



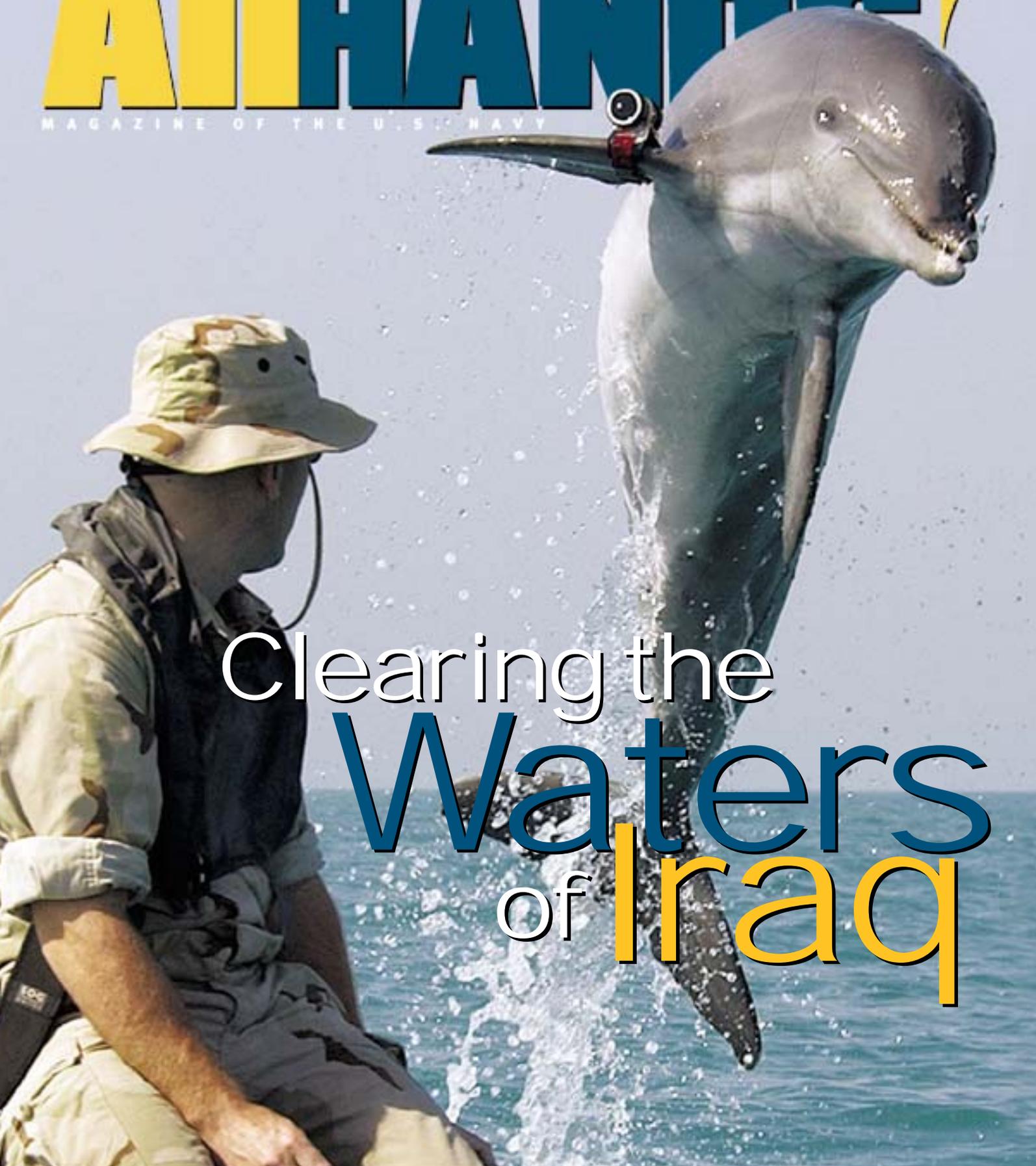
Deep Down

What does it take to be a Navy diver?

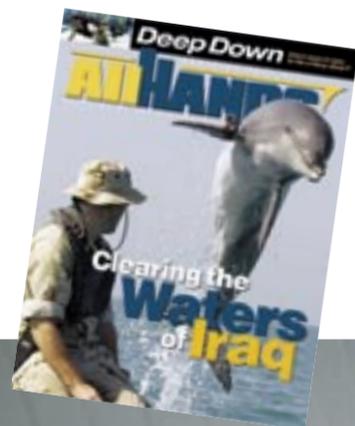
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ALL HANDS

MAGAZINE OF THE U.S. NAVY



Clearing the Waters of Iraq



34 Teen America in Japan

June

[On the Front Cover]

K-Dog, a bottlenose dolphin with Commander Task Force (CTF) 55, leaps out of the water in front of Marine Corps Sgt. Andrew Garrett during training near *USS Gunston Hall* (LSD 44) while operating in the Arabian Gulf.

Photo by PH1 Brien Aho

[Next Month]

As the war in Iraq winds down, we look at the inner workings of *USNS Comfort* (TA-H 20) and look closely at what life is like for Sailors riding with the rodeo.

Life as a teenager is tough enough, but it seems adapting to life overseas isn't as difficult as we first thought. Navy teens can still be typical teenagers and take pride in the fact they are "Navy brats."

[Features]

Clearing the Way 16

U.S. and Coalition Sailors clear underwater mines from the waterways of the Northern Arabian Gulf and Iraq, making way for humanitarian aid.



Photo by PH2 Bob Houlihan

14 Deep Down

To make it as a deep-sea diver, you have to have what it takes deep inside yourself.



Photo by PH1 Shane T. McCoy

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- Eye on the Fleet – 44
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- The Final Word – 48

Photo by JO1 Preston Keres

Dome Lights

Photo by JO1 Preston Keres

BM2 Donald Rouse and **Air Force Airman John Yorde** make early morning security rounds by the radomes at the Cryptologic Operations Center, Misawa, Japan.





Shuttle Service

Photo by PH3 Todd Frantom

A shooter assigned to the V-2 Division's waist catapult aboard **USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63)**, signals "return of shuttle" during a no-load evolution while in the Arabian Gulf.

Speaking with Sailors

Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy
MCPON (SS/AW) Terry D. Scott

These Questions are from a Recent MCPON All Hands Call on NAS Fallon, Nev

Q: I'm a first class petty officer, approaching the 15-year mark, and I'm confused about the High-3 or CSB/REDUX retirement options. How can I be sure which one is right for me?

A: The only way to be sure you make the right choice for you — and this applies to any financial decision — is to do your research!

I cannot over-emphasize the importance of discussing these alternatives with a financial advisor, or even just simply reading all the details of both plans on the www.staynavy.navy.mil

The CSB/REDUX option offers a \$30,000 "bonus" payment now, in exchange for a reduced rate of retirement for the rest of your life. The High-3 plan is 3 percent of base pay after 30 years of service.

I recommend every Sailor visit the Web site and click on the retirement options under the career tools section, to compare your retirement pay with both plans.

What concerns me is that 48.5 percent of those enlisted Sailors who are eligible are taking the CSB/REDUX option. The Center for Naval Analysis suggests considering this program as an early cash-out "loan" with an implicit interest rate of 10.4 percent (for an E-6). This "loan" is paid back later by smaller retirement paychecks that, over

all Sailors to do research before making this important decision.

Q: Does the Navy force single parents to move out of housing for six months while they are on deployment?

A: Typically, the Navy permits dependent family members to be away from their housing unit for no longer than 90 days. However, the local housing authority may permit a live-in aid, if they are given guardian status. The aid could remain in the house with the dependents as their guardian. ■



Speaking with Sailors is a monthly column initiated by the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy as a way of reaching out to the men and women of the fleet, whether they are stationed just down the road or halfway around the world.

All Hands

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All Hands

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Editor,

Everyday I do the POD and we have something called the "quote of the day." I found this quote by Benjamin Franklin: "Those who would give up essential liberty to purchase a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety."

If someone back in the 1700s can realize this, then what does that say for our country now? I think too many people take liberty for granted these days and don't realize that every stitch that holds our American Flag together was formed by blood, fears, tears and sacrifices of somebody's son, daughter, father, mother, brother, sister, husband, wife, child and friend. The silent agony that holds our stars and stripes together is something that is all too loud on the battlefield.

If you're going to weigh freedom for safety then what are you saying? Safety is more crucial than freedom?

Freedom provides us with safety. Nothing is given for free without sacrifice. Our forebears, men and women in uniform, are the very reason why we don't stand in bread lines, our homes are not being invaded, our wives are not being raped and our children sleep safely in their beds at night.

This is what we are fighting for.

I'm sure the brave men and women who died for our freedom would not appreciate being burned, shot at, trashed, dragged through the mud, stepped on and torn apart all over again. That, my fellow Americans, is what happens every time our flag is treated

Mail Call

Letters to the All Hands Editor

with disrespect — whether by friend or foe.

The next time you see our flag, listen. You can still hear them fighting for freedom. Red, White and Blue are the colors of their spirits now. These colors are embedded in our minds. We associate them with life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

If you ever come across a fallen American flag, pick it up. After all, that was somebody's child.

SN Sarah Penich
BMU 2, Norfolk



CORRECTION:
The "Providers" of HC-5 do not fly the SH-60. They fly the MH-60S which is replacing the CH/HH/UH-46D series helicopter, not the SH-46.



"We have gone forth from our shores

repeatedly over the last hundred years and we've done this as recently as the last year in Afghanistan and put wonderful young men and women at risk, many of whom have lost their lives, and we have asked for nothing except enough ground to bury them in, and otherwise we have returned home ... to live

our own lives in peace." **SECRETARY OF STATE COLIN POWELL** At the World Economic Forum, Annual Meeting 2003

U.S. Fleet Returning Home

USS *Abraham Lincoln* (CVN 72) returned home to a heroes welcome in Everett, Wash., in early May, after nearly 10 months on deployment. *Lincoln's* record-setting deployment began as a routine six-month deployment in support of Operations *Enduring Freedom* and *Southern Watch* in July 2002. Upon completing her deployment in December 2002, *Lincoln* was called back to duty in the Arabian Gulf to support Operation *Iraqi*

Lincoln's deployment was the first to last longer than nine months in nearly 30 years and the longest ever for a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier.

"I'm very proud of everything this crew has accomplished," said **RADM John Kelly**, *Lincoln* Carrier Strike Group (CSG) commander. "I know the extension has been tough and everyone's missing their loved ones, but it was important for us to hold the line and support our ground troops."

In a message to *Abraham Lincoln* CSG, Army **Gen. Tommy Franks**, commander, U.S. Central Command said, "your extended 10-month deployment in direct support of our global war on terrorism will be long remembered by both Central Command and the American people."

"Words cannot express how good it feels to be back," said **Seaman David Espinosa** of Reno, Nev. "This was my first cruise, so it feels [like] a long time to be away from my wife and son."

Just about the same time *USS Abraham Lincoln* arrived in Everett, Wash., *USS Kitty Hawk* and her Strike Group return to their forward-deployed port of Yokosuka, Japan, after more than 100 consecutive days underway in support of OIF and Operation



Photo by PH2 Nadia S. Larry

"First Kiss" winner, IT2 Michael Isbell is reunited with his wife and twin daughters, as USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75) returns to her homeport of Naval Station Norfolk. Truman returned to Naval Station Norfolk after a six-month deployment to the Mediterranean Sea in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

Southern Watch.

During a deployment beginning Jan. 23, *Kitty Hawk* and embarked *Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 5*, with a total complement of 5,336 crew members, received the call to transit to the 5th Fleet Area of Operations, Feb. 11.

While in the Arabian Gulf, *Kitty Hawk*, now affectionately known as the "Battle Cat," served at the forefront of operations with more than 3,000 sorties launched and nearly 900,000 pounds of ordnance expended in support of OIF.

CAPT Tom Parker, *Kitty Hawk's* commanding officer, said he was fortunate to have led the Battle Cat and her Sailors. "The fact that this great ship has recently completed a combat cruise, and I have had the honor of commanding America's finest men and women in a combat zone, fills me with pride and a profound sense of gratitude that I have had this opportunity," he said.

Also during this underway period, Commander, Naval Air Forces Pacific, rec-

ognized crew members of four departments for their outstanding performance and proficiency while performing their respective duties. Supply was awarded its 4th consecutive Blue "E"; Medical received a Blue "M"; Weapons, a Black "W"; and Aircraft Intermediate Maintenance Department (AIMD), its fifth Black "E".

By the end of May, the East Coast piers began to fill up as more than 8,000 Sailors from the ships and squadrons that comprise *USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75)* and her Carrier Strike Group returned to Norfolk.

Commanded by **RADM John D. Stufflebeem**, *Harry S. Truman's* Strike Group, includes *USS Harry S. Truman* with Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 3 and Commander, Destroyer Squadron (CDS) 22 embarked; *USS San Jancinto (CG 56)*; *USS Oscar Austin (DDG 79)*, *USS Mitscher (DDG 57)* and *USS Donald Cook (DDG 75)*; *USS Briscoe (DD 977)* and *USS Deyo (DD 989)*; *USS Hawes (FFG 53)*; *USNS John Lenthall (T-AO 189)*.

A few days later, *USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71)* returned to Norfolk after nearly a five-month deployment. *Theodore Roosevelt's* Strike Group deployed Jan. 6 and conducted a Composite Training Unit Exercise (COMPTUEX) in the Puerto Rican Operating Area until Feb. 4, before heading overseas.

Although some *Theodore Roosevelt* Strike Group surface combatants returned with the aircraft carrier, others will remain in theater, but are expected to return to homeport in July, completing about a six-month deployment.

Early this month in San Diego, *USS Constellation* family members' families welcomed their Sailors home from a successful seven-month deployment in support of OIF, Operations *Enduring Freedom* and *Southern Watch*.

Constellation and other ships in her strike group stopped in Pearl Harbor, in late May. The ships that joined the carrier in Hawaii are *USS Bunker Hill (CG 52)*, *USS Valley Forge (CG 50)*, *USS Milius (DDG 69)*, *USS Thach (FFG 43)* and *USS Rainier (AOE 7)*.

During OIF, *Constellation* CSG flew more than 1,500 sorties and expended more than 1 million pounds of ordnance, including 408 *Tomahawk* cruise missiles.

Throughout the deployment, the ships of the CSG also provided significant contributions to the war against terrorism. They escorted merchant and military ships through strategic waterways and conducted maritime interdiction operations, intercepting ships suspected of transporting illegal cargo. ■

Story compiled from various Navy News Service articles

Mine Watch: The First Line of Defense

Since the Revolutionary War, naval warships have sailed in fear of an "unseen" weapon. As technologically advanced as the Navy is today, it still haunts the oceans and seas, lurking below the water's surface, quietly waiting for just the right time to strike.

Over time, mines have been recognized as an effective instrument of war, one that is still a very real threat to today's Navy.

Several thousand underwater mines were placed in the Gulf waters during the first Gulf War, and even though U.S. and coalition minesweepers removed more than 13,000 mines from the Gulf, some could still remain.

Bataan's crew understands the threat and is ready to detect these mines through its first line of defense, the mine watch.

"The mine watch is a



USS Bataan (LHD 5) steams through the Atlantic Ocean as one of seven ships attached to Amphibious Task Force-East (ATF-E). All seven ships were deployed early in their schedules to support the ongoing efforts of Operation Enduring Freedom.

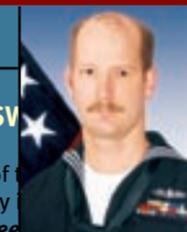
The crew of *Bataan* went a step further when establishing the watch - creating a mine watch chair to protect watchstanders from the elements, particularly the heat of the Arabian Gulf.

"I was asked to create a chair with a canopy to help shade and protect the watchstanders from

Shipmates

Photographer's Mate 2nd Class (SV)

was selected *USS La Salle (AGF 3)* 2002 Junior Sailor of the Year. A Reservist who was called into active duty in support of Operations *Noble Eagle* and *Enduring Freedom*, he has had more than 100 photos published in various national and international newspapers and magazines, including the "Washington Post," "Stars and Stripes" and "Navy Times." The Fort Lauderdale, Fla., native qualified as duty master-at-arms and became a member of the security alert team. **Reeves** is also the departmental training and division safety petty officer.



frame, and the PR (aircrew survival equipmentman) shop sewed the actual canopy for the frame," said **Higginbotham**. "We also made the canopy frame removable to make the chair easier to carry."

Cryptologic Technician (Communications) 3rd Class Keyla Garcia says she is thankful for the new mine watch chair.

As malaria, to an unsuspecting victim and possibly lead to death. One of the most powerful weapons to combat this danger is the Sailors from the **1st Force Service Support Group (FSSG)**, who use their knowledge of entomology to keep service members healthy while in support of Operation *Enduring Freedom*.

The specialists focus on pest control, education and surveillance to accomplish their mission of ensuring troop vigor. The main weapon in their arsenal is insecticide - lethal to insects but safe for humans, when used correctly. The most effective technique is to spray uniforms and mosquito netting with permethrin. Once uniforms are treated with the insecticide, it binds to the fabric and will not wash out. They have sprayed thousands of uniforms and netting for Marines, Sailors and Soldiers over the past several months.

"When a mosquito or tick lands on the treated uniform, it will pick up tiny particles of the insecticide and die in about 24 hours," said **LT Pete Obenauer**, an entomologist with **1st FSSG**.

In a camp setting, another combative priority is to rid the area of flies. A simple solution

paraloft helped make this very important watch more effective. **Patillo** concluded, "It makes me feel proud knowing that I built something that my fellow shipmates can use to help keep us safe from a threat that's so lethal."

The ship and embarked Marines are components of

Around the Fleet

is to sprinkle treated fly bait in the compound. The attracted flies feed and die in minutes.

Education is the second line of defense. The preventive medicine team explain what to look for, what to avoid and how to battle common pests such as flies, ticks, mosquitoes, spiders, rats and snakes.

“My recommendation to Marines and Sailors is to wear bug repellent and use mosquito netting,” said **Obenauer**. “Since most mosquitoes feed at night, if you have your netting up, you significantly reduce your chances of getting bit.”

Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Maryjane Guest, a preventive medicine technician, has additional advice.

“Don’t eat in the tents, because the food attracts rats, and the rats attract snakes.”

The third line of defense is ongoing surveillance. The team monitors pests by collecting insects from various locations to see if any are carrying diseases.

Obenauer said servicemembers would likely suffer greatly without modern preventive medicine’s attack on pests.

“During World War II, many Marines and Soldiers came down with malaria, which

incapacitated one of every three Marines,” he said. “We’re not on the front line fighting the bullets, but I like to think that we’re fighting insects so we can keep the forces healthy.” ■

Story by Marine Sgt. David Christian, 1st Force Service Support Group

Mentor a Sailor, Develop a Future Leader

The Navy has always placed great emphasis on mentoring its junior people to ensure their success. Today, the Navy is formalizing a process that will hold leaders accountable for not only mission accomplishment, but for the development of their Sailors, as well.

“We all have an inherent responsibility to ensure the growth and development of the people who work for us,” said **CNOCM(SS/SW/AW) Phil Russell**, Naval Personnel Development Command command master chief. “We have never before programmatically asked our leaders to get as engaged and involved in the mechanics of making

that happen for our Sailors, as we are going to in the future.”

A working group of fleet master chiefs has been established and is being supported by the Center for Naval Leadership (CNL) to develop guidelines for the fleet. Because mentoring skills are a key component of leadership and are an integral part of a Sailor’s entire career, CNL will provide training solutions to deliver the knowledge, skills and abilities our leaders need to support the program. By formalizing the process, both senior and junior Sailors will have a clear understanding of what mentorship is and how it works.

“Everyone in the Navy will have a mentor and be a mentor,” said **Russell**. “Each one of us in a leadership role, whether by experience, or position, has a responsibility and obligation to mentor the Sailors who work for us or with us, to help them be successful at what they do.”

For more information about mentorship, visit the Center for Naval Leadership on Navy Knowledge Online at www.nko.navy.mil. ■

Story by JO2 Edward Flynn, Naval Personnel Development Command Public Affairs

Naples’ SAVI Program Increases Scope

Quick and effective reporting of a sexual assault crime is essential to providing immediate support for the victim and minimizing the possibility of additional incidents.

Training, now offered from the Naples Sexual Assault Victim Intervention (SAVI) Coordinator Vicki Shepherd, provides updated guidance to command SAVI points of contact on proper procedures for reporting an incident.

Shepherd hosted Naples first SAVI Command Point of Contact/Victim and Witness Assistance Program (SAVI POC/VWAP) training in January and is in the process of training a designated representative from each command in Naples.

“This program cuts down on the levels or tiers you have to go through in reporting a rape, a sexual assault or other crime,” said Shepherd. “It can help cut down on the finalization time and helps to ensure the victim is not re-victimized by the

reporting process.”

In 1990, the Navy Women’s Study Group found that while reports of sexual assault in the Navy were increasing, incidents of sexual assault continued to be the most under-reported crimes, despite the existence of individual command education and victim assistance programs.

This study spurred a number of developments, including the formation of a department-wide reporting and tracking system with an integrated database of reported assaults.

Sexual Assault Victims Intervention (SAVI) opened its doors in Naples for the first time in the summer of 1995. The program’s first focus was to ensure SAVI advocates – those designated to provide assistance to victims of rape and sexual assault – received quality training.

The program has progressed over the years, and SAVI POC/VWAP training is the program’s latest expansion. This will ensure that each command in the Naples area has a trained individual who can advise their command on the proper steps to take if they have an individual who becomes the victim of a crime.

Shepherd said the training can provide benefits beyond its primary focus of sexual attacks.

“The command can rely on these in-house resident experts to provide information on proper reporting procedures, and not just for sexual assaults, but all crimes,” said Shepherd. “If someone has their car stolen or someone is robbed, the command has someone there already and doesn’t have to sit around wondering, ‘What do I do?’”

OPNAV Instruction 1752.1A directs each Navy command to designate and train individuals in SAVI procedures, and Shepherd noted that this educa-

tion process truly benefits the individual through immediate assistance and through minimizing the time it takes to provide the victim closure.

She said the lack of understanding or the misunderstanding of reporting procedures has, in some cases, led to unnecessarily prolonged investigations. Other cases have gone unreported when victims were not sure what constituted sexual assault or were not sure where the report needed to be made, or if it needed to be reported at all.

The SAVI Program POC implements and coordinates awareness training at each command, providing prevention education programs and maintaining and providing current information on base and community programs for victim advocate services that include counseling, medical care and other services. These individuals also ensure the proper collection and maintenance of sexual assault data for their own command.

Shepherd said each command needs a trained representative, and that personnel at small commands in the Naples area are at no less risk than larger commands.

“My goal is to ensure that every command has a letter-appointed, highly trained SAVI point of contact,” she said. “I also want to make sure small commands aren’t overlooked.” ■

Story from Fleet and Family Support Center Naples

Task Force Uniform (TFU) to Make Changes to The Navy “Seabag”

Task Force Uniform (TFU) met in Washington recently to begin laying the groundwork for an assessment of Navy uniforms and to discuss options for implementing a more professional, sensible, cost-effective set of uniforms for the fleet.

The TFU initiative began after Sailors in the fleet expressed concerns about the current status of Navy uniforms. **Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Adm. Vern Clark** determined there should be an evaluation of the uniform requirements. He tasked **Master Chief Petty Officer of the**

Time Capsule

This month we look back in the *All Hands* archive to see what was going on in the month of June. To view these issues in more detail on the Web, go to www.news.navy.mil/allhands.asp?x=search



Years Ago – 1958

U.S.S. Vanguard was in its infancy in 1958. After two disappointing failures, **Vanguard (TV 4)** was the first to use all three stages of the rocket and placed **U.S.S. Vanguard I**, a Navy test satellite, in orbit. We also dug into the archives to find the names of the many celebrities who came aboard Navy ships to entertain our Sailors. Celebrities included Tennessee Ernie Ford, Doris Day, Alan Ladd, Theresa Brewer, Bob Hope, Jane Mansfield and William Bendix.



Years Ago – 1976

By the reviewing ship **USS Wainwright (CG 28)**, ships’ delegations from more than 40 countries planned to convene in New York Harbor, July 4th, to participate in the Fourth International Naval Review. **U.S.S. Wainwright** was the poster for the event. We also covered the filming of “Midway,” which was filmed aboard **USS Lexington (CV 2)** and featured Glenn Ford as **ADM Raymond Spruance** and Henry Fonda as **ADM Chester W. Nimitz**. **Robert Mitchum** had a cameo spot as **ADM Halsey** and the supporting cast included Charleton Heston, Hal Holbrook, Robert Wagner and Cliff Robertson. “Lady Lex” played three roles – **USS Hornet (CV 8)**, **USS Yorktown (CV 5)** and **USS Enterprise (CV 6)**.



Years Ago – 1985

U.S.S. Wainwright went aboard **USS Nimitz (CVN 68)** to meet a crew that makes teamwork a tradition. From the mess decks, from the engine room to the deck, the crew of **Nimitz** keeps everything working like a well-oiled machine. We also featured the story of **Ship’s Serviceman 2nd Class Tyrone L. Gaynor**, the Navy’s best boxer in 1985. **Gaynor** was rated as one of the 10 best boxers in the United States and trained for the 1984 Olympic Boxing Team, but was not selected. **Gaynor** worked even harder and went on to win the Washington, D.C., Golden Gloves.”

Ricky’s Tour

By JO2 Mike Jones

mikejones43@hotmail.com



Around the Fleet

Navy (SW/AW) Terry Scott to review the Navy's "seabag" to help meet the needs of tomorrow's Sailors.

"The rapidly changing Navy of the 21st century dictates our Sailors have uniforms that are going to provide the versatility, the durability and even the interchangeability they need," said **Scott**. "We need to make sure we are addressing those concerns. Our Sailors are going

sent to the CNO in October.

TFU's goal is to evaluate the usefulness of each item against specific factors with an eye towards minimizing the number of uniform items required, and "keep what makes sense."

Some of the issues that will be addressed: developing a working uniform that can be used at sea or ashore and across all communities; establishing a service uniform for E-1 through

gevity are factors TFU will consider before making a final decision about any uniform.

"We are going to have a strong sense of tradition," said **Scott**. "We want to make sure our Sailors still feel like Sailors. I feel that is really important."

Sailors should not expect a drastic make-over in Navy fashion anytime soon, but what they can expect is a change that will be more convenient to them, whether they are ashore or at sea.

"We are going to be taking a look and ensuring we have a set of uniform regulations that are easily understandable, enforceable and realistic to our Sailors," said **Scott**. "We don't want a complete make-over of uniform regulations. We want to make sense. If it doesn't make sense anymore, let's stop doing it. If it does make sense and should be in the regulations, let's address it and make sure it's there." ■

Story by JO2 (SW) Hendrick L. Dickson, Navy News Service

How Secure Is Your Computer?

Many people think their password falls within the standard established by information systems technicians: do not pick a dictionary word, have at least one

capitalized letter and a number. But it may take much more than that to dissuade a serious hacker.

There are other measures you can take to protect against computer hackers.

"Do not use familiar things like your dog's name, your name, your wife's name or your social security number," says **Information Systems Technician**

2nd Class (SW) Micheal Burns, network system vulnerability tech (NSVT). "The best way to generate a password is to use something that you will remember.

"The best way to make it foolproof is to use ASCII characters; press 'Num Lock' on your keyboard and then press 'Alt' and at the same time, type a four digit number added to your password," **Burns** explained. "These passwords are the hardest for password cracking utilities to crack."

Even using a brute-force crack (one that uses totally random key strokes as passwords), with modern computers, it would take months to find out what your password is. And you are required to change them every 90 days.

But how safe is our server?

"One measure we have in place to disrupt hacking is the Access Control List (ACL), which is basically a set of rules to filter out what kind of traffic we allow onto the network," says **Burns**. "Different protocols use different ports. That is how information travels around the Internet, and we can limit the who and what we allow in."

Users can help protect their systems by performing a few simple tasks. The Local Network Operations Security Center updates all on-base computer systems with the latest anti-virus update patches, but there are still things that you can spot.

"You know your computer better than anybody else," says **IT1 (SW) Sidney Townsend, NSVT**. "You are working on it everyday. If there seems to be something out of place, then it might be that there is."

There are things to do to protect your home computer, as well.

"The best thing you can do is update your security patches," says **IT1 (SW) John Hickey**, infor-

mation systems security manager. "With Windows, you can use a Windows updater. It will scan your computer and tell you the most critical patches to install. The second thing you can do is make sure you have the most updated anti-virus software and definitions. This can be found for free at www.mcafee.com/dod, and get a fire wall and other virus defending applications for free at www.cert.mil. The cert. mil Web page needs to be accessed by a dot mil domain in order to be viewed." ■

Story by PH2 (AW) Tim Comerford, Naval Station Rota Public Affairs

Conan O' Brien Visits Nimitz

Comedian **Conan O'Brien**, host of "Late Night with Conan O'Brien," visited **USS Nimitz (CVN 68)** May 18 to meet the crew, sign autographs and tour the ship.

The visit was to show his support for service members as part of a United Services Organization (USO) tour. O'Brien said, "It's been an incredible few days. I was in Camp Matilda visiting the Marines, and I got to visit with the Army and the Air Force, but I said I wanted to come out here, to see where the real fighting force was."

Once O'Brien came aboard, he met with **Nimitz** Strike Group Commander, **RADM Samuel J. Locklear**; **Nimitz** Commanding Officer, **CAPT Robert J. Gilman**; and **Nimitz** Executive Officer, **CAPT William L. Cone**.

After his meeting, O'Brien was taken on a tour of the ship, where he met with crew members at the Pilothouse, Signal Bridge, Air Operations, Carrier Air Traffic Control Center,

and Primary Flight Control. He also had an opportunity to watch flight operations from "vultures Row" above the flight deck. Later in the afternoon, he had lunch in the wardroom (officer's galley), talked to **Nimitz** crew members in the hangar bay and posed for pictures.

Fireman Timothy Martinez, temporarily assigned to the wardroom, said it made him feel really good to see O'Brien come out to **Nimitz**.

"I don't think a lot of people in the media notice us," said **Martinez**. "So to have him on board showing his support, that's amazing. Everyone who watches his show will know he's on board our ship. That means everyone will hear **Nimitz's** story, and that's great."

O'Brien's talk with the crew in the hangar bay brought more than a few laughs from the crew, but his message was very serious.

"It's an amazing experience to meet you all," O'Brien said. "I want to tell you that everyone at home is just thrilled at the amazing work that's being done out here."

If you've seen what I do," he said, "you'll know that I just go on TV and make a fool out of myself. But I wouldn't be able to do what I do if it wasn't for people like you. Thank you."

For related news, visit the **USS Nimitz (CVN 68)** Navy NewsStand page at www.news.navy.mil/local/cvn68. ■

Story by JO2 Beth Johnson who is assigned to the public affairs office, USS Nimitz (CVN 68)

Commander-in-Chief Arriving



President George W. Bush passes through the "side boys" after a successful trap aboard the **USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72)** in a **S-3B Viking** assigned to the **Blue Wolves of Sea Control Squadron Three Five (VS-35)** designated "NAVY 1". President Bush is the first sitting President to trap aboard an aircraft carrier at sea. The President is conducting a visit aboard ship to meet with the Sailors and will address the Nation as **Lincoln** prepares to return from a 10-month deployment to the Arabian Gulf in support of **Operation Iraqi Freedom**.

to be prepared for whatever lies ahead for the future."

For the next five months, representatives from various communities in the Navy; surface forces, naval air forces, submarines, Seabees and others, will be addressing those concerns, and other issues regarding the current status of the seabag and uniform regulations. The assessment is expected to end Sept. 30 with a report to be pre-

E-6 that can be worn year-round; streamlining the Navy Uniform Regulations to make it more user-friendly and easy to read; and designing or redesigning uniforms to accommodate various body shapes and sizes.

Although several changes may be made upon the completion of the assessment, the more than 200 year history of the U.S. Navy will not be affected. Tradition, historical acceptance and lon-



Actor/Comedian Conan O'Brien speaks to Sailors over a sound-powered telephone during a recent visit to **USS Nimitz (CVN 68)**. **Nimitz** Carrier Strike Force and Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 11 are deployed in support of **Operation Iraqi Freedom**, the multinational coalition effort to liberate the Iraqi people, eliminate Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, and end the regime of Saddam Hussein.

Story by PH1(AW) Shane T. McCoy,
photos by PH1(AW) Shane T. McCoy and JO1 Preston Keres

“**D**-D-Diver on d-d-deck. Di-di-
ver OK,” said **Engineman 3rd**
Class Wayne Johnson as he
emerged
from the frigid water of the dive-training tank.

“It’s a lot like a polar bear plunge.”

Even for the last week of January, Panama City, Fla., is abnormally cold, with temperatures in the low teens. A sheet of ice has formed around the pool where Sailors and Marines swim laps before starting lessons for the day. In the nearby bay, a class in full wet suits swims 1,000 yards, decked out in full battle dress uniforms with rifles strapped to their backs. Showers near the water are left on to keep the pipes from freezing, and stinging air is sucked into the steaming bodies of students who have just completed a long run.

► **Soapy water** is used on an MK-21 dive helmet to make sure there are no leaks before a dive into the dark waters of the bay.

Photo by PH1 (AW) Shane T. McCoy

To make it as a **deep-sea diver** you have to
have what it takes **deep** inside yourself.



► **Dive Instructor EMC(DSW/SW) Ron Hennig** keeps his eyes on a slower student, as he makes his way through the bay during a 1,000-yard morning swim.

Photo by JO1 Preston Keres

▼ **Remaining calm**, cool and collected is the key to success during one of the drills conducted in the deep end of the pool. **HM3 Mateo Benavidez** holds his breath and waits for his turn to come up for air, as he is arm-locked with his fellow classmates.



Photo by JO1 Preston Keres

The weather might be abnormal, but the training is just business as usual at the Naval Diving and Salvage Training Center (NDSTC). The center trains divers to work around the world in any environment. Incredible opportunities await these young divers, from explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) to ships husbandry, or even the Navy's underwater photo team.

Some divers will end up with Mobile Diving Salvage Unit 2, which helped recover parts of the Civil War iron-clad *Monitor* and is currently recovering parts of the *Challenger* Space Shuttle. Some will go to a Deep Submergence Unit, rescuing Sailors who could be trapped in a submarine. Others will find themselves on Underwater Construction Teams, cutting through a few feet of ice to build below the surface.

Johnson, in his eighth week of training to become a second class diver, just completed his first dive with surface-supplied air. He has another three

months to go before he will leave the school as a Navy diver. It's just a short wait for him now, after the year he spent as a "Mud Puppy" prior to getting to the school.

Mud Puppy is the name given to a fleet Sailor who is slated for dive school, but must wait for a class opening. During this time, many Sailors are sent on temporary duty assignments to a dive command, where they have the advantage of working with fleet divers and learning what it really takes from a master diver.

"They undergo additional medical screenings and conduct academics and physical training. They go out on the dives. They aren't just cleaning bilges and swabbing decks. I put them on the line tending hoses for us," said Master Chief Boatswain's Mate (DSW/SW) **Kyle Gaillard**, senior master diver of the training department at NDSTC. **Gaillard** mentored **Johnson**, among others, prior to their schooling.

Gaillard explained that this screening

Photo by JO1 Preston Keres



◀ **A member** of the Explosive Ordnance Disposal dive class ventures off to the deep end of the pool to participate in confidence training.



▲ **During confidence training**, instructor ABHC(EOD) Preston Thomson keeps a close watch as students are evaluated on how they recover in emergency situations.

Photo by PH1 Shane T. McCoy

▼ **With masks full of water**, the new Marine Combat Diver class signals “OK” as the instructor passes by. New students are trained to clear water from a mask, even if they are on the bottom of the ocean.



Photo by PH1 Shane T. McCoy

process and mentoring, both before school and after, is the most important part of becoming a Navy diver. He added that even though a Sailor leaves dive school with a piece of paper that says “diver,” the Sailor is not really a “true diver” until he or she has hit the fleet and is working “SSN” – Saturday, Sunday and Nights.

Working with divers before attending the school, and making sure the Sailors have the right temperament to complete the intense courses offered at NDSTC, helps more students graduate.

Sailors who attend NDSTC right after “A” school, along with some others, don’t get a chance to be Mud Puppies.

For students like these, other new programs are being implemented.

In the future, students may be able to complete most of their written courses before ever arriving. Computer-based courses will be a prerequisite for all basic dive courses at NDSTC. While they won’t eliminate classroom time altogether, they will cut it substantially. All diving courses, ranging from five weeks to six months, are being updated to reflect the needs of working divers in today’s military.

“We need to focus on getting the Sailor in a rig and down doing the actual physical labor that it takes to do the job,” said Gaillard. “There are other parts to

the job, of course, but there are other people who are supposed to be focusing on that. A lot of those things could be taught on the job. We felt like there were things that could come out of the course that were not needed as much now as they were in the old years of diving, so we can focus more on the working diver.”

By eliminating antiquated material, the second-class diver course will be shortened from 20 to 14 weeks. Other classes, such as the first-class diver course, are being lengthened from eight weeks to 10. The EOD diver course was reduced from 14 weeks to nine.

While these course changes will streamline the program, they won’t



change the description of personalities that are successful in the community. According to **Gaillard**, heart, determination and maybe even a little bit of arrogance are needed to make it as a Navy diver. You have to be extremely sure of yourself.

Gaillard explained that **Johnson** needed to take the physical readiness test to qualify for school when they first met. After passing the test with a decent score, **Johnson** claimed he would have normally done much better. When **Gaillard** asked why, **Johnson** told him he had just run the test on a broken leg. "It's because of people like **Johnson** that I know the Navy

diving community is going to continue to prosper. He's got heart, and he instills it everywhere he goes," said **Gaillard**.

As you talk with divers about why they stay Navy, and what drew them to diving in the first place, you constantly hear the same thing – community and family. According to **Gaillard**, divers are told that even as a seaman, they can talk directly to their detailer. If they need a hand with placement due to family, they'll hear, "We'll see what we can do," and not "Get your chief on the phone."

"We have people who care about you and your family," said **Gaillard**. "As long as Sailors are happy with quality of life,

as long as he feels you care about him and are willing to bend over backwards for him and his career, he's going to stay. These Sailors know that's the way a lot of the master divers in the fleet operate. That's why they come to our community. That's why they stay in our community."

"Not everyone is cut out to do this," said **Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Mateo Benavidez**. "It takes a special type of person, someone with that 'suck it up attitude.'" **Benavidez**, an eight-year corpsman, just started the Marine Combatant Dive Course.

In his opinion, the physical aspect of the course has not been difficult, but



▲ **Sailors and Marines** learn to keep afloat while fully clothed during a first-week class.

Photo by PH1 Shane T. McCoy

◀ **The halls of the school** are loaded with reminders of those who have paved the way for today's dive community.

► **Despite it being a short drop** to the water, students must still face the fear of stepping off the dive tower in full scuba gear for the first time. Attention to detail and technique is crucial, with every step under the watchful eye of the instructors.

Photo by JO1 Preston Keres

▼ **Safety briefs** are the first and most important part of every dive at school and in the fleet.

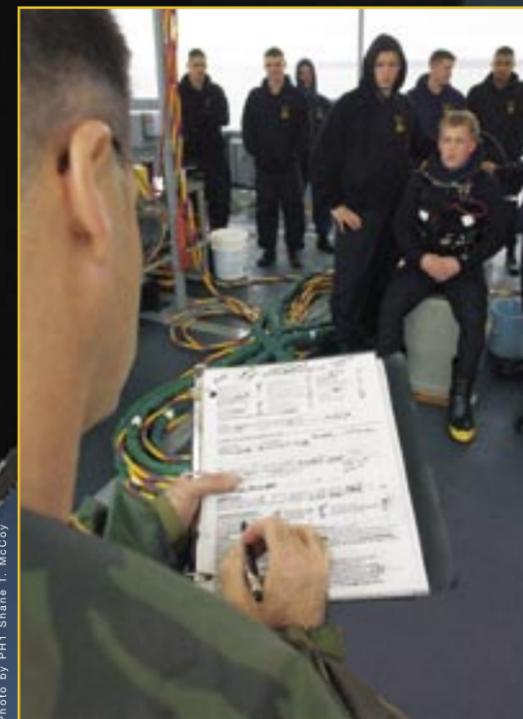


Photo by PH1 Shane T. McCoy

▼ **During the eighth week** of training, second class dive students will be entering one of the three dive practice tanks at the school.



Photo by PH1 Shane T. McCoy

the schedule is demanding. “You can only have one speed in this – full speed,” he said. **Benavidez**, always looking for his next challenge, will work alongside Marines in the field and under the water.

“No single thing here is all that hard,” said **EOD Instructor Boatswain’s Mate 1st Class (EOD/SW/PJ) Travis Bivens**, “but on the whole it is quite difficult. When you have to complete a 1,000 yard bay swim and then take a physics and medicine test a couple of hours later, that can be a challenge.”

That challenge has proven to be too much for many students who’ve attempted to become divers over the years. **Gaillard** said, “We can only get as

many people as apply. If we get 100 who apply and only 50 that cut the mustard, then there’s only 50 divers going out the door. I know that we need more than we have, but I can’t focus on that. If I let that be my driving force, to worry about numbers out in the fleet, then I would probably be putting the lives of my divers in the wrong hands and people would get hurt. I’m not going to do that.”

It seems to all come down to a quote from Vince Lombardi that the master chief has every one of his young divers read.

“I firmly believe that any man’s finest hour, the greatest fulfillment of all that he holds dear, is that moment when he

has worked his heart out in a good cause and lies exhausted on the field of battle – victorious.” ■

McCoy and Keres are photojournalists assigned to All Hands.

President George W. Bush said at the beginning of **Operation Iraqi Freedom** that this war was not just about defeating Saddam Hussein, but about winning the hearts and minds of the people who have long been repressed. But to win the hearts and minds of the Iraqi people, humanitarian aid needs to flow into the war-torn country.

Enter **Commander Task Force (CTF) 55**, a group of American, British and Australian ships, whose Sailors and Marines have been assigned the mission of clearing the Northern Arabian Gulf of underwater mines. In the few short weeks after the beginning of the war, an amazing amount of progress was made.

"Clearing access to the Khawar Abd Allah River (KAA), Umm Qasr and getting the port clear for operations, very specifically geared to moving humanitarian aid, was our first priority," said **CAPT Michael O'Moore, Commander, Mine Countermeasure Squadron (MCMRON) 3**.

The clearing of those areas moved quickly, using a variety of methods; men, mammals and machines.

U.S. and coalition Sailors clear underwater mines from the waterways of the Northern Arabian Gulf and Iraq, making way for humanitarian aid.

clearing the way

We can go through an area with the **UUV**, look at the images and tell our commanders that you have a mine-like object here, a rock here, a big hole here. We can give them a very accurate picture of what the bottom looks like.



Photo by PH2 Bob Houlihan

▲ **SN Quran Shaw** mans the sound-powered phones on the catwalk high above *USS Ponce's* (LPD 15) well deck, and communicates commands to raise and lower the sterngate.

The Sailors of *USS Ponce* (LPD 15) and **Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron (HM) 14** spent long hours getting the difficult and often dangerous job done. More than 2,000 U.S. and coalition Sailors are involved in the mine-clearing effort in the Northern Arabian Gulf.

"The team effort between **HM-14** and the commodore's staff and *Ponce* has been extraordinary," said **LTJG James R. Hoeft**, *Ponce's* navigator.

"When you have three independent elements from three separate communities – air, surface and mine – bringing them all together can be somewhat chal-

lenging, but everything just clicked. It was amazing that after just a few short days, the ship and helo squadron were able to professionally do an operation that *Ponce* had never done previously," **Hoeft** continued.

Ponce and **HM-14** are using two different devices to search for and destroy underwater mines in the region; the **MK-105** sled (magnetic device) with the **MK-104** acoustic device, and the **AQS-14** sonar.

The **MK-105** sled towed behind an **MH-53 Sea Dragon** creates an acoustical and magnetic field designed to detonate mines in the area. The **AQS-14** sonar is

also dragged behind an **MH-53**, but instead of actively detonating the mines, its data is transmitted to a console in the aircraft that shows real-time images of the bottom, as well as recording them. After a mission, minesweeping specialists read the tapes to look for any contacts the aircrew may have missed, and designated contact divers who go back and follow up.

Technology is a wonderful thing, but without the Sailors behind those machines, they wouldn't even be able to operate.

"The biggest obstacle we've run into out here is getting the parts we need to keep our systems running," said **Aviation Electronics Technician 1st Class (AW) Michael Petty**, **HM-14's** maintenance control supervisor. "The sleds have held up even better than I expected though, and all my guys have worked hard to keep the systems up and running."

For *Ponce*, mine countermeasure (MCM) operations were a new thing, but they stepped right up to the challenge.

"It's *Ponce's* first time doing MCM ops, said **Boatswain's Mate 2nd Class (SW) Cliff Junkins**, petty officer in charge of *Ponce's* well deck. "But it's been a real team effort between *Ponce* and **HM-14**. They've been pretty patient with us. Everyone has worked very well together to get the job done."

Also active in the mine clearance activities are *USS Ardent* (MCM 12), *USS Cardinal* (MHC 60), *USS Dextrous* (MCM 13) and *USS Raven* (MHC 61).

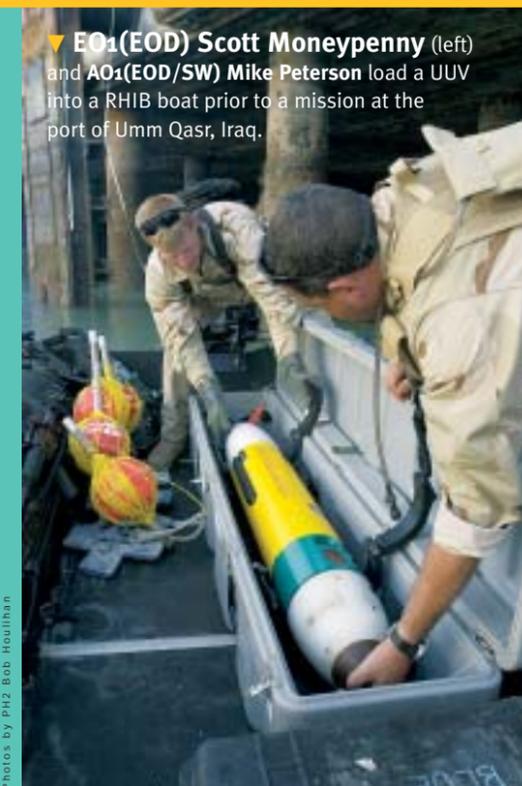
Because of their all-fiberglass construction, *Cardinal* and *Raven* are able to get extremely close to mines without causing a detonation.

"We have virtually no magnetic signature," said **LCDR Dan Voth**, *Cardinal's* commanding officer, "and we're very quiet in the water."

clearing the way



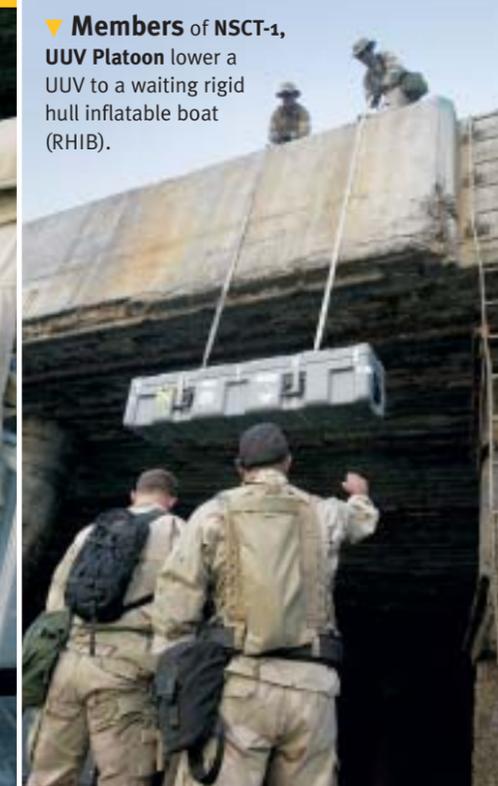
▲ **AE3 Gibson** troublehoots the **Mk-105** magnetic sled before it launches for mine countermeasure ops from *USS Ponce's* (LPD 15) well deck.



▼ **EO1(EOD) Scott Money** (left) and **AO1(EOD/SW) Mike Peterson** load a UUV into a RHIB boat prior to a mission at the port of Umm Qasr, Iraq.

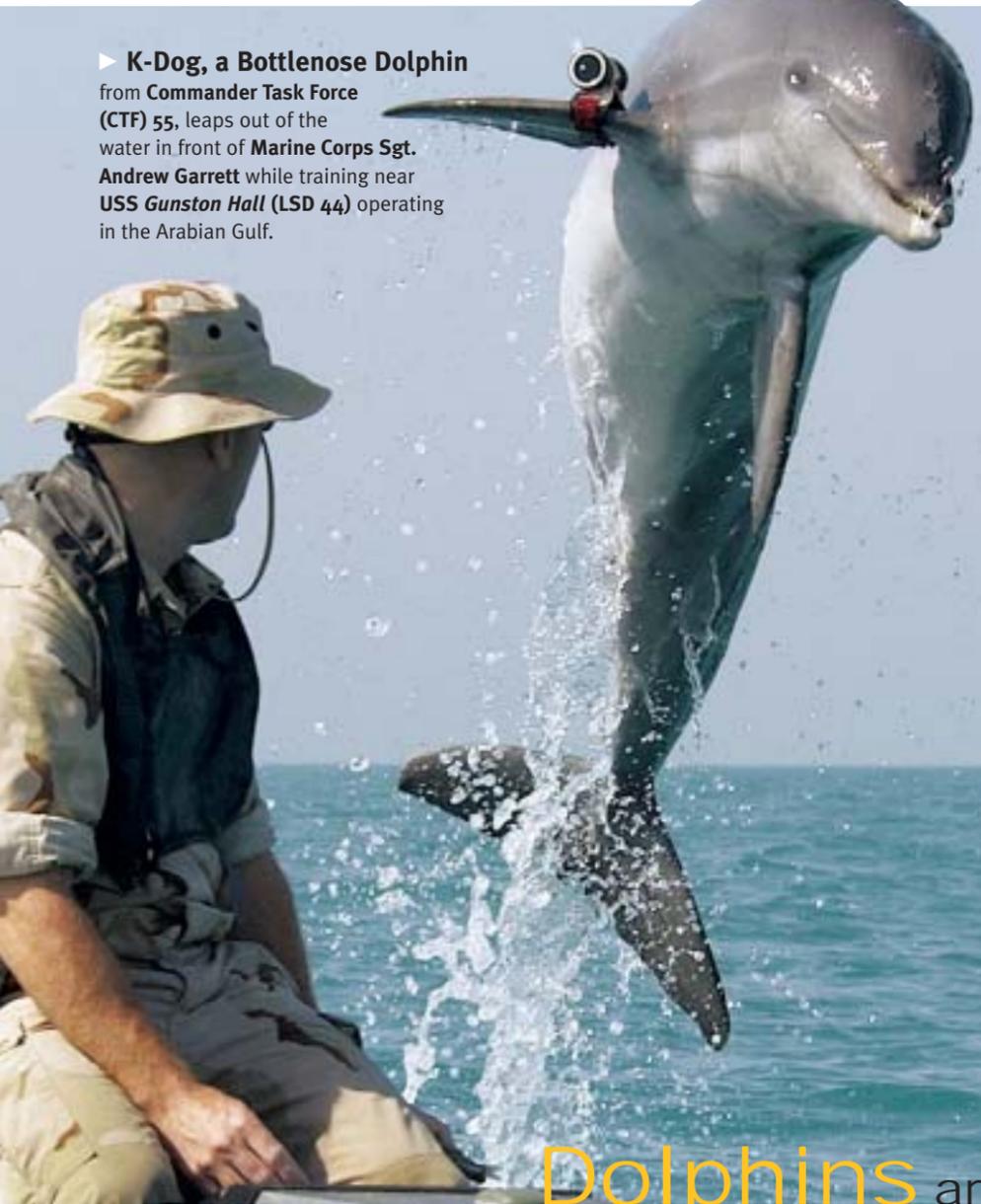


▲ **BM2(SW) Cliff Junkins** yells a question to one of the Sailors controlling *USS Ponce's* (LPD 15) sterngate during MCM ops.



▼ **Members of NSCT-1, UUV Platoon** lower a UUV to a waiting rigid hull inflatable boat (RHIB).

Photos by PH2 Bob Houlihan



► **K-Dog, a Bottlenose Dolphin** from Commander Task Force (CTF) 55, leaps out of the water in front of Marine Corps Sgt. Andrew Garrett while training near USS Gunston Hall (LSD 44) operating in the Arabian Gulf.

That allows us to get very close.”
 “Once we designate a contact, we can send out the mine neutralization vehicle (MNV), a remotely-operated, camera-equipped submersible, to survey the object and plant explosives if we need to,” added **LTJG Fahez Nadi**, operations officer for Mine Countermeasures Division 31.

It’s not just the sea lanes and the river that are getting the full attention of the MCM crews. The clearing operation in the port of Umm Qasr, Iraq, went into full swing as soon as the war began.

“We’ve got U.S. and coalition divers, marine mammals and unmanned underwater vehicles (UUVs),” said **CDR Tony Rodgers**, an underwater mine countermeasures commander for CTF 55. “Our task is [to solve] all underwater mine countermeasure problems in the theater. The job going on right now is really the river and the port of Umm Qasr.”

The marine mammals are one of the many systems that were applied to the MCM problem in Umm Qasr. Buried mines are especially difficult to find with traditional sonar or human divers, but a dolphin’s ability to detect buried mines with their own bio-sonar make them especially valuable in finding mine-like

objects on the silt-covered bottom of the port.

“The dolphins are trained to locate mine-like objects and do it in an environment that is completely natural to them, as opposed to a diver in a diving rig who can’t see much and is operating out of his element,” said **O’Moore**. “They’re very reliable and accurate, and probably one of the best systems we have.”

“The dolphins use their bio-sonar to locate a mine-like object,” said **Master-at-Arms 1st Class (SEAL) Rich Hansing**, a member of **Naval Special Clearance Team (NSCT) 1, MK-8 Marine Mammal Systems**. “They go out in search mode and come back to let us know they have a mark. At that point, the dolphin will place a marker to let us know where the object is located,” **Hansing** continued.

From there, the job is transferred to human divers. “Once a mine-like object is designated, our dive platoon will go down to inspect the object, and if needed, detonate or crack the case on a mine with pre-made charges, depending on its location,” continued **Hansing**.

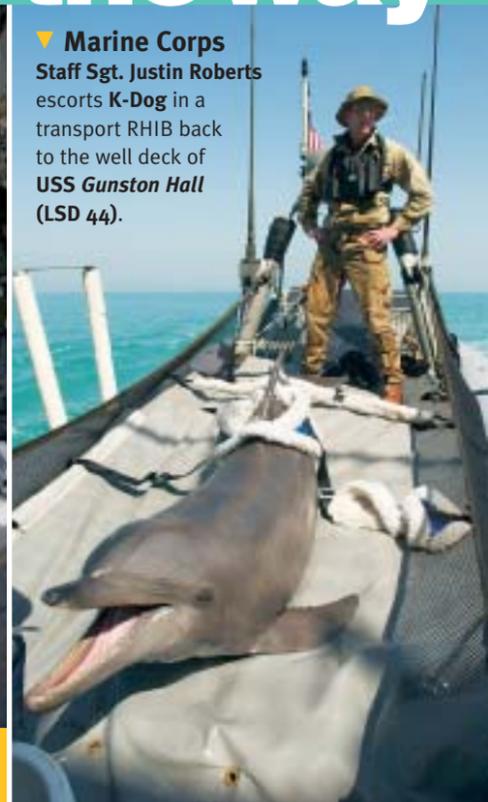
The dolphins used in the Navy’s Marine Mammal Systems (MMS) are part of a program that began in the 1960s. Originally used to study the hydrodynamics of dolphins for submarine design, the program has expanded to include California sea lions and beluga whales. They are used for a variety of tasks that include swimmer detection, mine countermeasures and retrieving lost objects at extremely deep depths.

“The effort to care for the dolphins begins even before we deploy,” said **Eric Jensen**, a veterinarian with the Navy’s Marine Mammal Program. “We try to complete at least one, if not more, site

clearing the way



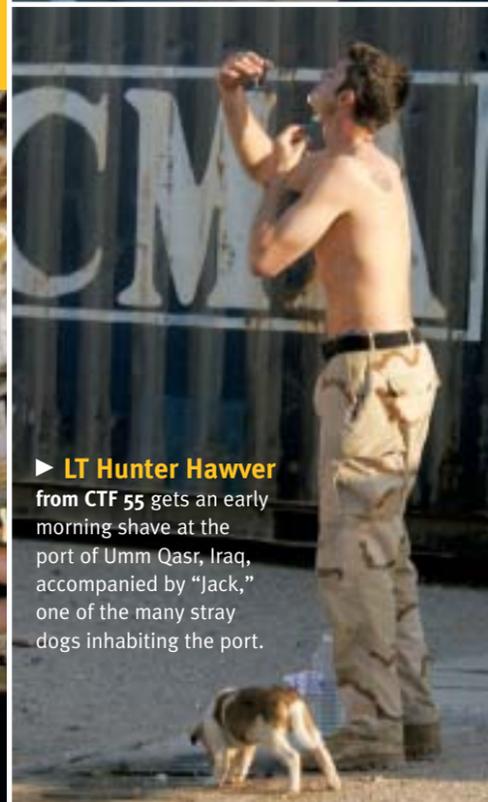
▲ **Aboard USS Gunston Hall (LSD 44),** Marine Corps Sgt. Andrew Garrett (left), Sgt. Jon Hoooge and Staff Sgt. Justin Roberts (right) prepare “pingers” used by bottlenose dolphins to locate man-made objects on the sea floor.



▼ **Marine Corps Staff Sgt. Justin Roberts** escorts **K-Dog** in a transport RHIB back to the well deck of **USS Gunston Hall (LSD 44)**.



▲ **Hefi rests** on a transfer mat before being weighed in.



► **LT Hunter Hawver** from **CTF 55** gets an early morning shave at the port of Umm Qasr, Iraq, accompanied by “Jack,” one of the many stray dogs inhabiting the port.



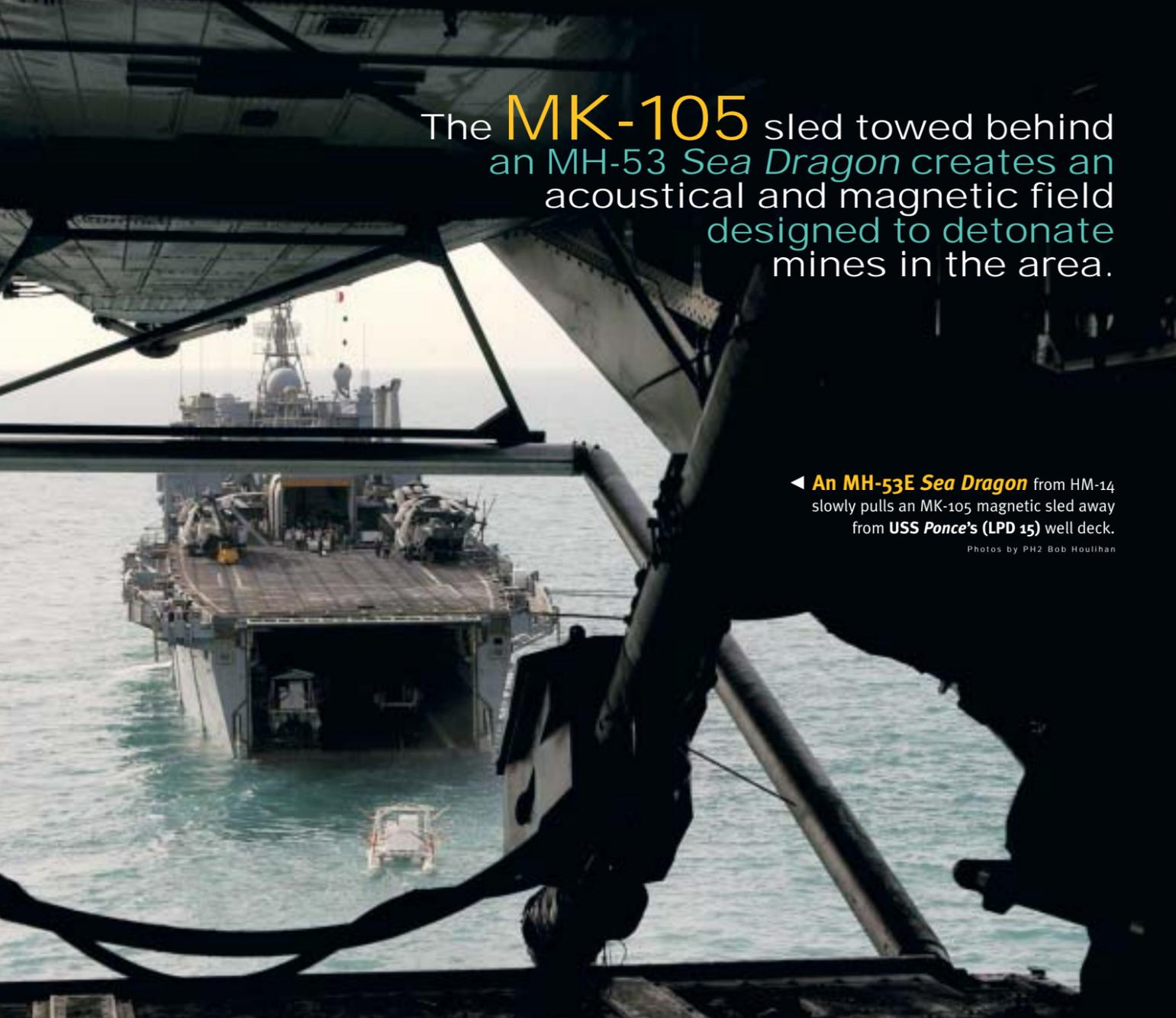
▲ **SMA (DV) Harold Bickford** a mammal handler from **Commander Task Force (CTF) 55**, brushes the teeth of a bottlenose dolphin in the well deck aboard **USS Gunston Hall (LSD 44)**.

Dolphins are trained to locate mine-like objects and do it in an environment that is completely natural to them, as opposed to a diver in a diving rig who can’t see much and is operating out of his element. They’re very reliable and accurate, and probably one of the best systems we have.

Photos by PH1 Brian Aho

Photos by PH1 Brian Aho, bottom right photo by PH2 Bob Houllman

The **MK-105** sled towed behind an **MH-53 Sea Dragon** creates an acoustical and magnetic field designed to detonate mines in the area.



◀ **An MH-53E Sea Dragon** from HM-14 slowly pulls an MK-105 magnetic sled away from **USS Ponce's (LPD 15)** well deck.

Photos by PH2 Bob Houlihan



▲ **After a mine countermeasure operations mission** near the mouth of the Khawar Abd Allah river (KAA), members of **USS Ponce's (LPD 15)** well deck crew haul in the MK-105 magnetic sled.

surveys where the animals will be used. This gives us an opportunity to check out the conditions where the animals will be living and working."

"We can make some decisions, such as whether the animals will be living in open ocean pens, or whether we will have to take environmental systems like pools, chillers, heaters and that sort of thing with us," **Jensen** continued.

Another high-tech tool used in the MCM problem is the UUV. The small torpedo-shaped vehicles are the wave of the future.

"The UUVs we have here are still in the research and development stage

phase, but the actual fleet operational units will be out in May," said **LT Richard Haas**, NSCT 1's UUV platoon commander.

"We provide underwater mapping and image analysis," continued **Haas**. "We can go through an area with the UUV, look at the images and tell our commanders that you have a mine-like object here, a rock here, a big hole here. We can give them a very accurate picture of what the bottom looks like."

The price of these units is relatively cheap, compared to the cost of a human life if something goes wrong. "You can always replace a UUV," said **Haas**. "You

can't replace a diver."

Speed is also a factor in the use of the UUVs. "We can clear an area very quickly, and after a mission, we provide the images to the divers, and they go out and take care of business," said **Haas**. "They always come back and say that the conditions and placement of the object were exactly like the images showed."

UUVs do more than just scan the bottom. The other important capability of the UUV is underwater terrain mapping. "When we do a mission, we can call up the bathymetry, water temperature and current speed data which gives our commanders a good knowledge of the area we surveyed. Then they know what size ships they can bring into the port," said **Haas**.

"I had an opportunity to watch **HMAS Sir Galahad (L 3005)**, the British ship carrying the first humanitarian aid into Iraq, come in. The thing that struck me was the handiwork of all the Sailors out there who were in harm's way," mused **Rodgers**. "To put it in perspective, you've got divers swimming up to ordnance to counter-charge it, you've got ships sneaking up to mines and as all this was going on, battles were still being fought all around them. For **Sir Galahad** to pull in without incident was a result of their fine handiwork," **Rodgers** concluded.

When a multinational force comes together to do a job, there can be misunderstandings and a lack of communication due to different lingo, but that was not the case with the MCM efforts.

"When it came to all the coalition forces coming together to work as one team, it was pretty easy for the MCM guys. We all kind of speak the same language, we train the same and the Australian team in particular did an

clearing the way



▲ **BM2(SW) Cliff Junkins** uses hand signals and a bullhorn to communicate with the Sailors controlling **USS Ponce's** sterngate during MCM ops.

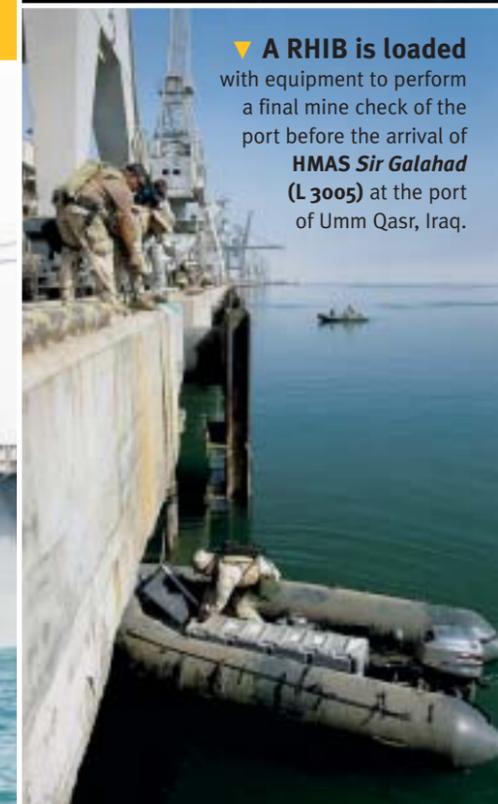


▲ **Besides sweeping** the shipping lanes for mines to keep other vessels safe, **PN2 (SW) Dale Estridge** and **SK2 Charles Wade** stand mine watches around the clock to keep their own ship safe.



▼ **An MH-53E Sea Dragon** lifts off the deck of **USS Ponce (LPD 15)** with a tow cable attached, in preparation for a mine-sweeping mission.

Photos by PH2 Bob Houlihan



▼ **A RHIB is loaded** with equipment to perform a final mine check of the port before the arrival of **HMAS Sir Galahad (L 3005)** at the port of Umm Qasr, Iraq.



▲ **Members of CTF 55** ride in a convoy between Umm Qasr and Al Zubayr after 24 underwater mines were discovered in a field hidden under a tarp.

▶ **HMAS Sir Galahad (L 3005)** prepares to tie up to the pier at Umm Qsar, Iraq, with the first shipment of humanitarian aid from coalition forces.



exercise with us in January of this year," said **Rogers**. "Since the beginning, the idea was to leave Iraq better than we found it, and that's what we're trying to do."

The Sailors and Marines in Umm Qsar who took part in this tremendous effort feel nothing but pride in what they have accomplished.

And on **Ponce**, a deep sense of accomplishment permeated the crew.

"It was a feeling of satisfaction, knowing that the ship had played a fundamental role in this war," said **Hoelt**.

"This is a war that's not just about bullets, smart bombs, **Tomahawk** missiles and destroying the enemy. It's a war for the hearts and minds and the liberation of the Iraqi people. Knowing that we were able to ensure that food and supplies were brought to a depressed people was very satisfying." **S**

Houlihan is a photojournalist assigned to All Hands and Aho is a photojournalist assigned to Combat Camera Atlantic, Norfolk.

Photos by PH2 Bob Houlihan

"Since the beginning, the idea was to leave Iraq better than we found it, and that's what we're trying to do."

▲ **Due to the speed** at which Umm Qsar was taken by U.S. forces, some Iraqi mines were abandoned where they sat in open fields.

Teen America in Japan

Life as a teenager is tough enough, but add to it the pressure of living overseas and dealing with a foreign culture, and things can get really challenging — **Or do they?** It seems adapting to life overseas isn't as difficult as first thought. Navy teens can still be typical teenagers and take pride in the fact they are **"Navy brats."**

THEY'RE BAGGY-JEAN-WEARING, SKATEBOARD-RIDING, VIDEO GAME-PLAYING KIDS. They watch MTV, pierce their ears, nose, and just about anywhere else that could offend their parents. They're teenagers. And just like their counterparts back in the United States, they're dealing with the same growing pains typical teenagers go through during their high school years. Building lasting friendships; attending sporting and social events; long study hours spent cramming for final exams that will look good on that college entrance application; and the ever-present "soap opera" of boy meets girl aren't just stateside issues, they're a part of growing up. The fact that these teenagers are living overseas doesn't take away from that teenage experience. It just means they handle things a little differently.



▲ **Craig, Stephanie and Travis Burgess** are just ordinary American teens in an extraordinary location. Their school and home is on foreign soil, but their desires and wants are very similar to their counterparts back in the United States.



► **The morning routine is pretty common.**

Craig makes his bed as Stephanie does her hair in preparation for school. "We're a typical family with three teenagers fighting over the bathroom," said **YN1 Roman Burgess**.

Instead of driving down Main Street on a Friday night blasting the latest tunes with friends, these kids stay busy wending their way through the streets of Japan, frequenting the neon-lit arcades and shops. While the kids back stateside enjoy the wide variety of fast food restaurants available to chow down in, these foreign travelers fill up with sushi and ramen, or dump yen into the street-side vending machines to curb their appetites. That's only the beginning of the overseas teen experience.

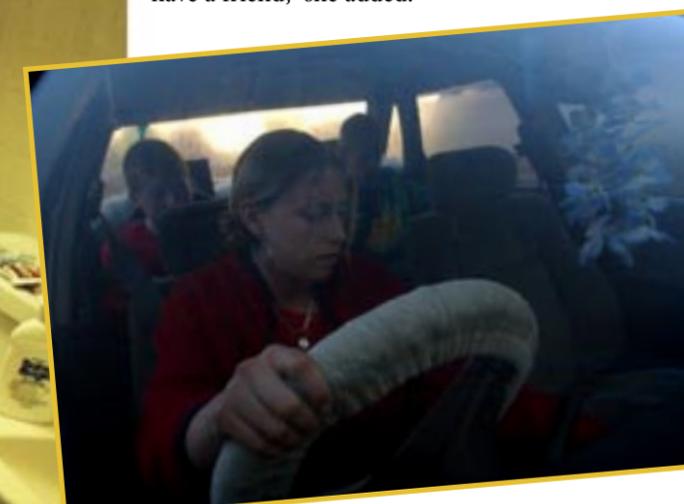
"There are some things they will miss out on," said **Yeoman 1st Class Roman Burgess**, who has the challenge of raising three teenagers while stationed overseas. "But being able to live in Misawa, Japan, and experience a foreign country in this way will hopefully give them something to hold on to for years to come."

Some people may feel sorry for kids who grow up in a foreign land, thinking they are missing out on everything the United States has to offer. If you ask the **Burgess** kids though, they would have it no other way. For the most part, they have the same opportunities to participate in everything stateside kids enjoy; and then some.

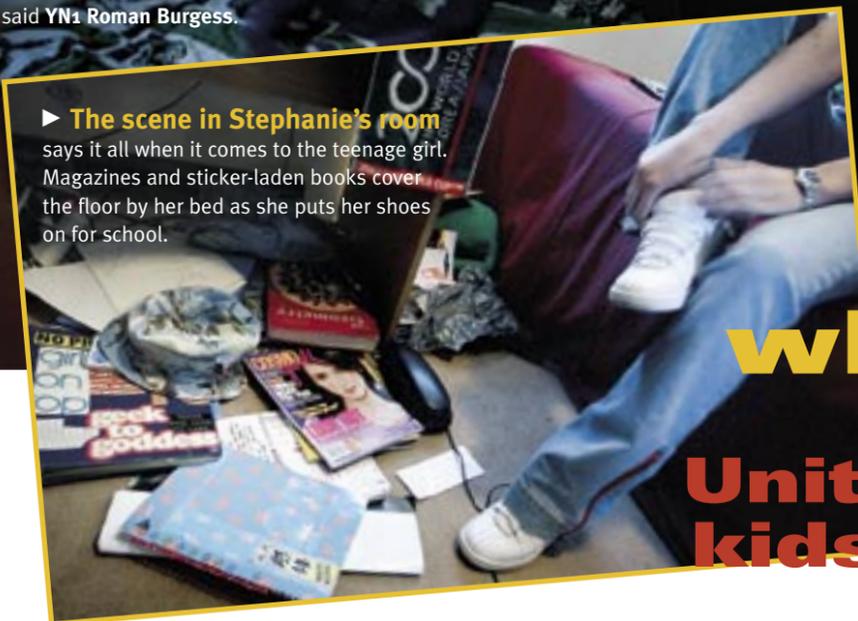
"I enjoy doing a lot of things off base involving culture," said 15-year-old **Craig**, "like going to the different festivals and eating the different food." Some teenagers would argue there is an even better reason to live overseas.



"There's not as many people, so it's easy to make friends," **Craig** added. His 17-year-old sister **Stephanie** agrees. "Here, there's not one person who doesn't have a friend," she added.



▲ **Being old enough to drive** has its privileges, but it also means you have to give your younger brothers rides once in a while.



► **The scene in Stephanie's room**

says it all when it comes to the teenage girl. Magazines and sticker-laden books cover the floor by her bed as she puts her shoes on for school.

Some people may feel sorry for kids who grow up in a foreign land, thinking they are missing out on everything the United States has to offer. If you ask the Burgess kids though, they would have it no other way.

► **Travis cruises through the busy hallways**

of Edgren High School as he makes his way to his first class of the day. "One major advantage with my kids living overseas is the diversity they are exposed to," said **YN1 Roman Burgess**. "Here you have nearly every ethnic background represented, where there are places in the United States where you just don't have that diversity." the United States by including activities, like traditional high school sports.

"The kids are limited here to the jobs out of school, so it's our job to ensure we provide enough high-quality activities to keep them busy and active out of school as well," said Johnson. He also



▲ **Going to school overseas** doesn't mean the students miss out on the education received back in the states. Here, **Travis** joins his classmates as they go over computer software for an assignment due that day.

"We take pride in our curriculum and feel we are preparing the students well for college and the future," said **Michael Johnson**, Edgren High School

with their people, allowing them to take the time away for school involvement," added Johnson.

Now, the principal isn't saying they live in "Pleasantville," where everyone is perfect, but like many of the parents and students on the base, he emphasized the problems that arise at overseas locations are often minor in comparison to those in the United States, a feeling reflected by the Burgess kids. "I feel safer here than what I see on the news," said **Craig's** 15-year-old twin brother **Travis**. "Plus living on base adds to our safety. I see shootings in the United States, and that scares me. You wouldn't see that here."

For a lot of folks stationed at this country base in northern Japan, having few worries for the family, both on and



► **Stephanie works in the hallway** on an art project with the rest of her class.

While the kids back states ide enjoy the wide variety o f fast food restaurants available to chow down in, these foreign travelers fill up with sushi and ramen, or dump yen into the street-side vending ma chines to curb their appetites.



▲ **Craig joins the other students** as they say the Pledge of Allegiance before JROTC class begins.



off base, is one of the major perks. "Being a small community, you somewhat know everybody, and it feels relatively safe," said Burgess. "It makes me feel good that there is a sense of control here and few troublemakers."

With crime in Japan being extremely low, it's not uncommon to find the kids roaming the streets in town looking for fun things to do after dark. It brings us back to the days our parents enjoyed, growing up in the United States. Nowadays, the typical reaction at home when a pack of teenagers is sighted under

the evening streetlights is to put up the guard and expect some sort of trouble. But on the streets of Misawa, the reaction is a little different.

"It's always fun running into the Japanese people in town," said **Travis**. "They always smile and act like they have seen Michael Jordan or someone."

Despite living in Japan for more than half his life, **Travis** still understands what to expect when he moves to the United States. "We have a lot of freedoms here, especially now that we are older and more responsible," he said. "If I was back in the United States though, I wouldn't



▼ **Stephanie and her boyfriend** share a moment at their final homecoming dance. The night started out like a typical homecoming evening — dinner out in town and fun and dancing with friends at the club.

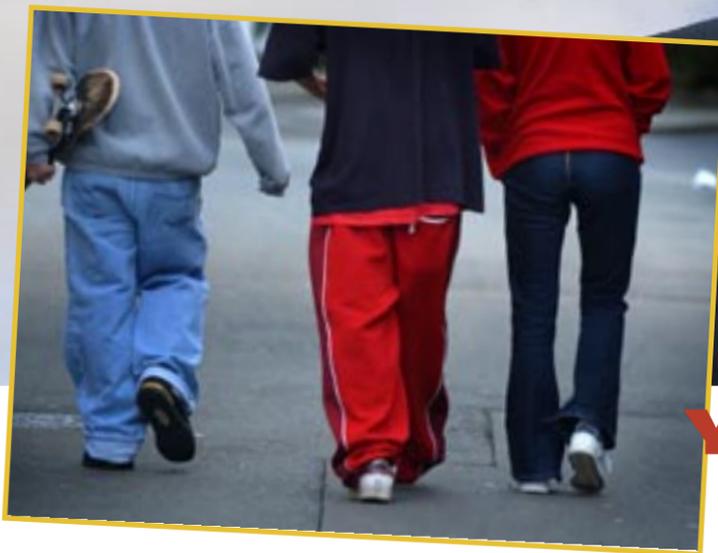
have as much freedom from my parents, especially if we lived in a larger city.”

He and his brother and sister have had a unique experience. Yes, it’s lasted a little longer than most, but they have a lot to show for it, not the least of which are the unique memories that will last a lifetime. “Overall, I think it’s a great experience that I hope they’ll never forget,” said **Burgess**. “I mean, how many American kids can say they grew up in Japan or a place like this.”

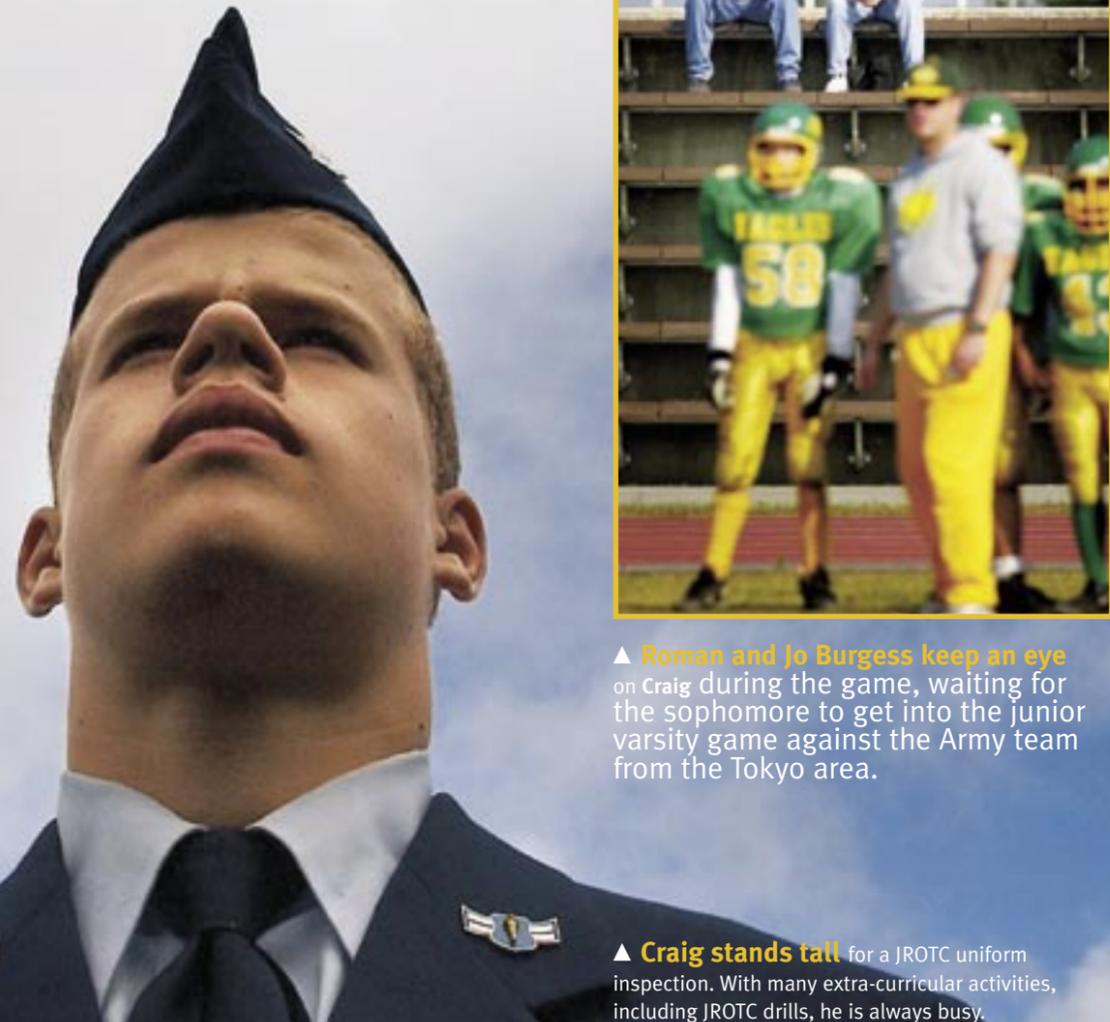
While they probably won’t bring the Japanese traditions of wearing kimonos and slippers back home with them, they

will be able to share with their stateside friends the unique experiences of living and growing up in the “Land of the Rising Sun.” ■

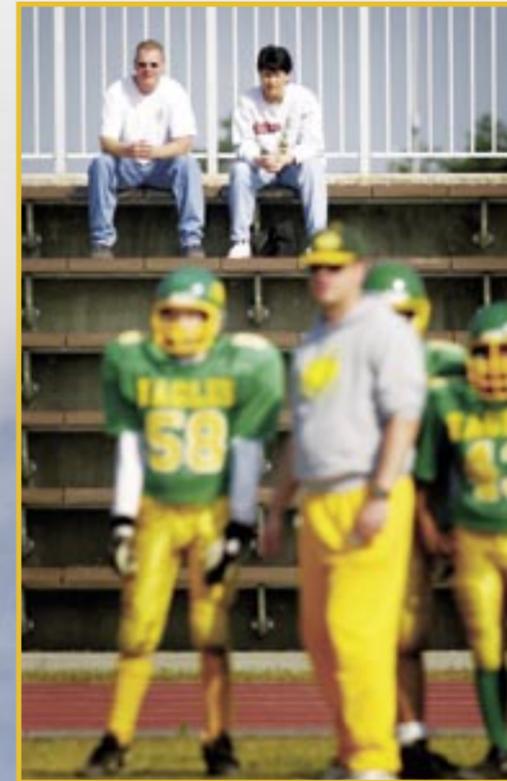
Keres is a photojournalist assigned to All Hands



▲ **Baggy pants, tight pants, skate boards ...** they’re all characteristics of today’s teens, whether they live in the heartland of America or on American soil overseas.



▲ **Craig stands tall** for a JROTC uniform inspection. With many extra-curricular activities, including JROTC drills, he is always busy.



▲ **Roman and Jo Burgess keep an eye** on Craig during the game, waiting for the sophomore to get into the junior varsity game against the Army team from the Tokyo area.



▲ **Growing up as twins,** Travis (left) and Craig often found themselves doing a lot of things together. But now that they are teenagers, their limited time

He and his brother and sister have had a unique experience. Yes, it’s lasted a little longer than most, but they have a lot to show for it, not the least of which are the unique memories that will last a lifetime.

Out of His Element

For a Navy Master-at-Arms, life can be a sequence of routines — patrols, traffic stops, emergency traffic control. But for **Master-at-Arms (SW) 1st Class James Strawser** and the security personnel aboard **USNS Comfort (TA-H 20)**, life is anything but routine.

“My usual job at National Naval Medical Center (NNMC), Bethesda, Md., is maintaining base security. I make routine patrols throughout the base, and issue citations for everything from speeding to running stop signs,” **Strawser** said. “But, I don’t have the opportunity to interact with people face-to-face like I’ve done aboard **Comfort**.”

Maintaining security for a base that sees tens of thousands of people driving through the gate every day is a great deal different from the personal interaction the security force assigned to **Comfort** provided. They were responsible for around-the-clock guards for up to 150 injured Iraqi Enemy Prisoners of War (EPW), as well as approximately 50 displaced Iraqi civilians with various injuries.

For **Strawser**, the Iraqis taught him a valuable lesson. “We were there (guarding the Iraqis) so they would be less apt to try and cause harm to the medical personnel, but most of them had no desire to cause harm. They were grateful they were no

longer in the situation they’d been in. These people were told we would kill them if they got caught, and here we were doing just the opposite — bringing them back to health and mending their wounds.”

“Once the adults saw how they were going to be treated and how Navy personnel interacted with their children,” he added, “they opened up a lot more to us.”

That interaction with the Iraqi people really touched **Comfort’s** crew. “Knowing that these children are now going to have the opportunity to grow up in an area with less oppression — the beginnings of freedom — makes it all worth it,” **Strawser** said. “I will never forget the day the adult Iraqis were told Saddam Hussein was no longer in power, and his statues were being toppled and dragged through the streets. The expressions on their faces and the tears streaming from their eyes, spoke volumes that could never be put into words. These were not tears of sadness, but tears of joy. I watched their faces as the word, “freedom,” became not just a dream to them, but a reality.” ☞

Strawser and McCoy are photojournalists assigned to All Hands.



Eye on the Fleet

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◀ **Silver Sentries**
Members of the crash and salvage crew aboard **USS Kearsarge (LHD 3)** wear fire resistant proximity suits during a fire and rescue drill on the flight deck.

Photo by PH2 Alicia Tasz



◀ **Traffic Control**

An aircraft director sends an **F/A-18C Hornet** to one of **USS Carl Vinson's (CVN 70)** four steam-powered catapults during evening launches.

Photo by PH2 Inez Lawson

Details, Details ▶

EM2 Nestor Novilla performs maintenance on a large electrical conductor in the motor rewind shop aboard **USS Constellation (CV 64)**.

Photo by PH3 Casey D. Tweedell



Night Flight ▶

An **F-14 Tomcat**, assigned to **Fighter Squadron (VF) 32**, stands by for night flight operations on the flight deck of **USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75)**.

Photo by PH3 Danny Ewing



Ever Vigilant ▶

AM3 Christopher Richards stands a security watch at Naval Air Station, Whidbey Island, Wash.

Photo by PH1 James Schauer



To be considered, forward your **high resolution (5" x 7" at 300 dpi)** images with full credit and cutline information, including **full name, rank and duty station**. Name all identifiable people within the photo and include important information about what is happening, where the photo was taken and the date. Commands with digital photo capability can send attached .jpg files to: navynewsphoto@hq.navy.mil

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Bringing New Life to Iraq

Story and photo by Marine Corps Staff Sgt. Robert Knoll

Only a few days after arriving into the area of An Nasiriyah, Iraq, doctors and corpsmen of the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) (Special Operations Capable (SOC)) have brought new life to the people of Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Shortly after sunrise, a medical team from the assistance approached FOC. The mother, Katham, in her mid-20s, had been in labor for several hours. Her baby was about to be delivered.

The Marines radioed from their operations center to pick up the expecting mother.

The Marines radioed from their operations center to pick up the expecting mother at the Battalion Aid Station (BAS) where a team of doctors and corpsmen were waiting.

“This is good stuff. We’re here to help,” said LT Brian Humble, a medical team leader. LT Sean Stroup, the 15th MEU’s medical officer, was also present at the birth. This was not the first time Stroup has been outside of the United States.

Katham gave birth to a healthy baby girl named Rogenia. The doctor weighed the baby at about 6 pounds. There were no complications with the delivery.

The baby was delivered about 15 minutes after arriving at the 15th MEU’s location, so Humble and Stroup said that they were not sure how long the mother had been in labor.

Katham was accompanied by a group of family members, including her great grandmother, Gamaraha, who helped communicate her great-granddaughter’s condition to the doctors. She told the doctors that it was her first baby. The entire family was grateful for the 15th MEU’s assistance, Stroup said.

After a short recovery period, Katham and her new baby girl

were driven to the boundary of the MEU’s area where the rest of her family was waiting. She was given enough food, water and bandages for a few days, in addition to a warm blanket for the baby. The doctors said the baby was in good health and was breast-feeding before



HMC(FMF) David Jones of the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) (Special Operations Capable (SOC)) holds the two-hour-old newborn Rogenia Katham, daughter of Jamila Katham. The infant was born in the Battalion Landing Team 2/1’s Battalion Aid Station about 15 minutes after her mother’s arrival at the 15th MEU’s position.

assigned to the 15th MEU(SOC).

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