.

"Naval Weapons Station Yorktown is proud to partner with



Photos by Mark Piggott

Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines from military installations across the Hampton Roads peninsula participate in "Patriotic Exercises" to commemorate the 228th anniversary of America's decisive Revolutionary War victory at the Battle of Yorktown, Oct. 19, at the Yorktown Victory Monument. Military service members took part in the annual pageant of flags, a colorful display that includes the American and French national colors, the flags of the 50 states and the District of Columbia, and the flags of the 13 Yorktown Day Association members.

the Yorktown Day Association," NWS Yorktown Executive Officer Lt. Cmdr. Tim Shipman, cer. "Being a part of the 'Historic

See YORKTOWN, B13



Photo by MC2 John Stratton

Navy Reserve Cmdr. Matthew Lee, executive officer and instructor for the Naval Justice School in Newport, R.I., and founder of Tocci, Goss & Lee PC, speaks to local area command representatives at the 2009 Mid-Atlantic Joint Services Immigration and Naturalization Symposium held aboard Naval Station Norfolk, about the basics of immigration laws as they pertain to the Navy.

Mid-Atlantic Navy Legal Service Office hosts local immigration, naturalization conference

BY MC2 JOSEPH R. WAX

Navy Public Affairs Support Element-East

NORFOLK — The Mid-Atlantic Region Navy Legal Service Office (NLSO) hosted an immigration and naturalization informational conference for all local command representatives, judge advocate general (JAG) officers and civilian employees Oct. 16 on board Naval Station Norfolk.

NAVADMIN 113/08 requires that all commands have "a command representative responsible for providing hands-on assistance to service members" who may be dealing with immigration and naturalization issues. The presentations at the conference focused on teaching command representatives the different forms and procedures necessary to help their shipmates obtain United States citizenship. It also spotlighted some problems they could encounter and how best to deal with them.

For Debra Parker, a supervisory paralegal specialist at NLSO Mid-Atlantic and one of the event's organizers, the goal was simply education.

"We want them [command representatives] to understand the basics of filing for citizenship and how to help their shipmates," she said.

According to Parker, most if not all of the normal fees associated with naturalization are waived while someone is in the military. The fee waiver, unfortunately, does not apply to family members and de-

See NATURALIZATION, B13

SPOUSE SPEAK!



Murphy's Law – for military spouses

BY CASEY SPURR

Navy spouse, Southeastern Virginia Chapter
Director for Blue Star Families

I like to think of it as Murphy's Law for Military Spouses: when our spouses are away, everything that can go wrong, likely will. The dishwasher breaks, the car gets a flat, the kids get the chicken pox, the dog rips a hole in the carpet – and all at the same time, no less. You name it, and there is a military spouse who can top it with a tale of her own.

Just the other day I was on the verge of a meltdown over an unfortunate combination of events when the humor of my own self-pity occurred to me. My husband hadn't been away from home twenty-four hours, and as I sat on my sofa, out of the corner of my eye I saw a flash scurrying across the floor. As I turned my head to investigate, I laid my eyes upon the most enormous and repulsive bug I'd ever seen and gasped in horror. I jumped to my feet, my heart racing, and tried to decide exactly what I was going to do. Call me old-fashioned, but I consider the eviction of such unwanted tenants a task far better suited for my husband than me.

Ten minutes later, I found myself frustrated and worn out from unsuccessfully chasing this insect-rodent hybrid with a rolled magazine in hand and more scared of it than it was of me. I know this because it would taunt me by pausing briefly as if to instigate me and then bolt on an unpredictable path each time I took a swing. Eventually, it ran behind a piece of furniture and out of sight for good. I eased my way back to my place on the sofa certain it might show its gnarly little face again at any moment.

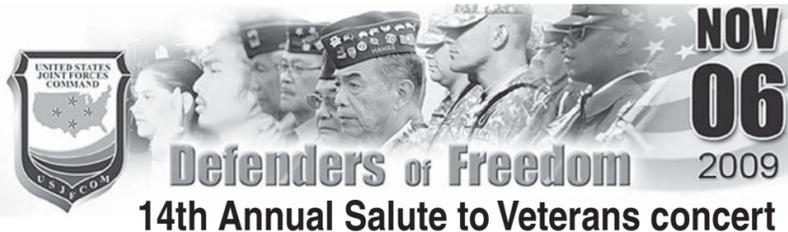
This incident alone would not have been enough to make me believe the laws of nature were working against me, but this was just the cap on a day full of fun little surprises. Earlier that afternoon as I jumped into my car to go pick my son up from preschool, I was stunned to find it wouldn't start. I had just driven the car thirty minutes earlier, but suddenly when I had somewhere important to be and

my husband was in no position to help, it was dead as a doornail. A new battery, an alternator, and a week in a much too compact loaner car, and I would eventually be all set. The only other time we have ever had a car break down? His car, another alternator, and he was deployed, of course.

After making other arrangements to pick my son up that afternoon, several attempts at jumping the vehicle, and transporting it to the repair shop, I finally made it home just in time for one of the bulbs in our family room's recessed lighting to blow out. Clearly, a blown out bulb is no tragedy. In our house, however, it has become almost comical that bulbs decide to meet their demise each time my husband leaves home. And not just any light bulb. No, a simple lamp would be too easy. It's always the lights that are irritatingly just out of reach (and of course, would be no problem for my husband at 6'6") that require me to drag out the ladder. The bulbs that really seem to have their lifespan in sync with my husband's detachment schedule are the outdoor lighting over our garage and every recessed light bulb between our kitchen and family room. And let's not forget those hallway ceiling lights that also require unscrewing and detaching the bulky globes just to change the bulb. Now, don't get me wrong, I'm perfectly capable of changing a light bulb. The irony of their timing just never ceases to amaze me.

So when my friend, the insect-rodent hybrid, decided to play his game of cat and mouse with me that evening, it was just the finishing piece of a perfect day to finally make me laugh out loud at a day full of these little quirks of fate that had occurred yet again when my husband was away from home. None of this should have surprised me, you see, because this type of evolution happens each time he is gone.

One time in particular that always echoes in my mind was during a deployment. One night precisely at the moment my head touched the pillow after a long, grueling day at work, the smoke detector



TIP of the week

U.S. Joint Forces Command will host its 14th Annual Salute to Veterans concert on Nov. 6 at 7 p.m. at Norfolk's Chrysler Hall. The event is free and open to the public. This performance features a combined military band, made up of select members from the each Hampton Roads military band. The concert is free but tickets are encouraged to help ensure seating. Tickets may be obtained through the Ticket and Tours offices at each base and through the Chrysler Hall Box Office. Download and print a ticket at www.jfcom.mil/newslink/storyarchive/2009/pa081709.html. Call 836-2118 to validate the ticket after it is printed by providing your name and the number of tickets printed. Individuals without tickets will be admitted after 6:45 p.m. as space is available.

Admission: Free
Event Dates: Nov. 6, 2009 • 7 p.m.
Event location: Chrysler Hall,
215 E. Brambleton Ave. • Norfolk
More contact information,
call 836-2118.

in the hallway outside our bedroom began chirping. Low battery – of course, why not? I lied there for about five minutes convincing myself that I could fall asleep and deal with it in the morning. As the minutes went on, however, the chirping seemed to only grow louder and louder. The idea of me drifting off to sleep in spite of this noise was becoming highly improbable.

I was too tired and too lazy to get a ladder, so I grabbed the chair from our home office. I was equally lackluster in my desire to go downstairs to get a new battery. Instead, I thought, I'll just take out the old battery and change it in the morning. It couldn't chirp if there was no battery at all, right? Wrong. Still unwilling to fetch a new battery, I buried the smoke detector in a pile of laundry, surprising even myself at the extent of my laziness. Finally, silence and a night of peaceful rest.

Fast forward twenty-four hours, at nearly the exact same time the next night. Just as I laid my head down to sleep, there it was again – more chirping. Only this time, it was louder, more intolerable, and entirely impossible to ignore. It couldn't possibly be the same smoke detector as the previous night because I had changed that battery in the morning. It quickly occurred to me that this new chirping was coming from the smoke detector in the very room where I was sleeping. And this time, the solution wouldn't be nearly as easy as the previous night because this smoke detector was firmly affixed to the uppermost point on our 15-foot cathedral ceiling. So there I was at midnight dragging a 50-pound Little Giant ladder up the stairs just so I could get some sleep (which prompted a mental note:

Must get a lighter ladder. Insult meet injury.). It is worth noting here that no smoke detector has ever chirped since that day when my husband is home. Like our light bulbs, those pesky little batteries have clearly worked out a deal with my husband to only die when he is hundreds of miles from home. Clearly, there is a conspiracy.

Over the years, I've been lucky enough to deal with everything from firing and suing a negligent home improvement contractor to fixing a toilet that overflowed enough to flood a bathroom and leak through to the floor below. For all of these unexpected episodes, however, I've learned not to sweat the little things and try to find humor in even the most unexpected inconveniences. Sometimes that's not so easy, but I have to remind myself to not let these things ruin my day. Otherwise, my life would be far more stressful than I think I could handle. As military spouses, we all live with the fact that we have to deal with these hassles on our own much of the time, and often times the "when it rains, it pours" philosophy certainly applies. It's how we respond to them that ultimately determines how we let these events affect us.

And so, now I simply wait for the next time my husband is away and what adventure next lies in store for me. For now, I must get the ladder. There is a light bulb to change.

Casey Spurr is a Navy spouse and the Southeastern Virginia Chapter Director for Blue Star Families. She lives in Virginia Beach with her husband and their 2-year-old son. To contact Casey, you can e-mail her at casey.spurr@gmail.com.

Survive the holidays without going broke

With the official start to the holiday season about a month away, it won't be long before walking through any store means being accosted by tempting displays of holiday merchandise and the indecision of whether or not to purchase this gift or that gift. Stores are counting on impulse purchases, but that can be quite taxing on your pocket book. Consumers spend more on presents, travel, and entertaining during the holidays than at any other time of the year.

And much of that buying is done on credit, which can lead to major debt problems for months or even years to come. Now may be the time to start planning for the season with both a budget and a gift list so you can enjoy the holidays to their fullest. You can be generous without inviting disaster, and here are some of the ways to stay on track.

SET UP YOUR BUDGET

Review last year's expenses. The best starting point to determine what you can afford this season is to review what you spent last year. Be honest and thorough, and include items like holiday cards, postage, gifts, food, travel and special occasion clothing. Purchases such as teacher gifts, children's parties, pic-

tures with Santa, entertainment for kids while school is out, babysitting and extra child care expenses and decorations should be included.

Was last year on target? If it was right, you might have your budget target for this year also. If it caused too much debt, scale back the number to what will work without creating financial hardship. Factor in job changes or new purchases that impact available cash.

Who to buy for? Once you have known how much you can spend total, then you can determine who to buy for and how much to spend on each person. This will help you avoid the temptations of last-minute impulse buying. The easiest way to reduce how much you spend during the holidays is to exchange gifts with fewer people. For extended family, have everyone draw names out of a hat so that you each shop for only one member of your family. You might even talk to some people in advance and agree that you won't exchange gifts, but will get together to do something you both enjoy – such as taking a stroll downtown to see the holiday lights.

Create expectations and family buy-in to the budget. Now that you have got your magic number, it is not going to work unless ev-

eryone is willing to stick to it. The key is to communicate with family members and begin planning now to avoid last-minute weaknesses and over-buying. Minimal lifestyle changes such as skipping dessert in a restaurant, packing a lunch, or renting less movies can help to save money that can be earmarked for the holidays. Even setting aside \$10 or \$20 a week throughout the year will add up to help offset costs. Kids can contribute to a coin jar and learn about the value of saving as well.

SHOP SMART

Get started early. Buying presents throughout the year, will allow you to spread out your funds and not have to purchase them all at one time. Good deals are often available before the official holiday shopping season starts on the day after Thanksgiving. Prices are usually lower, you have more time to take advantage of mail order bargains, and you can find some great deals on models that are being phased out toward the end of the year.

Find alternatives to purchased gifts. Be creative with alternatives to purchased gifts. A coupon for your services (such as babysitting), pre-addressed and stamped envelopes so an older person can

easily keep in touch, a family photo or a tax-deductible contribution to a charity are all thoughtful gifts. If you enjoy crafts, art or cookery, put your talents to good use and give personal, handmade gifts that will be treasured.

Look for good gifts that are also good buys. When searching for those perfect gifts make sure to do your research and find the best deal on that item. Studies have shown major price variations – often 50 percent or more – in the same area for identical products, especially audio-video and computer equipment. Do not assume that prices are always lower in catalogs or on television shopping channels, no matter what their ads claim.

Do the research. Learn about the features and options available on particular products, especially expensive items such as cameras, video equipment, sporting goods, stereos, and computers. Read up on different makes and models so you won't be swayed by the more costly recommendations of zealous (and commission-hungry) salespeople.

Buy gift wrap early or after the holidays. Gift wrap tends not to be as expensive if bought in advance or immediately following the

holidays. Buy early and save money this year or buy in bulk at clearance prices and save it for next year.

Plan a potluck. When celebrating holiday dinners with your family or friends, plan a potluck so that everyone will be responsible for a dish.

Avoid buying unnecessary warranties. Resist the pressure to buy an extended warranty or service contract for most products. Extended warranties often duplicate the product's existing warranty and rarely are worth the extra cost. For every rule, there's an exception, however: Consumer Reports does suggest that you consider extended warranties for laptops and some types of TVs: LCD, plasma flat panels, and some rear-projection TVs.

Say no to last-minute temptations. Stores know the temptation of exquisite decor displays that lead to impulse purchases, and with it, a case of buyer's guilt later. Be strong and don't give in. If it's not on your "approved" list, then the answer is no. Shopping with someone who can provide the voice of reason is the best way to keep from overspending. Exceptions can occur, of course, on last-minute party invites or occasions, but keep a close watch on overall costs.

SWDG helps midshipmen develop tactical understanding

BY LT. ABIGAIL DRYDEN
Surface Warfare Development Group

Coffee, Mountain Dew, and even a laptop open at 6 a.m. to “stay better engaged.” Naval Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (ROTC) midshipmen at Old Dominion University and Commander Skip Shaw, Chief Staff Officer at Surface Warfare Development Group (SWDG), exchanged ideas and talked at weekly drill. As a 1988 graduate of Old Dominion, Shaw had a captive audience of about 75 future Surface Warfare Officers ranging from new midshipmen to senior officer

candidates. “Twenty-three years ago I was right where you are and let me tell you the journey you are taking will be amazing,” Shaw told the eager students.

After a brief introduction Shaw introduced a simple tactical acronym, R*IS*K. This acronym (developed by Captain Stan DeGeus) is a simple tool used to frame basic tactical scenarios. Range, Intelligence/intent, Speed/direction and Knowledge/evaluation can be referenced to think through and tactically react to threats. This model provides the midshipmen and officer candidates a straightforward



Naval ROTC midshipmen at NROTC Hampton Roads Old Dominion University and Commander Skip Shaw, Chief Staff Officer at Surface Warfare Development Group (SWDG), exchanged ideas and talked at weekly drill.

ward tool that can be used to work through scenarios they will most certainly encounter in their future training and real-world

tactical scenarios. After wrapping up his R*IS*K portion of the brief, Shaw moved on to candid discussion with the future Surface

Warfare Officers. “Repeat this phrase after me ‘I don’t know.’” Shaw conveyed that it is OK not to know everything when you first arrive

at your ship. However, he made it clear that trying hard and the phrase, “I’ll find out for you Sir,” is one of the best things any junior officer can tell his/her CO, Shaw said.

Ending the morning another candid question/answer session with questions including, “how can I best be prepared for the fleet?” CDR Shaw provided up-front answers to all questions and closed the morning with the following advice, “it’s not easy to be the newest officer in a wardroom. But eventually, with hard work, there are exceptional rewards.”

SWOS set to teach material readiness to perspective COs

BY STEVE VANDERWERFF
Naval Education and Training Command Public Affairs

PENSACOLA, Fla. — The Surface Warfare Officers School (SWOS) in Newport, R.I. is prepared to welcome more than 30 prospective commanding officers (PCO) scheduled to attend the newly created Senior Officer Ship Material Readiness Course (SOS-MRC) this January.

The course is designed to increase their knowledge of material readiness and ensure that the ships they will command are always ready to sail into harms way.

The five-week course will focus on core shipboard systems, how to self assess the health of a ship’s system, and how to maintain a high state of material readiness.

The four-week shore portion of the course consists of classroom, labs and shipboard simulators to bring the PCOs rapidly up to speed on the latest in material readiness, damage control procedures, damage control equipment, engineering programs, and focus on specific platform engineering plans, equipment operations,



Photo courtesy NETC Public Affairs

Surface Warfare Officers School (SWOS) in Newport, R.I.

material self assessment and equipment operations. All of the instructors will have previous experience of command at sea.

During their final week, called PCO Ship Rides, each PCO will go aboard the type of ship they will command for hands on training.

“We’ll go to the class of ship that they’re going to command

and spend a week on the water with them to re-enforce what was taught in the classroom,” said William Scardina, SWOS deputy director Command at Sea Department. “We’ll point out stuff and have them participate in the material assessment of its spaces to increase their ability to self assess.”

The new course is an updat-

ed and condensed version of a 13-week course that used to be taught in the 1980s and 1990s. The revised course is being offered by SWOS because it was determined by the surface warfare community after reviewing recent results of Board of Inspection and Survey (INSURV) assessments and ships material reports, that ships throughout the fleet were apparently not meeting the Navy’s shipboard material readiness standards.

“There has been a degradation of material readiness out in the fleet,” said Cmdr. Angel Cruz, SWOS SOSMRC instructor. “We are linking poor material readiness to a lack of fundamental shipboard system knowledge. This course will provide PCOs with the tools to walk into a space and be able to quickly assess the health of a shipboard system.”

To attend the course, students must have an engineering background, earned their Surface Warfare Officer pin and be screened for command. They will attend SOSMRC prior to taking the traditional PCO course.

“It’s part of the pipeline,” said Scardina. “They’re still going to

get the PCO course. When SOS-MRC is implemented January fourth, they’ll get four weeks of classroom and simulator training up here in Newport, one week on the waterfront, and then return to Newport for eight more weeks of PCO training.”

INSURV is a congressionally mandated periodic inspection that determines a ship’s fitness for further service.

The board works to review and inspect the material condition and readiness of a ship to ensure that the ship and her crew are properly equipped for prompt, reliable and sustained missions at sea.

Inspectors evaluate the ship’s habitability, operations department, deck department, engineering spaces and other remote areas on the ship.

SWOS will teach SOSMRC to PCOs four times a year. SWOS expects to teach approximately 140 PCOs per year.

To learn more about Surface Warfare Officers School visit <http://www1.netc.navy.mil/swos/>.

For more news from Naval Education and Training Command, visit www.navy.mil/local/cnet/.



Photo by MC2 Kristopher Wilson

Marines assigned to the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) grapple during a physical training session in the well deck of the amphibious dock landing ship USS Fort McHenry (LSD 43). Fort McHenry is currently deployed with the Bataan Amphibious Ready Group (ARG) in support of Maritime Security Operations (MSO) in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations.



Photo by MCSN Ash Severe

Marines from 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit (22nd MEU) move tie-down chains inside the well deck of the amphibious dock landing ship USS Fort McHenry (LSD 43).



Photo by MC2 Kristopher Wilson

Fire team members begin to make their way into a smoke-filled boat deck space while responding to a simulated fire during a damage control drill aboard the amphibious dock landing ship USS Fort McHenry (LSD 43). Practicing firefighting techniques is an integral part of everyday life aboard Navy ship's and it is required for personnel to get qualified to fight fires and maintain those qualifications.

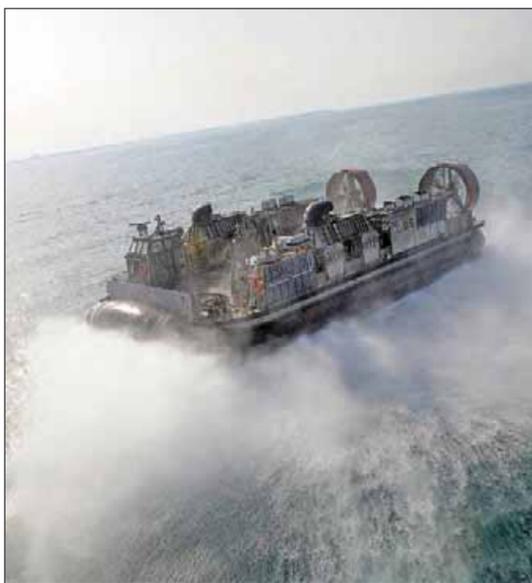


Photo by MC2 Kristopher Wilson

Landing craft air cushion (LCAC) 71, assigned to Assault Craft Unit 4 (ACU 4) prepares to head back to the Kuwaiti shore to pick up another load of equipment and Marines from the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU).

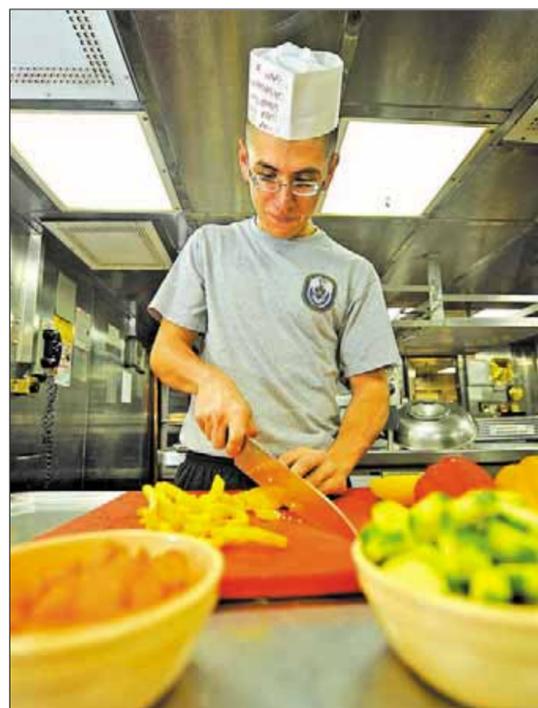


Photo by MC2 Kristopher Wilson

Culinary Specialist Seaman Paul Serna chops fresh vegetables for the salad bar while preparing lunch for the crew in the galley aboard the amphibious dock landing ship USS Fort McHenry (LSD 43).



Photo by MC2 Kristopher Wilson

A landing craft air cushion (LCAC) assigned to Assault Craft Unit (ACU) 4 speeds towards shore after departing the multipurpose amphibious assault ship USS Bataan (LHD 5) during an amphibious assault demonstration in Alexandria, Egypt, as part of Bright Star 2009.

USS Fort McHenry

USS Fort McHenry (LSD-43) is a Whidbey Island-class dock landing ship of the United States Navy. She was named for Fort McHenry, in Baltimore, Maryland, the 1814 defense of which inspired The Star-Spangled Banner.

USS Fort McHenry (LSD-43) was laid down on June 10, 1983, by Lockheed Shipbuilding, Seattle, Wash. She was launched on Feb. 1, 1986 (sponsored by The Honorable Helen D. Bentley), and commissioned on Aug. 8, 1987 in Seattle, with Commander George S. "Dusty" Rhodes in command.

Fort McHenry's maiden deployment was from June 1988 to the Western Pacific. Following her return, Fort McHenry participated in the cleanup of the Exxon Valdez oil spill from April 28 – June 22, 1989. In recognition of the crew's effectiveness during the cleanup operation, Fort McHenry was awarded the Meritorious Unit Commendation and the Coast Guard Special Operations Service Ribbon.

On May 13, of this year the USS Fort McHenry left her homeport at Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek for a regularly scheduled deployment as part of the Bataan Amphibious Ready Group (BATARG) and 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit (22nd MEU), including more than 4,000 Sailors and Marines. The BATARG/22nd MEU will support maritime security operations, provide crisis response capability and increase theater security cooperation and forward naval presence in the 5th and 6th Fleet Areas of Operation.

The BATARG is com-

prised of the multi-purpose amphibious assault ship USS Bataan (LHD 5), the amphibious dock landing ship USS Fort McHenry (LSD 43), and the amphibious transport dock USS Ponce (LPD 15). The 22nd MEU includes a ground combat element, battalion landing team from 3rd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment; an aviation combat element, part of Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 263 (reinforced); a logistics combat element from Combat Logistics Battalion 22; and the MEU's command element.

Fort McHenry

The history of the fort began in 1776 during the Revolutionary War. The people of Baltimore feared an attack by the British and wanted to build a fort for protection. Anticipating an attack at any time, a fort of earthen mounds was constructed quickly. Originally, it was called Fort Whetstone, because of its location on Whetstone Point.

The Revolutionary War ended without an attack on Baltimore, but improvements to the fort continued. In 1798, a French engineer was directed by the Secretary of War to draw plans for a new fort on Whetstone Point. These plans were expensive, and it was difficult for the people of Baltimore to raise money for construction. However, James McHenry, a well known politician, was instrumental in raising funds for the new fort. The fort was renamed "Fort McHenry" in his honor.

Fort McHenry became famous when the British tried to attack Baltimore during



Photo by MCSN Ash Severe

Boatswain's Mate 3rd class Jonathan McNeil signals an MH-60S Knighthawk from the "Sea Knights" of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 22 down onto the flight deck of the amphibious dock landing ship USS Fort McHenry (LSD 43) while Boatswain's Mate 3rd class John Randell steadies him against the helicopter's rotor wash.



Photo by MC2 Kristopher Wilson

Hospital Corpsman 1st Class David Ancheta, right, asks Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Ambar Vega what steps she'll take while responding to a simulated personnel casualty on the boat deck of USS Fort McHenry (LSD 43) during a damage control drill aboard the amphibious dock landing ship.

the War of 1812. When the 1,000 soldiers defending Armistead. Just prior to the attack, Sept. 13, 1814, there were officer was Major George Francis Scott Key, a well-

known lawyer, met the Royal Navy in the Chesapeake Bay to effect the release of Dr. William Beanes, a British prisoner and close friend of Key's. Key and his friends watched the British bombard Fort McHenry.

After 25 hours of continuous bombing, the British left, unable to destroy the fort as they had hoped. Realizing the British had ceased the attack, Key looked toward the fort to see if the flag was still there. To his relief, the flag was still flying! Quickly, he wrote down the words to a poem which was soon handed out as a handbill under the title, "Defence of Fort McHenry". Later, the words were set to music, and renamed, "The Star Spangled Banner".

WASP Sailors graduate intense security training

BY MC1 AMIE GONZALES
USS Wasp (LHD 1) Public Affairs

USS WASP — Twenty-five Sailors aboard USS Wasp (LHD 1) graduated from the two-week training course Security Reaction Force-Basic (SRF-B) Friday. The training began with classroom instruction before moving on to a practical portion, which involved hand-to-hand combat training, and concluded with an Oleoresin Capsicum (OC) spraying combined with a challenging end-of-course exercise.

According to Master-at-Arms 1st Class (SW/AW) Reginald Allen, SRF-B is designed to teach Sailors how to create and analyze tactical situations, and to prepare for unforeseen events while they are standing security watches.

“We want our watch standers to be ready for anything that may occur while they are standing their watch,” said Allen, one of Wasp’s SRF-B instructors.

“I think this course is important because we stand watches we aren’t really prepared for, said ITC Kristina Montgomery, a recent graduate of the SRF-B course. “This course isn’t a Per-



Photo by MC1 (SW/AW) Andrew McCord

Operations Specialist 3rd Class Carla Pisecco, a Sailor attached to USS WASP (LHD 1) simultaneously defends herself against an opponent while counter striking only minutes after having been sprayed with Oleoresin Capsicum, better known as pepper spray.

sonnel Qualification Standard (PQS), it really gets you prepared to defend yourself and others.”

The class covered a multitude of topics including the use of deadly force, proper handling of weapons onboard ship and prop-

er watch standing.

“It was interesting to learn the different take-down moves and learning to use a baton, but I didn’t care much for the OC spray,” said Montgomery.

“It was a great learning experience and I learned a lot

of valuable information,” said MM3 Kelly Christie, one of the recent graduates. “I wouldn’t want to go through it again, because there is nothing that you can do to prepare yourself, mentally or physically for the pain you experience [during the end-of-course

exercise].”

Christie added it was her determination and support of her shipmates that helped get her through the OC-spray course.

“You have to adapt to your circumstances and overcome them by knowing it is possible. In the end though, it’s an experience I’ll never forget, and it gives you an amazing sense of accomplishment,” said Christie.

The Navy requires all Sailors to take the SRF-B class, Allen said. He noted that everyone onboard a ship is responsible for its security and training like SRF-B plays a major role in keeping Sailors ready to defend their shipmates in an environment where terrorist threats are always a possibility.

Wasp and the Security Cooperation Marine Air Ground Task Force are working alongside Mayport-based Destroyer Squadron 40 during a three-month deployment to build and instill interoperability and cooperation between U.S. and partner nation naval forces through a variety of exercises as part of Southern Partnership Station.

MAREXCMDCON Division 24 prepares for deployment

BY MC2
MADDELIN ANGEBRAND
Navy Operational Support
Center Norfolk Public Affairs

WILLIAMSBURG — The Navy Operational Support Center (NOSC) Norfolk mobilized 57 Reservists of Maritime Expeditionary Command and Control (MAREXCMDCON) Division 24 to support overseas contingency operations in Kuwait.

Division 24 conducted training and participated in a Marine Corps Combat Fitness test (CFT) at Naval Weapons Station Cheatham Annex to integrate the unit in preparation for their



Photo by MCSN (SW/AW) Maddelin Angebrand

Sailors from Maritime Expeditionary Command and Control (MAREXCMDCON) Division 24 take off sprinting during the run portion of the Marine Corps Combat Fitness Test, Oct. 24.

upcoming deployment, Oct. 24.

Approximately 35 of the 57 Reservists mobilized are working outside of their normal units in order to support MAREXCMDCON’s mission. NOSC Norfolk

mobilized the entire unit after receiving notice that the unit needed more Sailors to support their mission.

“This has been our biggest group to date. We came together as a NOSC in order to get them mobilized,”

said Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Dona Hubbard. “Usually it’s just the mobilization department and PSD that gets them ready for NMPS (Navy Mobilization Processing Site) but with this group, it was a concerted effort from different departments.”

Division 24 must now properly train the additional Reservists who have come from other drilling units in order to pass upcoming inspections required for the unit to deploy. They participated in the Marine Corps Combat Fitness Test (CFT) at Ft. Eustis as part of their integration and training.

“I initially thought it

would be challenging to integrate the new group coming in, but they are really working well together,” said Lt. Cmdr. Adam Bellin, Executive Officer of MAREXCMDCON. “The combat fitness test not only gets them ready for the heat and conditions of where we are going, but it focuses on team building as well.”

Sonar Technician 1st Class Jamie Hudson, who normally drills with MAREXCMDCON, trained some of the Reservists who came from other drilling units.

“We want to get everybody on the same page, that means everyone must know how to use the equip-

ment, know what it does and how to fix it,” said Hudson. “Today, we are stowing our TSPs (Trailer Sensor Platforms) and tearing down the large tents. It will help us when we are on deployment to know each other and how we work together.”

MAREXCMDCON supports contingency operations as part of Operation Enduring Freedom by providing surface surveillance capabilities in littoral operating areas, harbors and offshore economic areas. They also provide law enforcement, intelligence collection and communication support.

Siblings deploy with ARG on Ponce, Bataan

BY MC2 (SW) KORY KEPNER
USS Bataan Public Affairs

USS PONCE — Normally, a deployment means months away from loved ones as a service member sacrifices time with family and friends to answer their call-to-duty.

Yet, sometimes a deployment can bring family members together, relieving some of the stress of being thousands of miles from home for several months.

Ensign Jennifer Winn, the Main Propulsion Two division officer aboard amphibious transport dock USS Ponce (LPD 15), and her brother, Marine Capt. Christopher Winn, platoon commander for the Light Armored Reconnaissance Platoon of Battalion Landing Team 3/2, 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit, had a chance to spend time together aboard Ponce, Oct. 11.

"I had a choice of ships to choose from and I chose (Ponce) in hopes we would be near each other," Jennifer said. "I didn't think we would be deploying together, it's absolutely great."

Jennifer said even though her brother is embarked aboard the



Photo by MC2 (SW) Kory Kepner

Brother and Sister, Marine Captain Christopher Winn and Navy Ensign Jennifer Winn, had a chance to visit each other onboard USS Ponce (LPD 15), Oct. 11. Both are deployed with Bataan (LHD 5) Amphibious Readiness group to the 5th and 6th areas of operation, Christopher on Bataan and Jennifer on Ponce.

multi-purpose amphibious assault ship USS Bataan (LHD 5), it is great having him in the same Amphibious Ready Group (ARG).

"We are going through roughly the same stuff," Jennifer said. "We

e-mail each other all the time, it's just really nice to have him here. He has been really helpful with this being my first deployment and all."

Unfortunately for the two, they

have not had a chance to enjoy a liberty port together. The two ships have only had one concurrent port visit, and due to operational considerations they were not able to spend time in the

port city.

"Our ships were bow-to-bow so we had to stand out there and yell from ship-to-ship in order to talk to each other," said Christopher. "We don't know if we are going to get a port visit together but we are hoping for the best."

Both of them knew from an early age that the military was in their blood and in their futures.

They are third generation military members as their father was a Navy Dentist and their grandfather, Air Force Brig. Gen. David Winn (ret), was a pilot in the Army Air Corps who later received his commission at the inception of the U.S. Air Force. They also have a middle brother, Capt. Alex Winn, who is an Air Force F-16 pilot stationed at Shaw Air Force Base, S.C.. In addition, they have a sister-in-law who is a Captain in the Air Force, and is currently deployed to Afghanistan.

USS Ponce is deployed with the Bataan ARG, conducting Maritime Security Operations in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations. The 22nd MEU, embarked on the ships of the Bataan ARG, is serving as the theater reserve force for U.S. Central Command.



Photo by MC2 (SW) Kiona Miller



Photo by MC3 Ryan Steinhour

The Marines have landed!

Above: Marine Lt. Gen. John R. Allen, Deputy Commander, U.S. Central Command, salutes side boys from the multi-purpose amphibious assault ship USS Bataan (LHD 5) during a visit with military leaders participating in the multi-nation exercise Bright Star.

Left: Marines assigned to the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), along with Marines from Kuwait and Pakistan, storm the coast of Egypt during an amphibious assault demonstration during Bright Star 2009. The multinational exercise is designed to improve readiness, interoperability, and strengthen military and professional relationships among U.S., Egyptian and other Coalition forces. Bright Star is conducted by U.S. Central Command and held every two years. The 22nd MEU is serving as the theater reserve force for U.S. Central Command.



Photo by MC1 Julie R. Matyascik

The amphibious transport dock PCU New York (LPD 21) arrives at its home port of Naval Station Norfolk for the first time. New York is the fifth of nine San Antonio Class amphibious transport dock ships, but the first to be named after a state instead of a city in remembrance of the victims of the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. The ship has 7.5 tons of World Trade Center steel in her bow, and is scheduled for commissioning on Nov. 7, 2009 in New York.

Fitting New York into Norfolk

Damage Controlman 1st Class (SW/AW) Paul Bershers is greeted by his family at Naval Station Norfolk. Bershers is attached to the amphibious transport dock PCU New York (LPD 21) which arrived at its home port of Naval Station Norfolk for the first time. New York is 111 feet longer than her battleship namesake. She will carry sea-based platforms, including the V-22 tilt-rotor Osprey aircraft, three types of helicopters, 14 expeditionary fighting vehicles (EFVs) and/or several air-cushioned landing craft (LCACs) for across-the-beach deployments of U.S. Marine Corps and Special Forces personnel.



Bush Sailor proves to be an 'Ironman' at Triathlon

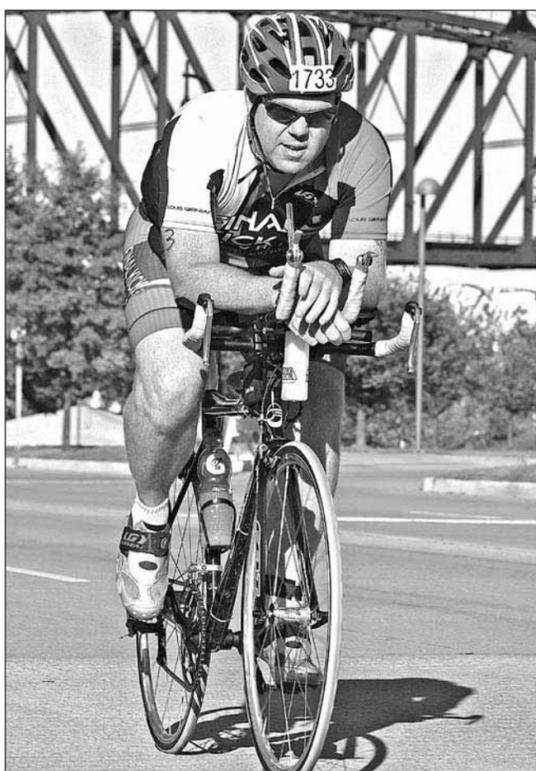
BY MCSN JOSHUA D. SHEPPARD
USS George H.W. Bush

NEWPORT NEWS — Completing a grueling 140.6-mile Ironman Triathlon is a feat of physical conditioning and endurance designed to test the very extremes of an individual's mental and physical toughness. Athletes train for months, logging thousands of miles on a bicycle, and hundreds of miles both running and swimming to prepare their minds and bodies for up to 17 hours of pain on race day. All of this just to complete the course in the allotted time.

Now, imagine balancing the preparation for an Ironman Triathlon with the demands of a naval career and a family of three.

Lt. Eric W. Edge, IM3 division officer assigned to USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77), completed the Ford Ironman in Louisville, Ky., Aug. 30. Edge completed the 2.4-mile swim, 112-mile bike ride and 26.2-mile run event in 14 hours, 55 minutes.

"The Ironman is an endurance event like no other and was an experience that



U.S. Navy Photo

Lt. Eric W. Edge competes in the second stage of the 140.6-mile Ford Ironman Triathlon in Louisville, Ky., Aug. 30. Edge, the IM3 division officer assigned to USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77), completed the event in 14 hours, 55 minutes.

I wanted to complete before my 40th birthday," Edge said.

Race day began at 3:50

a.m. with the hopes of being one of the first competitors in the water for the swim, Edge said.

"I was in the churning water of the Ohio getting wacked, smacked and clawed by 3,000 of my best friends," Edge said.

After the swim, competitors moved to the transition area for the 112-mile bike ride portion of the triathlon. With the exception of some minor quadriceps cramping during the bike ride, Edge passed his second test of the competition.

"I hit the second transition area, changed clothes, and headed out on the run course knowing that the next 26.2 miles were going to be the toughest part of my day," explained Edge.

Edge's original strategy for the run was to run three minutes and walk one minute. This changed three miles into the run when he started experiencing stomach cramps. Edge settled into a rhythm of walking until he could stand to run, then running until he had to walk.

"At mile 25 I heard the party at the finish line and I started picking up the pace a bit," Edge said. "I hit the cobble stone stretch and knew

that in less than one minute I would be a first-time Ironman."

After finishing his first Ironman, Edge is more than willing to attempt another one.

"Without the support of my wife and two children, my parents, and the words of encouragement and patience of the chain of command, allowing me to train every morning, I could not have completed a challenge of this magnitude," Edge said.

Edge, who turned 40 Sept. 3, began preparing for this grueling event 30 weeks before race day.

Training encompassed much more than physical activity, it included nutrition management, mental stamina building and pace setting, Edge said.

Edge averaged approximately 11 hours of training per week, peaking at 20 hours when his scheduled allowed. Edge took advantage of every possible opportunity to train. By 4:30 a.m. each day Edge would be at the gym running for two hours before work. He would take extended lunches whenever

possible and train. After his workday, Edge would stop on the way home and train on his bicycle.

"My average week consisted of 13,000 meters of swimming, 240 miles of biking and 35 miles of running," Edge said.

Edge also devoted between eight and 14 hours to training each weekend.

If training for an Ironman triathlon was not difficult enough, training while assigned to the nation's newest aircraft carrier presented Edge with an additional set of unique challenges.

"One of the hardest times during my training was when we went underway for a month. I had to adjust my training regimen and continue my training without being able to swim," Edge explained.

"As I crossed the finish line and heard my name called out, my mind flashed back to all of the training and sacrifice that I and my family had gone through over the past seven months, and at that moment, we realized that it was all worth it," Edge said.

USS Arleigh Burke returns from African Partnership Station

BY MC3 (SW) BRIAN GOODWIN
Naval Public Affairs
Support Element - East

NORFOLK — The guided missile destroyer USS Arleigh Burke (DDG 51) returns to homeport Naval Station Norfolk after completing a six-month deployment recently.

Burke deployed April 25 of this year to the coast of the United Kingdom, Eastern Africa and the Mediterranean in support of Exercise Joint Warrior and African Partnership

Station (APS).

"We were building partnerships and friendships with the countries overseas and leaving a good impression," said Cmdr. Brian Moum, commanding officer of Burke. "It's all about how my crew was helping to build good coalition with the nations overseas. I can't say enough good things about my Sailors and their accomplishments."

"It was hard waiting here at home with the kids not really knowing what was happening while he was

gone," said Kim Gill, wife of Chief Gas Turbine Technician (Electrical) Gill

"It was very lonely while he was gone, but now that he's home, we're going to catch up on what we've been missing out on," said Amanda Williams, girlfriend of Engineman 1st Class Brian Shreckengase.

"The hardest part of a deployment is seeing your family on the pier as you leave," said Operations Specialist 2nd Class Lorenzo Garcia. "The most rewarding part is them here when you come off the ship."



Photo by MC3 John Suits

Information Systems Technician 1st Class (SW) Edwin Rodriguez receives a welcome-home kiss from his fiancée, Lisette Montanez, after returning to Naval Station Norfolk, Oct. 21, from a six-month deployment in support of Exercise Joint Warrior and African Partnership Station (APS) aboard the guided-missile destroyer USS Arleigh Burke (DDG 51).

President Obama in Norfolk



Photo by MC2 Mandy Hunsucker

President Barack Obama flew into Naval Station Norfolk's Chambers Field on Air Force One. The President greeted some Norfolk based Sailor's before heading to a speaking engagement at Old Dominion University Tuesday.

WASP Sailors strive for their surface warfare pins



Photo by MC3 Andrew Rivard

Senior Chief Electronic's Technician (SW/AW) Larry Novak pins Electronic's Technician 3rd Class (SW) Tiffany Chatman with her Enlisted Surface Warfare Pin September 19, 2009.

BY MC1 AMIE GONZALES
USS Wasp Public Affairs

CARIBBEAN SEA

— The Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialist (ESWS) qualification designation signifies that a Sailor has achieved a level of proficiency in surface ships and is competent with general knowledge in the areas of ship damage control, engineering, deck and combat systems, to name a few. Those who earn their ESWS are considered by many to be significant contributors to the surface force.

“It’s important because it is a major career milestone,” said Cryptologic Technician (Collection) 1st Class (SW/AW) Jill Violini, Wasp’s ESWS Program Coordinator. “Earning your surface pin is a big accomplishment it establishes you as a person who has initiative and who takes their career seriously.”

The program is open to enlisted personnel permanently assigned to Wasp, enlisted personnel serving on Type 2 or 4 sea duty who are assigned to a U.S. Navy or Military Sealift Command afloat staff, or to commands that deploy aboard Wasp for a minimum of 90 consecutive days.

Qualifying for ESWS requires Sailors to complete Personnel Qualification Standards (PQS) and be knowledgeable in the areas of Ship’s Maintenance and Material Management (3M) System; Advanced Damage Control; Deck Watches for in port and underway, and an ESWS core and platform specific PQS.

“I suggest setting small, attainable goals,” said Violini. “Don’t stress yourself out about the process. There is a lot of information to retain and you’re not going to learn it overnight.”

Once all PQS requirements have been signed off and a written exam is completed with a passing grade of 80 percent or higher, Sailors have 10 days to complete their “walk-through” with required departments. The final steps to earning an ESWS pin consists of two oral boards. A “murder board,” given by qualified Wasp First Class Petty Officers, is conducted as a precursor to what Sailors can expect at the final step, the Chief’s Board.

At these boards, Sailors must display a general knowledge of the ship’s overall mission, engineering plant capabilities, combat systems, and basic deck equipment among others areas.

The ship conducts training Monday through Saturday nights under-

way in its Library Media Resource Center. Wasp Sailors can go to the ship’s web page for a detailed schedule. The site also lists subject matter experts for Sailors to get in touch with for any additional questions they may have.

Violini added Sailors must route a request chit through the Command Master Chief to start the program. Those in pay grades E-1 to E-4 must complete all in-rate training requirements before they can begin their ESWS qualification.

Wasp currently has 72 Sailors enrolled in the program. Five Sailors have earned their initial qualification and three have re-qualified since Wasp deployed Oct. 4.

ESWS qualification may only be obtained through the formal qualification program, Wasp Instruction 1414.2C provides specific details on the ESWS program, and can be found on the ship’s web page under ESWS/EAWS.

Wasp and the Security Cooperation Marine Air Ground Task Force are working alongside Mayport-based Destroyer Squadron 40 during a three-month deployment to build and instill interoperability and cooperation between U.S. and partner nation naval forces through a variety of exercises as part of Southern Partnership Station.

GENTLEMEN'S QUARTERLY: Sailors scouted out for magazine shoot

Continued from page B1

the day after the Sailors received the call letting them know they were chosen. Both Sailors had duty that day, but after receiving permission from their chain of command, both were able to participate in the shoot.

"They put make-up on us. I've never put make-up on before," said Wilson. "They said it was to make us look more tan. It felt weird and sticky."

Once the Sailors were in their chosen wardrobe with hair and make-up done, the posing began.

"The shoot it's self was crazy," said Doerflinger. "One minute they told me to walk and then they told me to run. When I ran, I guess it was too fast so

they told me to 'fake run'. I was like, how do you fake run?"

"The photographer was really funny. He had an Australian accent. He was calling all kinds of ridiculous commands like, 'act like Tom Cruise in Mission Impossible' and 'be the Bourne Identity,' said Wilson. "I was like, 'Ok I'll try, I guess'".

"Every time we got done with a couple of pictures, the clothing the guy would run up and adjust the clothes on me," continued Wilson.

"The clothes were tight. I mean, I wear my clothes a little tight already, but these clothes were like skin tight," said Doerflinger. "They hemmed them up while we were wearing them. I had a hard time maneuvering

like they wanted me to in them."

Both Sailors recalled the heat of the day, agreeing it was too hot for the clothes they modeled.

Wilson, 20, is from Cincinnati, Ohio. He said the GQ Magazine shoot was the best day he had while visiting New York City and he'd do it again, if given the chance. In his spare time, he likes to study cars and says German engineering is the best.

Doerflinger, 24, is from Sterling Heights, Michigan. In his spare time he likes to hang out with friends or goes fishing. He said if given the chance to do something like the GQ Magazine shoot again, he'd probably pass on it.

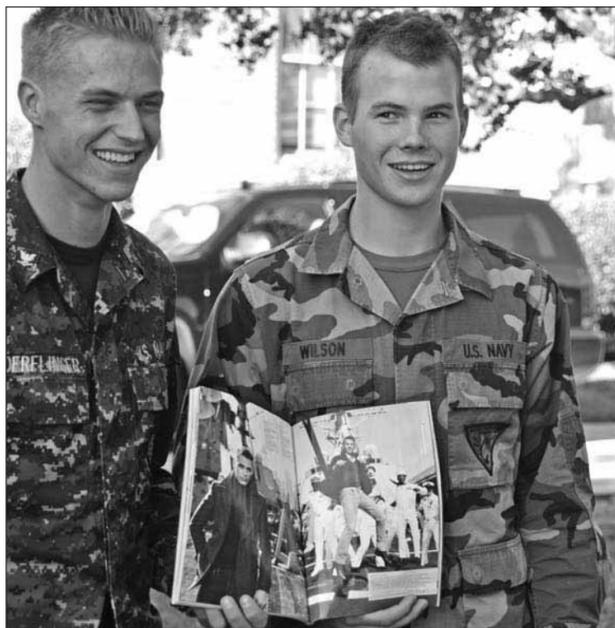


Photo by MC2 Mandy Hunsucker

Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Tommy Doerflinger from USS Iwo Jima and Master-at-Arms Seaman Apprentice Marcus Wilson, Maritime Expeditionary Security Squadron Six were two of seven Sailors that made it into GQ magazine.

YORKTOWN: Revolutionary History and heritage celebrated

Continued from page B1

Triangle' makes you understand and appreciate the history and the heritage of Yorktown."

The Historic Triangle in Virginia — Yorktown, Jamestown and Williamsburg — is recognized as the birthplace of America, where American Indians, Europeans and Africans lived together and became the seed of America.

The official Yorktown Day parade stepped off along Yorktown's Main Street and passed in front of the Yorktown Victory Monument. The monument was erected in 1881 to commemorate the military victory a century before. Included in the parade were representatives of all branches of the U.S. military, fife and drum corps, JROTC and NJROTC and patriotic organizations.

Following the parade, "Patriotic Exercises" at the Yorktown Victory Monu-



Photo by Mark Piggot

Members of the Deep River Junior Ancients Fife and Drum Corps from Deep River, Conn., march in the annual Yorktown Day parade.

ment kicked off with the annual pageant of flags. The pageant is a colorful display that includes the American and French national colors, the flags of the 50 states

and the District of Columbia, and the flags of the 13 Yorktown Day Association members.

"It was a wonderful experience to be a part of and

commemorate history," said Yeoman Seaman Daniel J. Haas, NWS Yorktown Administration, "especially the reason why America became America."

NATURALIZATION: NLSO gives advice, tips to future citizens

Continued from page B1

pendants.

"This is a very good deal for the service members, but if they don't know about it they can't use it," said Michael S. Cole, the Office of the Judge Advocate General in the Legal Assistance Policy Branch (Code 16) immigration and naturalization Navy liaison.

Cole advises any non-citizen in the military to file. "There are certain rates and ranks they may be excluded from," said Cole. "They could be denied the opportunity to expand their horizons."

The training given to the command representatives also dealt with helping service members families. Everything from naturalizing spouses met while overseas to obtaining citizenship records for children once the adults are naturalized was discussed at length.

"This is essential training to have and command representatives won't get it anywhere else," said Dena Panecaldo, a reserve lieutenant commander in the JAG Corps and subject matter expert for immigration and naturalization issues at NLSO Mid-Atlantic. "This training will give the command representatives a good understanding of how the process works and how the forms work."

For more information or to inquire about the next immigration and naturalization conference contact NLSO Mid-Atlantic at 444-4424.