

December 2009

All HANDS

MAGAZINE OF THE U.S. NAVY

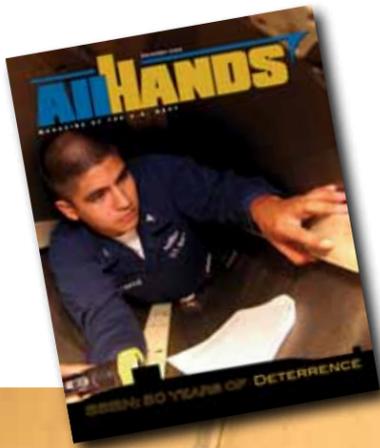


SSBN: 50 YEARS OF DETERRENCE

Robert Bowker welds the initials of Susan Ford Bales into the keel of the aircraft carrier *Gerald R. Ford* (CVN 78) during a keel laying and authentication ceremony at Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding, Newport News, Va.

Photo by MC2 Kevin S. O'Brien





[On the Front Cover]
MM3 Anthony Roman inspects a torpedo tube aboard USS *Henry M. Jackson* (SSBN 730).

Photo by MC2 Gretchen Albercht

[Next Month]
Look for the 16th edition of the January Owners' and Operators' Manual.

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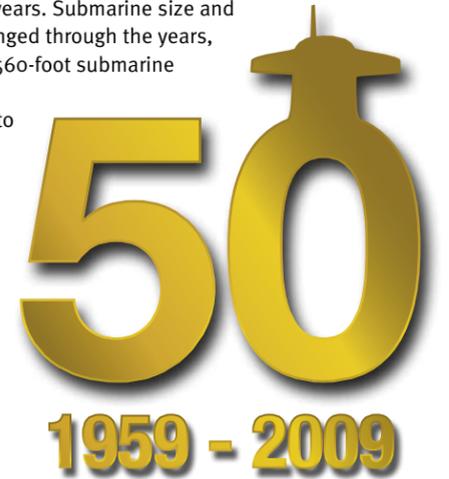
[Number 1113]



December

18 SSBN: 50 Years of Strength Through Deterrence

Fleet ballistic missile submarines have been patrolling the world's oceans for 50 years. Submarine size and capabilities may have changed through the years, but the Sailors who call a 560-foot submarine "home" have stayed as vigilant and ready as ever to prevent war.



26 A Career of Service: An Inside Look at the 75th Secretary of the Navy

Ray Mabus took the oath as the 75th United States Secretary of the Navy, May 19, 2009. This is a presidential appointment he doesn't take lightly, and a job that consists of so much more than just being in a Pentagon office. His No. 1 priority is people and making sure that the Navy has everything it needs to continue to be the best Navy and Marine Corps in the world.

Photo by MC2 Kevin S. O'Brien



12 Around the Horn Building Hope

The Seabees of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 11 have been involved in a vast number of humanitarian missions throughout Africa to help strengthen the bonds between the Joint Task Force currently serving in the Horn of Africa and the people located in and around their area of responsibility.

Photo by MC2 Erick S. Holmes



Speaking with Sailors

Fleet Master Chief, Navy Total Force/MPT&E
FLTCM(SW/AW/SCW) Scott A. Benning

Shipmates,

“Family First” is a term I use with our Sailors and have practiced throughout my naval career. For me, it’s not just my family’s love, but their support which allows me to serve, excel and has laid the foundation for all of our successes.

Valuing our families can build relationships with spouses and children, enabling personal and professional development. To give you a glimpse into the positive impact the Navy has had on my family: my oldest son is now a FITBOSS, his crew’s fitness consultant, and my youngest son is a Navy ROTC student. It isn’t the naval career so much as the drive, focus and responsibility that comes with such a path that is most rewarding to my family.

I encourage each of you to acknowledge and return the support your family gives you by becoming smart on Navy’s family programs and support services. But don’t stop there; go home and tell your wife, your husband and your children about the programs and benefits they can take part in. Connect them with the resources they need to excel, whether you are stationed stateside or overseas.

My family has tapped into several resources as we faced many deployments and challenging assignments together. The list of available options continues to grow. New this year, the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill offers the transfer of education benefits to family members, as long as Sailors correctly document dependents and apply while on active duty.

In addition, new DoD hiring practices allow our spouses faster access to federal employment opportunities worldwide.

Lastly, Congress approved the Military Spouse Residency Relief Act, allowing military spouses to claim the same state of residence as their spouse when they move under orders, providing possible voting and state tax benefits.

Shipmates, don’t just take my word for it, step back and take a look at the many benefits and



Photo by MC1 R. Jason Brunson

services that our great Navy offers in support of you and your family. Child care, youth development programs, medical and dental, sports and fitness, family counseling, family housing,

Fleet and Family Support Centers, Navy Exchanges, commissaries, legal assistance and web-based tools; all ensure our families stay informed, stay healthy and stay connected.

Our ombudsman volunteers are the anchors to family readiness and our Navy Career Counselors continue to support you through career development boards. They are part of our focus on ‘Brilliant on the Basics’ and ensure our families know how to access the Navy’s robust benefits.

Throughout my career, my family has considered these services while making career decisions. As you make your career decisions, consider your options and how they enable you and your family to succeed.

After 26 years of service, I can confidently say, the Navy has retained more than just this Sailor; the Navy retained my family. In many cases, family is the constant throughout a naval career. From boot camp to master chief, my wife’s support has been key to my success.

I would like to thank all of our families for their sacrifice, love and support which ensures our Navy continues to excel. People — you and your family — are the Navy’s most valuable resource and our leadership supports your growth and success. 

ALL HANDS

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A message from your seven year old...



A child's logic can be tough to argue.

For information on how you can quit smoking check out www.cdc.gov/tobacco or contact your health care provider.

Navy Earns Diversity Award, Tops Leading Companies

Navy Region Southwest was awarded the President's Award for Diversity in the large business category from the Urban League of San Diego during a recent awards luncheon. The award honored businesses for maximizing opportunities for minorities in San Diego County.

Several large businesses were also nominated for the award, including Walmart, Federal Express and Wells Fargo.

Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Gary Roughead has pointed out his goal to see the Navy designated a top 50 employer. Ray King, president and chief executive officer of the San Diego Urban League, said the Navy in San Diego is helping the CNO realize this goal.

"The fact that the U.S. Navy won is a testament to the CNO's stated policy and the efforts and support from area commanders to promote diversity at all levels," King said. "We congratulate and salute the Navy for being our 2009 winner."

Master Chief Petty Officer James Hervey, the Navy's equal opportunities advisor in the southwest, said the award demonstrates the Navy's commitment to attracting, promoting and retaining a diverse workforce.

"[It] shows that the Navy has awareness on how to manage diversity and is sensitive to diversity," said Hervey. "It is crucial in retaining and attracting employees."

Hervey is a member of the Urban League, representing

Navy Region Southwest, in a position he says gives him insight into current corporate thinking and best practices in diversity.

"We are competing for the same talent as Fortune 500 companies and small businesses, and I get to see what works for them and share it with the Navy," he said.

Hervey is also able to identify opportunities for Sailors to be involved in the communities around San Diego area bases, "to see beyond the fence," he said.

"Volunteer opportunities get Sailors out on the front lines, and neighborhoods get to see we are all members of the community."

"We don't just talk about diversity," Hervey said. "We embrace it."

The Navy continues to attract, develop, mentor and retain a top diverse talent to remain a strong and relevant force and the award is a testament to these efforts. **NS**

Story by MC3 (SW/AW) Michelle Rhonehouse, Navy Region Southwest, San Diego.



Rear Adm. Patrick McGrath (center left), and Capt. Ken Barrett, Chief of Naval Personnel Diversity Directorate, accept a President's Award for Diversity from San Diego's Urban League leadership.

Photo by MC1 Tiffini Vandewyst

Navy Retains More Than 97 Percent from Senior Enlisted Continuation Board

More than 97 percent of candidates reviewed by the Navy's Senior Enlisted Continuation Board were selected to continue naval service according to a Navy message released Oct. 30.

"The overwhelming continuance of our senior enlisted demonstrates the extraordinary quality of the chief petty officer mess. The records of eligible master chiefs, senior chiefs and chiefs were reviewed and given full consideration," said Vice Adm. Mark Ferguson, chief of naval personnel.

After complete review of 5,686 eligible active-duty and full-time-support candidates, the board selected 5,528 members for continuation.

According to the precept, which outlines what information board members may or may not consider from a record, documented misconduct and substandard

performance were the primary reasons a Sailor would not be selected for continued service.

Some examples include "significant problems" or "progressing" promotion recommendations, declining performance from the same reporting senior, failure to maintain physical fitness assessment standards, military or civilian convictions, and non-judicial punishment.

Members not selected for continuation will retire no later than June 30, 2010.

"There were chiefs with adverse information in their records, and many of them are staying. That, in itself, should tell any doubters that there was no quota, and that we are not a zero defect Navy. People make mistakes. Often times, it's how we respond after those mistakes that defines us as chiefs, as Sailors and as leaders in our Navy," said Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (SS/SW) Rick West.

The board concluded deliberations at Navy Personnel Command Oct. 1, 2009, and the results were forwarded to

CNP for approval. Sailors not selected for continuation were personally notified prior to the results posting in BUPERS Online. Candidates can check their status at <https://www.bol.navy.mil>.

"The purpose of this board was to continue to improve the effectiveness of the force by identifying and continuing our most fully qualified enlisted leaders. I appreciate the leadership of the CPO mess in this process," Ferguson commented.

The Senior Enlisted Continuation Board is a performance-driven review of master chiefs, senior chiefs and chiefs with more than 20 years of service and three years time-in-grade. **NS**

Story by MCCS(SW) Maria Yager, Chief of Naval Personnel, Millington, Tenn.

Don't Miss Out on Post-9/11 GI Bill Benefits Transferability

According to an online poll conducted by Navy Personnel Command, Sailors still don't quite understand how the Post-9/11 GI Bill transferability option works.

Sixty-two percent of Sailors who responded thought they could wait until after retirement to transfer benefits to their children.

"Based on the calls that we're receiving, we're worried that the perception is out there that you can wait until you retire to transfer your benefits and that's not the case," says Kathy Wardlaw, Navy active-duty GI Bill program manager. "You have to do it before you leave the Armed Forces."

Sailors with 90 days of active-duty service after September 11, 2001, have earned education benefits under the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of

2008, with no buy-in costs. This benefit can now be transferred to family members shown in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System.

The first thing Sailors can do is read NAVADMIN 203/09, which provides the requirements for transferring Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits.

"Normally an enlisted member needs to check with their career counselor because there will be an obligation required," said Wardlaw. "Sailors will need to obtain the obligation through either re-enlistment or extension. Officers can sign a Page 13, and they need to see their administrative officer to do that."

Sailors need to ensure that their obligated service is reflected in their electronic service record before their request for transferability will be processed. A four-year obligation is required for the transferability option.

Since July 2009, 12,000 Sailors have taken advantage

of this relatively new education benefit option. This is below the estimated 15,000 the Navy GI Bill office expected.

"I have a nineteen-year-old currently attending Mississippi State University," said Vicky Gallagher, a Navy Reservist. "It's an out-of-state college, and it's expensive to pay that bill as a single parent on one income. With tuition, books and housing, I'm saving nearly \$12,000 annually. This money is going to help me quite a bit."

For more information on the Post-9/11 GI Bill transferability program, read NAVADMIN 203/09 or visit the Post-9/11 GI Bill page at npc.navy.mil. **NS**

Story by MC1(AW) LaTunya Howard, Navy Personnel Command Millington, Tenn.

Shipmates

Sailor wins JTF-Bravo's 'Trooper of Quarter'

Hospitalman Christian Mewes, who deployed from Yokosuka, Japan, to Joint Task Force-Bravo (JTF-Bravo) Medical Element (MEDEL), Soto Cano Air Base, Honduras, was the first Sailor in the unit's history to win Trooper of the Quarter.

The Army's Trooper of the Quarter is based on a 600-point evaluation process, testing E-1s to E-4s on physical fitness, weapons qualification, land navigation, a written exam on the Soldier's knowledge and an administrative board.

He received 523 points out of a possible 600, putting him 66 points higher than his nearest competitor.

"He's a team player who always puts others and the unit first," said Air Force Tech. Sgt. Cassandra Glasco, Mewes' supervisor.

But there is another piece to this puzzle – the job Mewes is doing here isn't even part of his Navy rate, or specialty. Mewes is a combat medic by trade, filling an operations NCO deployment slot in JTF-Bravo's MEDEL.

"Assignments like this are what you make it," Mewes said. "If you have an open mind it enables you to enjoy the experience regardless of the circumstances."

Story and photo by Cpl. Sean P. Cummins, Combat Correspondent, Quantico Marine Corps Base, Quantico, Va.





Photo by MC3 Bryan Ipankoff



Photo by MC3 Brian Aho

Above
AOAN Anthony Gallo, right, from Olean, N.Y., salutes and shows his identification card to AO2 Abe Haw, from Crosby Ironton, Minn., the assistant junior officer of the deck, as he requests permission to come aboard USS *John C. Stennis* (CVN 74) in Bremerton, Wash.

Below
ABHAN William Rupert looks for an approaching AV-8B *Harrier* from Marine Attack Squadron 223 aboard USS *Nassau* (LHA 4) during a three-week Composite Unit Training Exercise.

Below
QM2 Matthew M. Brook raises the American flag as USS *Harpers Ferry* (LSD 49) gets underway in the South China Sea.



Photo by MC3 Joshua T. Wahl

Detailers to Field Applications for Break from Active Duty

Responding to a need for greater flexibility, the chief of naval personnel revised a pilot program allowing Sailors to take a break of up to three years from active duty, by authorizing the review of applications on a rolling basis in place of an annual selection board.

Sailors can apply through their detailers to participate in the Career Intermission Pilot Program, which offers quotas for 20 officers and 20 enlisted members annually through 2012.

Spots remain available from CY09, following the selection of nine officers and six enlisted members by a board that met in May. Authorization for rolling applications is contained in OPNAV Instruction 1330.2A, effective with the release of NAVADMIN 301/09.

"We made changes to the program to give our Sailors the flexibility to take advantage of professional and personal opportunities, or tend to personal or family needs, while keeping their Navy careers on track," said Rear Adm. Dan Holloway, director of the Navy's military personnel, plans and policy division. "The Navy [also] benefits, because we ultimately retain a highly-trained, skilled and tested warrior upon their return to active duty."

In addition to rolling applications, other changes include:

- Removing the restriction on retirement-eligible Sailors;
- Allowing E-1 to E-3 Sailors to apply for the program, with participation beginning at the end of their first term of service;
- Clarifying a requirement

that Sailors in a high-year tenure status be able to serve two months on active duty for every month in the program.

The intent of the Career Intermission Pilot Program is to retain the valuable experience and training that otherwise would be lost through permanent separation.

While participating in the program, Sailors must maintain their security clearances and professional certifications; meet physical fitness requirements; and adhere to Navy policies regarding conduct. They receive two days' basic pay each month, and are not subject to operational mobilization unless they fail to meet the terms of the program.

To preserve promotion and advancement opportunities, officers and enlisted members are assigned adjusted dates of rank and pay grade, and enlisted Sailors are assigned a new time in rate when they return to active duty. **NS**

*Story courtesy of
Chief of Naval Personnel,
Washington, D.C.*

NPS Launches New Online Human Systems Integration Certificate Program

The Naval Postgraduate School has recently launched a new distance learning certificate program in Human Systems Integration (HSI) open to all federal government personnel – officers and enlisted military, U.S. civilians and DOD contractors – as well as international officer students.

The four courses in the one-year, all-online interdisciplinary

Continued on page 11

Around the Fleet

Below
A Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL student moves through the weaver during an obstacle course evolution in the first phase of training.



Photo by M/Cs Kyle D. Gahlan



Photo by M/CSN Ash Severe

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



Photo by M/Cs Michael Lindsey

Above
Seabees assigned to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 74 bury two kilometers of fiber optic cable for their new camp in the expansion area of Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan.

Continued from page 9

program are designed to educate and train HSI practitioners in the state-of-the-art policies and processes needed to conduct HSI in DoD and other federal agencies. The course begins each summer quarter and is designed to be applicable toward a resident HSI master's degree or a resident master's degree in systems engineering, as the elective track. Classes are asynchronous, and instructors are regularly available by e-mail.

Leading the creation and development of the new distance learning curricula was retired Army Col. Lawrence Shattuck, the HSI Program Director, Operations Research (OR) Senior Lecturer. Assisting in the two-year effort was OR Associate Professor Anita Miller.

"You've heard of the expression 'The human in the loop?'" Miller asked rhetorically. "DoD and other federal agencies are increasingly recognizing that the human is the loop -that people are critical components in any complex system - and that their capabilities and limitations need to be researched, documented and integrated if the system as a whole is to achieve optimal performance."

"As a result, HSI has become a vital aspect in the acquisition of DoD and other federal systems," said Shattuck. "And though it's now mandated by

many organizations as part of their acquisition process, there are few practitioners who have the actual knowledge, skills and abilities to perform HSI. That's why we created this new distance learning program - to equip a new cadre of HSI practitioners with what they need to ensure their agencies' systems are designed, developed and deployed with appropriate consideration for human operators, maintainers and supervisors, making explicit the lifecycle tradeoffs across all HSI domains - manpower, personnel, training and human factors engineering -- to optimize total system performance within cost constraints."

Thirty distance learning students are currently enrolled in the inaugural HSI DL course, which began this summer.

"NPS is the only school with an HSI Department, anywhere," said Tvryanas. "All the HSI I'd had before was ad hoc and learned on the job, and this program is cutting edge and extremely unique. to address unique economic public comment. 

Story courtesy of Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, Calif.

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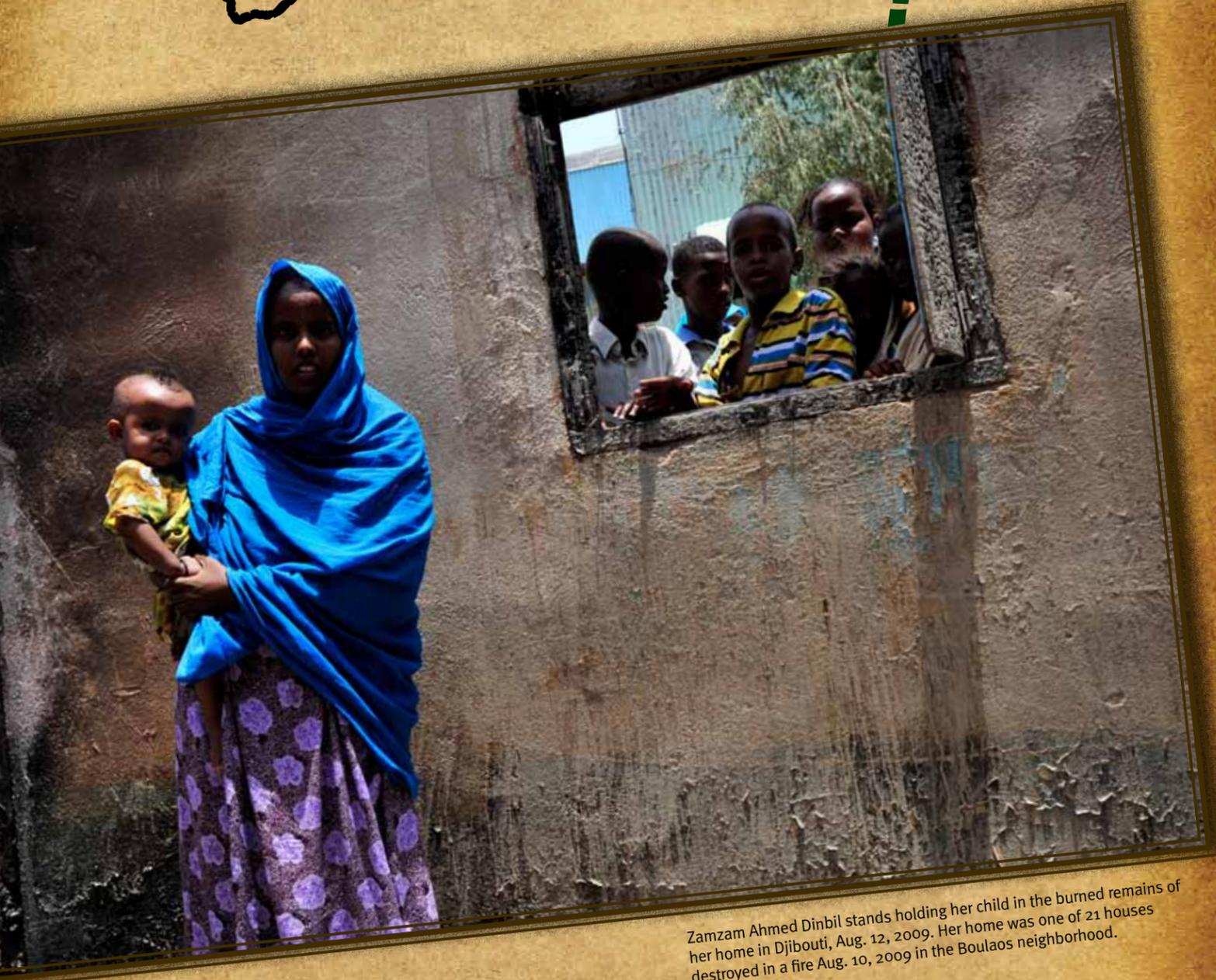
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AROUND
THE HORN
*Building
Hope*

Story by MC1(SCW) Nicholas Lingo
and photos by MC2 (SCW) Erick Holmes



Zamzam Ahmed Dinbil stands holding her child in the burned remains of her home in Djibouti, Aug. 12, 2009. Her home was one of 21 houses destroyed in a fire Aug. 10, 2009 in the Boulaos neighborhood.



BU3 Gwennette Jamerson, assigned to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 11, carries plywood for a water storage tank at Ecole de Douda primary school.

The Seabees have always been at the forefront when it comes to winning over locals during war and peacetime missions abroad. During Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 11's historic first deployment since being recommissioned Sept. 14, 2007, the Seabees of this young battalion were hard at work all over the world reestablishing themselves as a key piece of the philanthropic side of the U.S. Navy. This is evidenced throughout Africa, where NMCB 11 is involved in numerous projects to help strengthen the bond between the Joint Task Force (JTF) currently serving in the Horn of Africa and the indigenous peoples located in and around their area of responsibility.

Djibouti

The Seabees of NMCB 11 supported a vast number of humanitarian missions in Africa. In Djibouti the 'Bees of 11' refurbished buildings to ensure a healthy learning environment is available for the children of Grande Doua.

In Grande Doua, Djibouti, seven Sailors from NMCB 11 participated in a cultural celebration at the Ecole de Doua Primary School. Recently, NMCB 11 completed work on the school, installing a 1,500-liter water storage cistern and added a new dining facility, enhancing cleanliness to the school. With the crew of Seabees working six days a week at the school, the school wanted to thank the crew by inviting them to the celebration, according to Moussa Guedi Idriss, Ecole de Doua's 5th grade teacher.

"Americans help and always do anything for the school we ask," explained Idriss. "And we are friends, we wanted them here today."

"They asked us to join them the day before the event and we decided to share something with them," explained Builder 2nd Class Randall Class Randall Davis, project crew leader. "I brought in some of my wife's homemade cookies she sends me and the

crew brought in other snacks and drinks," Davis said.

The sharing of cultures is an example of the positive relationship Americans are building with locals, said Idriss. "Davis and I are friends and [because of that] he helped us."

The crew took a break from their work day and watched the students sing, dance and laugh on their last day of school. "I like other cultures and participating in unique stuff like this," said Davis. "I'm glad we got a chance to take part in this."

Comoros

On the tiny island of Comoros, NMCB 11 assisted another community in their educational pursuits, by providing just the second primary school to the residents of Moroni, Comoros.

Working from sunup to sundown, in heat and rain seven days a week, the crew members of NMCB 11 say they keep motivated because their hard work will benefit the Comorans.

"No matter how long the hours or hard the work, it's worth in the end," said BU3 Roylander J. Williams Jr., a project crew member. "The education will change the lives of the youth in Moroni."

The Comorans say they see the hard work and stress the Seabees endure every day and appreciate every moment of the work, which allows the deployed Americans and local people to create new relationships.

"We asked for help and the Americans were the first to respond," said Mohamed Ali Mgonri, headmaster for Hamramba Primary School. "It's great having people help. The effect of the work is of much value to Comoran people."

"The Comorans I have spoken to are excited to have this school," said BUCN Benjamin B. Highfield, a project crew member. "After they finish their schooling here, they want to go to the United States, or to France, to continue a higher education."

"Part of the Seabee ethos is we build with compassion for others," Highfield explained. "It's what we do, and I love doing it. We got to get out there and do the job, even if it means getting dirty and working all hours of the night."

"While NMCB 11 focuses on pouring concrete and bringing columns and walls to life for the schoolhouse, Comoran engineers have begun working side-by-side with the Seabees in a military-to-military training program.

"The experience with Seabees and with the way they work is valuable," said Mgonri. "I feel help should always be like this. This will be the model of all schools on the island, with a new perspective and look on reality and education."

Ethiopia

Another small contingent of Seabees from NMCB 11 was hard at work ensuring the children of Dire Dawa, Ethiopia, have a learning facility that is top-notch from the ground up.

In Dire Dawa, a local secondary school is receiving the finishing touches on a new facility that will provide a location for plays, public speeches and other gatherings. They laid tile across the 4,300-square-foot floor and replaced the roof to complete the project.

The crew hit some speed bumps during the renovation, ranging from having no electricity to using mismatched tile sizes. But, they remained ahead of schedule.

"We found a technique for laying tile that works," explained BU3 John Vetter, a crew member.

"According to Construction Battalion Construction Management, the computer program we use to track our project's progress and calculate man-hours, we did 14 days of work in three days," Vetter said.

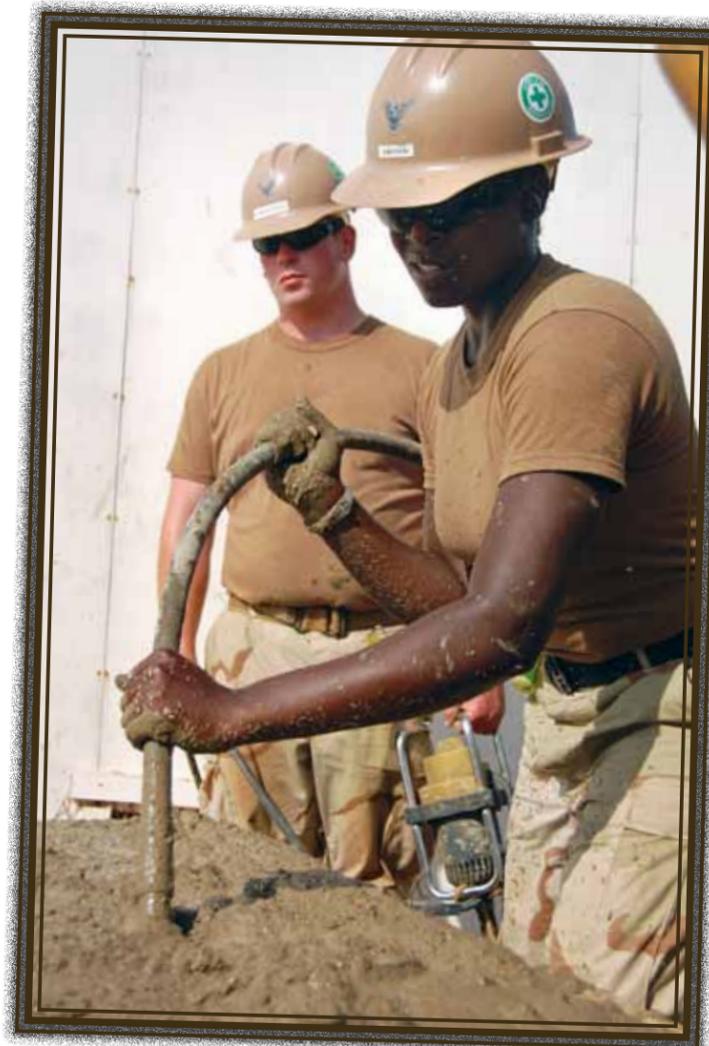
The Sailors' success came from their focus and determination to finish the school on schedule, according to CN Scott Bishop, another crew member.

"Once we get moving, it's actually hard to stop," said Scott.

"Most of the troops are green," said BU1(SCW) Jeffery Dwyer, project mission commander. "But they stay motivated and very

Left

Seabees assigned to NMCB 11 inspect and remove debris from a bridge project in Aromo, Uganda. The original bridge was destroyed during a flood and NMCB 11 is constructing a more durable replacement.



BU3 Gwennette Jamerson, assigned to NMCB 11 Det. Horn of Africa, settles concrete at the Doua de Ecole Primary School.



resourceful for the task at hand."

"We have worked late and through lunch multiple times without even realizing it," said Bishop. "All of us just want to see the project to the end that much."

Uganda

In Uganda the trend of assisting educational pursuits for the locals continued for NMCB 11, yet this time the 'Bees were needed to help bridge the gap between two towns separated by the effects of yearly torrential rainfall.

After completing work on a concrete bridge of major importance to villagers in Aromo, Uganda, NMCB 11 continued to work on a second one nearby.

The crew of Seabees built the Aromo low-water crossing bridge over a small river, replacing a lighter bridge that washed out during the last seasonal high floods and heavy rainfall. The

bridge once again connected the village of Aromo with the road leading to the city of Lira and other local areas, such as the public school.

“The Seabees’ strong work ethic and extensive technical skills are providing Ugandans with two bridges that [are] able to withstand the seasonal flooding and provide transportation solutions to the largest vehicles used in the region,” explained Lt. Garth Pertersen, Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) country planner for Uganda.

To work at the remote project site efficiently, the Seabees set up a small tent camp only 50 yards away from the bridge. The camp was designed to be self-sufficient, giving the Seabees their own power. It was where they lived and kept supplies for the project. It was also on the edge of local farmland, with goats and cattle constantly grazing next to the camp. The living conditions gave the crew a unique chance to grow, according to Steelworker 3rd Class John Johnston, project crew member.

“No one wants to live the way we do,” Johnston said. “But it gives you such a great understanding of what the people we are helping have to endure on a daily basis. I have definitely developed a greater appreciation for the little things in life,” added Johnston.

“By living in the vicinity of local Ugandans,” said Pertersen, “the Seabees are able to interact on a daily basis with Ugandan civilians



with the kids is by far the best part of the day,” said Johnston. “No matter how exhausted you are, those kids can always bring a smile to your face.”

“The people around here are genuinely nice, too,” said Construction Mechanic 2nd Class Trent Thurnhorst, an equipment mechanic. “One guy came to my shop and began to cut the high grass. He told me ‘I do this for friendship.’”

Johnston said the work was draining and living conditions were below what they considered normal, but mission progress and success came from the prospect of improving the lives of Ugandan youth.

“Some days,” he said, “I don’t feel like getting out of bed and going to work. On those days, I remind myself that this project will ensure the local kids can cross the river during the rainy season to get to school. Knowing my work has such a tremendous affect on the local community is enough motivation in itself. There is no project I’d rather be on.”

During their historic first deployment, NMCB 11 Seabees have re-established themselves as one of the best and brightest the Naval Construction Force has to offer. Fully embodying one of the Seabees mottos, “With willing heart and skillful hands, the difficult we do at once, the impossible takes a bit longer.”

Holmes is assigned to American Forces Network South and Lingo is assigned to NMCB 11, Gulfport, Miss.

Above

EACN Travis C. Porter, shakes off the elements as he takes measurements in a rain storm for the Hamramba School Project in Comoros. The detachment worked seven days a week to remain in schedule.



and build goodwill between our two countries. The efforts of the Seabees of NMCB 11 outside Lira will provide benefits for both the people of Uganda and the United States for years to come.”

NMCB 11 also had the opportunity to work with engineers from the Ugandan People’s Defense Force (UPDF), allowing more growth for relationships as well as cross-training.

“It’s been an amazing experience working with the Ugandan engineers,” said BU2(SCW) Peter A. Belcastro, project crew leader. “They have such a strong desire to learn and their work ethic is incredible. I would be happy to serve side by side with them anytime.”

The villagers, especially children, watched the work daily, waiting for the Seabees to finish working each day before interacting with the crew. This was also the highlight of the day for the Seabees.

“Handing out our extra water bottles and throwing the football

Left

Seabees assigned to NMCB 11 pour concrete into a column for the Hamramba School Project in Moroni, Comoros.

Right

BUCN Leslie Keen, left, and BU3 Gwennette Jamerson, assigned to NMCB 11, Det. Horn of Africa, participate in a song and dance celebration at the Doua de Ecole Primary School.





YEARS OF STRENGTH THROUGH DETERRENCE

Story and photos by MC2(SW/AW) Gretchen M. Albrecht

Fleet ballistic missile submarines (SSBN) have been patrolling the world's oceans for 50 years acting as a deterrent force to countries that could use nuclear weapons of mass destruction. The size and capabilities of the ballistic missile submarine have changed through the years, but the Sailors who call the 560-foot submarine "home" have stayed as vigilant and ready as ever to prevent war.

The first ballistic missile submarine, USS *George Washington* (SSBN 598), was commissioned Dec. 30, 1959. *Washington* was originally scheduled to become a fast attack submarine, but was lengthened by the addition of a 130-foot missile section enabling her to carry up to 16 *Polaris* missiles in support of rising tensions during the Cold War.

Through the years the fleet has evolved from the *Lafayette*-class to the *Benjamin Franklin*-class and into the *Ohio*-class of today. Each new class of submarine has given the nation a more powerful, capable and technologically advanced submarine force.

Capt. David Ratte, commodore, Submarine Squadron 17, has dedicated the past 25 years of his naval service to the submarine force and has seen little change in the overall mission of SSBNs.

"The fundamental mission of the SSBN has not changed since the 1960s," said Ratte. "How we execute it has changed, the details such as adversaries have changed, but how and why we operate our ships at sea is all still in place. The mission of the SSBN still involves the safety, security, reliability and survivability of our nation's maritime nuclear deterrence force."

The SSBN mission precedes Missile Technician 3rd Class (SS)

David Bunney by 27 years, but he knows that it remains as important as ever.

"We are a big part as to why we have not had a nuclear war, and deterrence is something we will continue to rely on in the future," said Bunney. "I know that when I am on patrol or in training I am adding to the success of our deterrent mission, and it makes the long hours and personal sacrifice worthwhile."

Although the mission has stayed the same, the adversaries of today are not always as well known as those in the past. The ballistic missile submarine force must be flexible in adapting to new threats, and continue to protect the United States and its allies from rogue nations.

The SSBN community continues to adapt to a changing world, and works to support the U.S. maritime strategy that states, "Preventing war is preferable to fighting wars. Detering aggression must be viewed in global, regional and transnational terms via conventional, unconventional and nuclear means."

Ballistic missile submarines, or "boomers," are beneficial because they are a survivable platform at sea. Survivability means assured retaliation should any nation choose to use nuclear weapons, and the chance of finding a deployed ballistic missile submarine would be like finding a baseball bat hidden somewhere in the United States.

"Our ballistic missile submarine force is an extremely important part of our national defense. It was, and remains today the most survivable part of our nuclear defenses," said Rear

Adm. Frank Caldwell III, Commander, Submarine Group 9.

"The boat is virtually undetected once it leaves port and submerges, and the thought that it can be anywhere at any time undetected is a huge deterrent value for our nation."

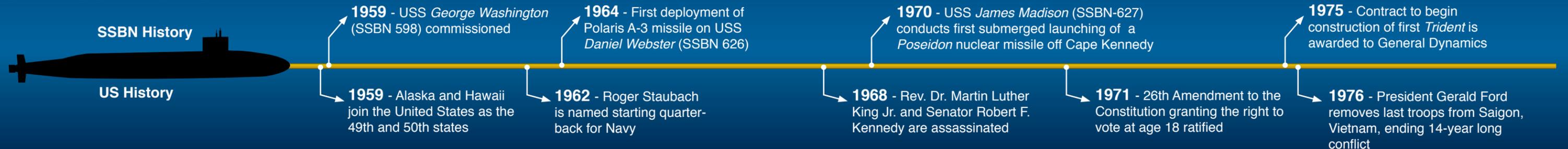
The nation's maritime strategy states, "Maritime ballistic missile defense will enhance deterrence by providing an umbrella



U.S. Navy photo

USS *George Washington* (SSBN 598) was the Navy's first nuclear-powered fleet ballistic missile submarine, and was originally scheduled to become USS *Scorpion* (SSN 589). During her construction she was lengthened by the insertion of a 130-foot missile section and was finished as a fleet ballistic missile submarine. She was commissioned Dec. 31, 1959.

SSBN / US Timeline





Fleet Ballistic Missile Submarines - SSBN

Description

Since the 1960s, strategic deterrence has been the SSBN's sole mission, providing the United States with its most survivable and enduring nuclear strike capability.

Features

The Navy's fleet ballistic missile submarines, often referred to as *Boomers*, serve as an undetectable launch platform for intercontinental missiles. They are designed specifically for stealth and the precision delivery of nuclear warheads.

Ohio-class SSBNs have the capability to carry up to 24 submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) with multiple independently-targeted warheads. The SSBN's primary weapon, the Trident missile, was built in two versions. The first generation missile, Trident C-4, has been phased out of service and replaced by the larger, longer-range, and more precise Trident II D-5. The first eight submarines (SSBN 726 to 733) were initially built to only carry the C-4 missile. The first four *Ohio*-class (SSBN 726 through SSBN 729) ended their strategic deterrent mission in the early 2000s when they began the

conversion process into guided-missile submarines, or SSGNs. SSBN 730 through 733 have been retrofitted to carry the D-5 missile. SSBN 734 to 743 were designed from the beginning to carry the D-5 missile and continue to execute their primary mission of strategic deterrence.

SSBNs are specifically designed for extended deterrent patrols. To increase their at-sea time, the *Ohio* class have three large-diameter logistics hatches that allow Sailors to rapidly transfer supply pallets, equipment replacement modules and machinery components, significantly reducing the time required for in-port replenishment and maintenance.

The *Ohio*-class design allows the submarines to operate for 15 or more years between major overhauls. On average, the submarines spend 77 days at sea followed by typically 35 days in-port for maintenance. Each SSBN has two crews, Blue and Gold, which alternate manning the submarines while on patrol. This maximizes the SSBN's strategic availability while maintaining the crew's training readiness and morale at high levels.

General Characteristics, *Ohio* Class

Builder: General Dynamics Electric Boat Division.

Date Deployed: Nov. 11, 1981 (USS *Ohio*)

Propulsion: One nuclear reactor, one shaft.

Length: 560 feet (170.69 meters).

Beam: 42 feet (12.8 meters).

Displacement: 16,764 tons (17,033.03 metric tons) surfaced; 18,750 tons (19,000.1 metric tons) submerged.

Speed: 20+ knots (23+ miles per hour, 36.8+ kph).

Crew: 15 Officers, 140 Enlisted.

Armament: 24 tubes for *Trident* II submarine-launched ballistic missiles, MK48 torpedoes, four torpedo tubes.

USS Submarine Group 9, Bangor, Wash.

COMSUBRON 17

USS *Henry M. Jackson* (SSBN 730)
 USS *Alabama* (SSBN 731)
 USS *Kentucky* (SSBN 737)
 USS *Nebraska* (SSBN 739)

COMSUBRON 19

USS *Maine* (SSBN 741)
 USS *Louisiana* (SSBN 743)
 USS *Nevada* (SSBN 733)
 USS *Pennsylvania* (SSBN 735)

Submarine Group 10, Kings Bay, Ga.

SUBRON 16

USS *Alaska* (SSBN 732)
 USS *Tennessee* (SSBN 734)
 USS *West Virginia* (SSBN 736)

SUBRON 20

USS *Maryland* (SSBN 738)
 USS *Rhode Island* (SSBN 740)
 USS *Wyoming* (SSBN 742)



of protection to forward-deployed forces and friends and allies, while contributing to the larger architecture planned for defense of the United States.” Ballistic missile submarines deter through credibility and reliability.

“A big part of deterrence is the fact that we say we can do something, and we demonstrate we can do it. Our adversaries know that if they choose to be aggressive then the president has his options,” said Ratte. “You can argue that as long as there are nuclear weapons out there then we need to have a capability to defend against them.”

LIFE IN A BOOMER

With great power comes great responsibility, and the men entrusted to carry out the mission of ballistic missile submarines are all volunteers, and almost half are between the ages of 19 and 25 years old.

These Sailors volunteer knowing that communication while on patrol is hit and miss, the only port call will be when they walk across the brow in their homeport after completing up to a 90-day patrol, and the unforgiving nature of submarines leaves no room for mistakes.

USS *Nebraska*'s (SSBN 739) Chief of the Boat, MCMT(SS) Randall Pruitt knows the service he and his shipmates volunteered for is not surrounded with fanfare and publicity. Submarines are the “silent service.”

“I can say without exception, that the Sailors who serve aboard SSBNs are the best Sailors in the Navy,” said Pruitt. “These guys are the best at their jobs, and each and every one of them has selfless motivation to give up contact with the outside world and work incredibly long hours knowing that their selflessness is helping to achieve the mission.”

Before Sailors step foot on their first submarine they must complete either three months of submarine school on top of their



YN3 (SS) Joshua Jones, helmsman of the watch, works to maintain the boat's ordered course and depth while FCC (SS) Troy Leonard supervises.

specialty rate training and boot camp, or those in a nuclear field rating must complete 18 months of nuclear power school. This extensive training gives the newest submariners the basic skills they will need to be successful on their first boat.

“Submarine school is a Navywide focus on submarines, how they operate, traditions and history,” said Bunney. “It gives us the tools we will need to go to our first boat with a general knowledge of what is expected of us.”

Ballistic missile submarines are meant to last more than 40 years, and the boat will typically be at sea for 65 percent of those years. Because of this high operating tempo the dual crew concept was created, and that concept is still in place after 50 years.

The dual-crew concept means each ballistic missile submarine has a blue crew and gold crew. This allows the nation to get a higher return on its investment by sending the boat to sea more often while

allowing the off crew to have time at home.

“I switched from the fast attack submarine community to the ballistic missile submarine community because of the stability that comes with the dual-crew concept,” said CS1(SS) Cary Schiff. “I usually know when I will be home and when I will be on patrol, and this gives me the chance to plan for things with my family. That kind of stability is great for raising a family, and I would not get that on any other platform.”

Submarine Group 9 Command Master Chief (SS) Rick Adkins knows that the dual crews are in place for what he calls the “Mission first, Sailors always” concept.

“Two crews maximize the operational availability of the submarine while not over-taxing the crew,” said Adkins. “It provides for a somewhat predictable schedule. While they are home, even though the training periods are rather intense for the crew, they still have the opportunity to build quality family time which in turn helps with Sailor readiness and retention.”

Having two crews is also good for creating strong bonds

between crews and families. When one crew goes to sea they can count on the off crew to help if any issues come up back home as MT3(SS) Zachary Agnew has seen.

“If somebody's family needs help then we are there to help because we would want the same for our families when we are out to sea,” said Agnew. “I think this is one of the reasons why the submarine community is so tight; we all have to depend on one another at home and at sea. The camaraderie and the closeness you have is like no other because we need each other to make it back home.”

DRILL, DRILL, DRILL

While one crew goes to sea in support of the deterrent mission, the off crew remains ashore. This is not free time for these men. Days are filled with training, training and more training to stay proficient in all areas so the crew remains mission ready when it's their turn to take the boat to sea.

Since training is considered the bedrock of the submarine community – both in port and at sea – the need for a good mentorship program is a must. The submarine community has a different name for this; the “Sea Pup and Sea Dad” program.

“Mentorship is a way of life for us, and it's the way we do business because it is how we properly train those who will be relieving us,” said CS1(SS) Jonathan Miller. “Your Sea Dad is someone you can go to when you need help with qualifying, or if you are having a difficult time and need advice. I know that I could not have been any prouder when my Sea Pups were pinned with their dolphins because they worked hard for it, I was a small part of helping them get there, and they are now part of a fraternity going back to the beginning of the submarine service.”

Finding time to study while underway can be difficult. The work day is based on 18 hours instead of 24 hours giving the men six hours of watch and 12 hours off. Maintenance, cleaning, studying, training, eating and sleeping are all crammed into these 12 hours making the time off fly by.

“Our days change all the time with the 18-hour schedule, and

Upper Right

ET2 (SS) Christopher Curtis takes time to relax in his rack during his off hours. submarine Sailors work 18 hour days, six hours on watch, six hours training, and six hours are spent working out, relaxing or sleeping.

Lower Right

MMFA Kyle Ketron passes through one of the three watertight doors. All *Ohio*-Class *Trident* submarines have three watertight doors to prevent the spreading of fire and flooding in the event of an emergency.



1981 - The first *Trident* submarine USS *Ohio* (SSBN 726) is commissioned.

1989 - USS *Tennessee* (SSBN 734) conducts first submerged test of *Trident* III.

1994 - Nuclear posture review determines only 14 SSBN are needed.

2003 - First *Tomhawk* fired from a converted SSBN torpedo tube.

2009 - 1,000th *Trident* strategic deterrent patrols by the *Ohio*-class ballistic missile submarine.

1980 - American hostages in Iran released.

1983 - 241 U.S Marines killed by suicide bomb in Lebanon.

1989 - Cold War Ends with the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of Soviet Communism.

1999 - Former Iron Curtain nations join North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

2001 - Pentagon and World Trade Centers attacked by terrorists.

2009 - Barack Obama Inaugurated first African American president of the United States of America.



Left
MM3 (SS) Anthony Roman inspects a torpedo tube for damage and foreign debris during a regular preventive and corrective maintenance, which is done before and after launches to prevent mishaps, and to maintain a constant state of readiness.

Below
MM1 Gary Poppleton (center) gives training on how to properly maintain a torpedo control cable to MM3 (SS) Anthony Roman and MM2 (SS) Dan Firestone in the torpedo room aboard the USS *Henry M. Jackson* (SSBN 730). Due to the unforgiving nature of submarines training is conducted tirelessly in an effort to prepare for any situation.

Far Right
The tug Mitchell Herbert helps maneuver the Ohio-class ballistic missile submarine USS *Alabama* (SSBN 731) to be moored alongside the Ohio-class ballistic missile submarine USS *Maine* (SSBN 741) at the Delta Pier on board Naval Base Kitsap.



Above
ET2(SS) Nathan Smith plots the position of USS *Henry M. Jackson* (SSBN 730) while standing quartermaster of the watch.



Right
Lt. Gierag Andrews shaves in his stateroom prior to assuming his watch.

life really only gets mundane if you are not actively working to better yourself and the boat,” said Electronics Technician 2nd Class (SS) Bevan Aque Paraz. “You get busy on your 12 hours off with maintenance, drills, and studying so your sleep can sometimes feel like a nap.”

“We don’t have a day check and night check. People sleep throughout different times of the day depending on their watch, so we forget what time or what day it is,” said Agnew. “We just see fluorescent lights, so the meal usually tells us what time of day it is. For example, pancakes mean breakfast ... the food is really good, and it has a very positive impact on morale.”

Many things take getting used to while underway on a submarine. The absence of sunlight, the lack of communication to and from home and the 18-hour days can make life difficult.

“We are secluded from the outside world, but we are never alone because we have our shipmates who we form lifelong bonds with,” said Miller. “It’s hard going from seeing and talking to your family on a regular basis to a few sporadic e-mails during patrol, but it’s part of the job. You have to have a strong bond with your spouse and know things will get done while you’re gone. It gives us peace of mind and [we can] focus on the mission.”

Sailors still have opportunities to relax while underway after all of their daily duties are completed. There are movies and board games for Sailors to use in their off time, and submariners can still get a good workout on one of the stationary bikes, elliptical machines or treadmills placed in spare nooks throughout the boat.

“There is always something you can be doing while underway,” said Aque Paraz. “From going above and beyond and qualifying for different watches, to taking a break and watching a movie with a few friends or getting 20 minutes in on the bike; something is there to fill what free time you have.”

Boomer Sailors often go unnoticed due to the operations and strategic platform they maintain. The secretive lifestyle of ballistic missile submarines does not dissuade submariners like MT2(SS) Sean Gage who knows that completing the mission is more important than recognition.

“We live a life that is not always on the news, we are the secret side of the Navy that does not always get recognition because of the mission that we do, but it’s very rewarding to know that you are part of something bigger that’s helping prevent nuclear war,” said Gage.

The ballistic missile submariners are a proud group of Sailors. Even with the hardships and struggles many said the submarine service was the best choice for them.

“If I had to go back I would definitely do it all over again,” said Agnew. “The camaraderie and the closeness you have with the men is like no other community in the Navy.”

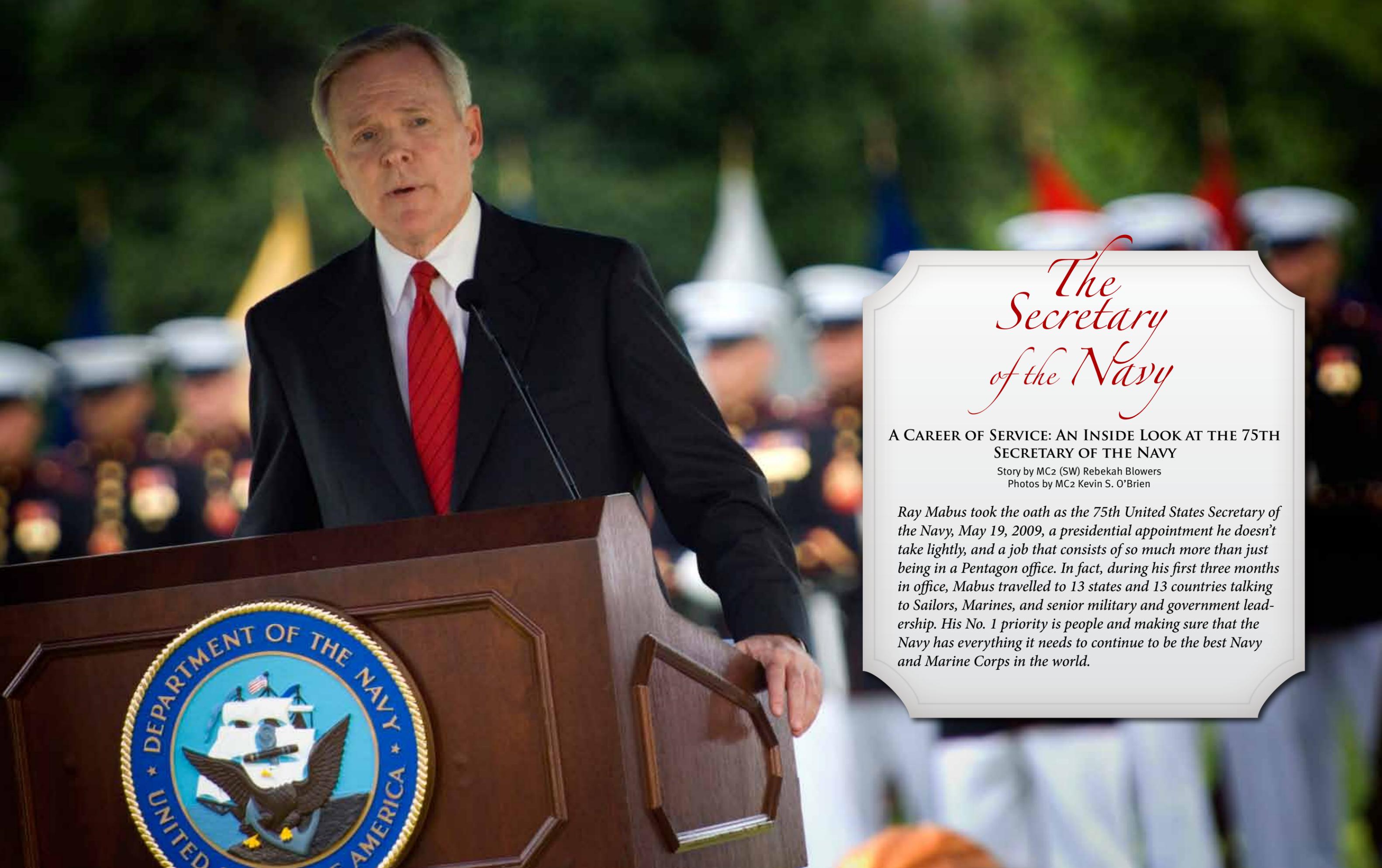
Miller agrees, “The submarine service has not always been easy, but it has made me into a better Sailor and a better man. I would not change what I am doing for anything.”

Fifty years of naval tradition and heritage along with advanced technology and the selfless service of submariners have brought the ballistic missile submarine force to where it is today; the most advanced nuclear deterrent force in the world. **SS**

Albrecht is assigned to Submarine Group 9, Silverdale, Wash.



Photo by Ray Narimatsu



The Secretary of the Navy

A CAREER OF SERVICE: AN INSIDE LOOK AT THE 75TH SECRETARY OF THE NAVY

Story by MC2 (SW) Rebekah Blowers
Photos by MC2 Kevin S. O'Brien

Ray Mabus took the oath as the 75th United States Secretary of the Navy, May 19, 2009, a presidential appointment he doesn't take lightly, and a job that consists of so much more than just being in a Pentagon office. In fact, during his first three months in office, Mabus travelled to 13 states and 13 countries talking to Sailors, Marines, and senior military and government leadership. His No. 1 priority is people and making sure that the Navy has everything it needs to continue to be the best Navy and Marine Corps in the world.

Sailors and Marines out in the fleet, aboard ships, submarines, attached to air squadrons, on the ground in Central Command or the Horn of Africa may not know or understand the senior Navy leadership above their immediate chain of command.

What about the person who runs the Department of the Navy? So much of what Sailors and Marines do every day, not just for their jobs but for their quality of life, is determined by one such leader: Secretary Mabus. It may sound a bit overwhelming, and hard to imagine that kind of responsibility but Mabus said he couldn't imagine a better job.

"My job is to make sure we recruit, train and equip the Navy and the Marine Corps. That we have the people and the equipment we need to do what America needs for us to do. What that translates into is I do things like oversee buying ships and aircraft, but more importantly, I oversee things like recruiting and training," Mabus said. "My most important priority is to take care of Sailors, Marines and their families who are taking care of us."

The holiday season is almost here and many Sailors are away from home, away from their families and friends, carrying out the mission that the Navy has assigned them. Mabus said whatever that mission is, no matter how great or small, it is all vital and he appreciates it.

"The mission the Navy and Marine Corps fulfill for this country is absolutely vital. And even though the separation is hard, and even though it's particularly hard during the holidays, [Sailors and Marines should know that what they are doing in protecting and defending our country is crucial, is vital and is appreciated and

valued by our country," Mabus said.

And if anyone knows what it is like to serve, it's the secretary. He was born in Mississippi, and his father was a naval officer during World War II. Mabus said he admired his father for the work he did and the opportunities that he gave him. By the time Mabus had graduated from University of Mississippi, or as he lovingly calls it "Ole Miss," he had been all through the Middle East, across the Trans-Siberian railroad and through Asia and Central America.

"He gave me as much of an education about the world as I was educated in school about other things," Mabus said.

He said part of what drove him to make his next career choice was that even though his father was from a small town, he still had the desire to serve and see the world.

"[My father] was born in a little town in Northeast Mississippi, about 1,000 people, and yet he had this insatiable curiosity about the world," said Mabus.

His father's service also gave him a strong moral foundation, so after he



Above

Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates and Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus perform pass and review during Mabus' public swearing in ceremony at the Washington Navy Yard.

Right

Secretary Mabus poses for a photo with Jon Stewart, host of The Daily Show after appearing there.

Left

Vice President Joe Biden delivers remarks to family and friends of Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus, center left, following a special swearing-in ceremony at the Eisenhower Executive Office Building next door to the White House.

Lower Right

Ray Mabus greets Sailors while touring USS *Chung-Hoon* (DDG 93) during a four day trip to Hawaii to meet with military and senior government leadership, to speak with Sailors and to familiarize himself with Department of the Navy assets in the region.

"I'm one of the luckiest people alive. I've got a terrific job, and I've got a wonderful family. I've gotten to serve in a lot of different capacities during the course of my career, and I hope I'm approachable... I'm working hard to make sure Sailors, Marines and their families are taken care of."





graduated college he became a junior officer on a surface ship.

"I thought it was important to serve and to give something back. I was attracted to the Navy because of its history, its traditions and what it does for this country," he said.

He served aboard the cruiser *USS Little Rock (CLG 4)* in the Mediterranean. Today when he travels around the fleet to talk to Sailors, he likes to say how different the Navy of today is, than when he served in the early '70s.

"I have been asked what the difference is between when I served four decades ago and today. And the difference is not that the equipment has gotten better, although it certainly has. And the difference is not that technology has advanced, although it has. The difference is that we have more skilled, more dedicated, more talented and a more educated group of people who are Marines and Sailors," Mabus said. "Even though I served with a lot of people who were dedicated, skilled, very patriotic Americans – we can't touch you in terms of skill level, in terms of devotion level, in terms of commitment level, in terms of just operational tempo – in terms of how often you are called on to deploy, in terms of how much your families sacrifice."

His time in the Navy was the starting point for a very successful career in service. He went on to graduate from John's Hopkins University, and then used the Montgomery GI Bill to help pay his way through Harvard Law School. This focus on education and service led him to be elected as the youngest governor of Mississippi in 100 years, at the time of his election.

While serving as governor he was named one of "Fortune" magazine's top 10 education governors for leading a comprehensive education reform called Better Education for Success Tomorrow. Quality of life issues for Sailors and Marines such as the Post 9/11 GI Bill are important to the secretary since he used a GI Bill program to help propel his career.

"After the Navy, I got the GI Bill. It helped me go to Harvard Law School. I think if my memory is correct, I got \$175 a month which paid for all my living expenses. My dad picked up my tuition, but it allowed me to have a place to live, all the expenses that involve being away in school," he said. "That's one of the reasons I think the GI Bill is so important and the flexibility that our new GI Bill gives – either the service member can use it or they can pass it along to one of their family members. I just think it's one of the best things we do."

Mabus later went on to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, along with several other jobs as a senior executive in both the civilian and government sectors. His time growing up in a Navy family and becoming a Sailor himself has helped him lead today's Navy. He said that he can relate to Sailors and their families who are separated, especially during the holidays.

"I've travelled a lot for work and have most of my career. And I know just in the short times – in two weeks or three weeks, I know

Left

Ray Mabus visits with wounded service members during a tour of the Comprehensive Combat and Complex Casualty Care Unit at Naval Medical Hospital Balboa in San Diego California.

Right

SECNAV Ray Mabus, poses for a photo with Sailors during an all-hands call following a tour of the amphibious command ship *USS Blue Ridge (LCC 19)*. *Blue Ridge*, embarked U.S. 7th Fleet staff and Marines from Fleet Anti-terrorism Security Team Pacific hosted Mabus' first official visit to the Republic of Korea .

how difficult that separation is," said Mabus. "And those trips pale in comparison to being deployed – to going away on a six-month cruise, to being in theater as a Marine or Sailor for seven months – and the effects the families who are left behind, because those who stay at home also serve."

He stressed that quality-of-life issues are important to him and he keeps those at the front of his mind as he looks at the policies and procedures that keep the Navy running.

"You need to make sure that things like child care are taken care of, education is taken care of, but also that [the family at home] gets enough information so they know what their [Sailor or Marine] is doing, they understand the importance of it, and that America understands the importance of what that [Sailor or Marine] is doing," he said.

Mabus understands the importance of his job, but more importantly he understands the importance of each and every Sailor, Marine, Navy civilian and family member who make up the entire Navy family. He said he cannot imagine a better job than serving as Secretary of the Navy.

"My Navy roommate who is a judge in Indiana now, sent me a letter when I got nominated for this job," said Mabus. "And he said, 'Do you remember all those nights on the bridge when we were talking [at] two or three in the morning about how this whole Navy

thing could be run better? OK, here's your chance. Run it better."

Mabus said he can run it better, but only by getting out into the fleet, on the ground or at sea where Sailors and Marines are doing the nation's work. He said that he learns better by seeing things firsthand, and by hearing firsthand from Sailors how they think he can make the Navy better. That's why he travelled to 13 states and 13 countries in the first three months in office, because he is still striving to serve in the best way he can.

"I'm one of the luckiest people alive. I've got a terrific job, and I've got a wonderful family. I've gotten to serve in a lot of different capacities during the course of my career, and I hope I'm approachable. I hope I'm not remote, and that I'm working hard to make sure Sailors, Marines and their families are taken care of so we have the best Navy and Marine Corps in the world," Mabus said.

And as he works at the Pentagon, meeting with Navy and DoD leadership, with Congress and even with the President, he hopes that Sailors, Marines, Navy civilians and their families around the globe know he is working for them. Not for himself, but for the United States of America, for the United States Navy and for you. **NS**

Blowers is assigned to the Office of the Secretary of the Navy.



Lassen Visits Vietnam in Storybook Return of Her Commander

A Navy officer picked up as a boy off the coast of Vietnam by a Navy ship recently returned to Vietnam in command of one.

Photo by MC2 Matthew R. White



Cmdr. H. B. Le, commanding officer of USS *Lassen* (DDG 82), shares a laugh with Ensign Michael Quagliano as *Lassen* nears Da Nang, Vietnam.

USS *Lassen* (DDG 82), commanded by a man who as a boy sought escape from those once war-torn Vietnamese homeland waters, recently arrived in Da Nang, Vietnam, for a scheduled port visit.

"My crew and I are proud to be able to represent our country to the people of Vietnam," said Cmdr. H.B. Le, *Lassen's* commanding officer. "This visit is a symbol of the friendship between our two nations, and we are deeply honored to be a part of it."

Nearly 35 years ago, Le left aboard a fishing trawler; he now returns at the helm of a U.S. Navy warship.

"I'm very humbled by the amazing opportunity to get to Vietnam after more than 34 years," Le said. "I feel so fortunate to bring *Lassen* and my crew to Vietnam."

Le's story of escape followed by prosperity in the United States reads like a Hollywood manuscript.

"My father was a commander in the South Vietnamese Navy and was serving as the deputy commanding officer of Nha Be Naval Support Base when we left Vietnam," he said. "The evening of the April 29, 1975, his commanding officer left the country with his family without telling my dad, and

when his officers told him about that he assumed command," said Le.

"The next day, only after realizing Saigon had fallen, my dad tell his remaining men to go home to their families and to make sure to take care of them," he continued. "My dad navigated a fishing trawler with 400 passengers out to sea, where we were picked up by USS *Barbour County* (LST 1195) on May 2, 1975."

"Leaving Vietnam had a profound impact on my family," said Le. "My parents had to start all over again with no money in their pockets. Thanks to some truly generous and wonderful Americans who sponsored us, my Dad was able to forge a new beginning," he said.

The Le family immigrated to the United States and settled in Northern Virginia. As Le grew older he heard the call of the seas as his father heard many years before him. After becoming a U.S. citizen in 1985, Le attended the U.S. Naval Academy, graduating with merit in 1992 and was commissioned a U.S. Navy officer.

"Growing up, my father never pushed me to join the Navy or anything like that,"

Le said. "He said do what you want to do, but whatever you do, do your best at it. So when I did decide to go to the Naval Academy, he was proud of me for that."

The crew that Le leads is one of only a few in the Navy who have had the opportunity to visit the Asia-Pacific nation since the end hostilities in 1975.

"I never thought I'd have a chance to visit Vietnam," said Logistics Specialist Seaman Michael McLean, who hails from Gahanna, Ohio. "All that history that happened in Vietnam, and now I get to see it first hand," he said.

McLean and his fellow Sailors had the opportunity to interact with the local people of Da Nang as well as experience their customs and culture. The crew will also compete in soccer and basketball games against students from the University of Da Nang. The visit was not just about fun and games, though, as many of *Lassen's* crew took part in multiple community service projects in the Da Nang area. **NS**

Story by MC2 Matthew R. White, USS *Lassen* (DDG 82).



Photo by MC3 Matthew Bookwalter

Ensign Francis Dore, the navigator aboard USS *Cole* (DDG 67), reviews navigational charts with Commanding Officer Cmdr. Edward DeVinney. *Cole* recently completed Exercise *Joint Warrior* 09-2 and is continuing routine operations in the 6th Fleet area of responsibility.

Cole Completes Security Cooperation Port Visits in Finland, Estonia

Sailors aboard USS *Cole* (DDG 67) recently completed theater security cooperation port visits in Helsinki, Finland, and Tallinn, Estonia. The visits came after *Cole's* participation in Exercise *Joint Warrior* 09-2, a multilateral exercise with various international partners.

Cole's Commanding Officer, Cmdr. Edward DeVinney greeted the Mayor of Helsinki Jussi Pajunen shortly after pulling into the port. Pajunen welcomed *Cole* and exchanged gifts with DeVinney. He said it was an honor for the ship to be in Helsinki, and he hoped the Sailors would have a wonderful visit.

Sailors had the opportunity to experience a historically rich culture and interact with locals during their stay in Finland's capitol. *Cole's* Morale, Welfare and Recreation program offered a tour of the city, which included a sightseeing tour of Finlandia Hall, Uspenski Orthodox Cathedral and a tour of one of the largest sea fortresses in the world, the Suomenlinna Sea Fortress.

"It was an honor for *Cole* to be in Finland," DeVinney said. "The crew has been looking forward to this visit for quite some time."

Cole hosted a reception in Helsinki, which was joined by Adm. Mark Fitzgerald, commander, U.S. Naval Forces Europe, U.S.

Naval Forces Africa and Allied Joint Forces Command Naples.

"It is truly great to be here," Fitzgerald said. "We do a lot of work partnering with Finland, and I think it is a great partnership. The capabilities that Finland brings are truly a benefit to the alliance and to the U.S."

Fitzgerald thanked *Cole* Sailors for their commitment as ambassadors of the U.S. while visiting Finland.

"I think having *Cole* here to help to continue to cement this relationship and work as true partners with each

other is of great benefit to the U.S. Navy and our allies," Fitzgerald said. "I really appreciate the great support, teamwork and partnership from *Cole*."

Immediately following the departure from Helsinki, *Cole* arrived in Tallinn, Estonia, a few hours later. Tallinn is the capitol of Estonia.

Sailors had the opportunity to visit famous sights such as Raekoja plats, St. Olaf Church and the Russian Orthodox Alexander Nevsky Cathedral.

"A lot of Sailors join the Navy to see the world," Devinney said. "I really wanted the crew to maximize these port visits and take in the different cultures and have a great time doing that." **NS**

Story by MC2 Katrina Parker, Destroyer Squadron 24.

Test Results Promising that Navy Hornet Can Fly on 'Green Fuel'

The Navy is one step closer to flying the "Green Hornet." Members of the Naval Air (NAVAIR) Warfare Center fuels team recently made a small, but very vital step toward changing the source of jet fuel the U.S. Navy uses.

Below

An F-404 engine from an F/A-18 runs on biofuel in a Naval Air Systems Command test at the Aircraft Test and Evaluation Facility, Patuxent River, Md.

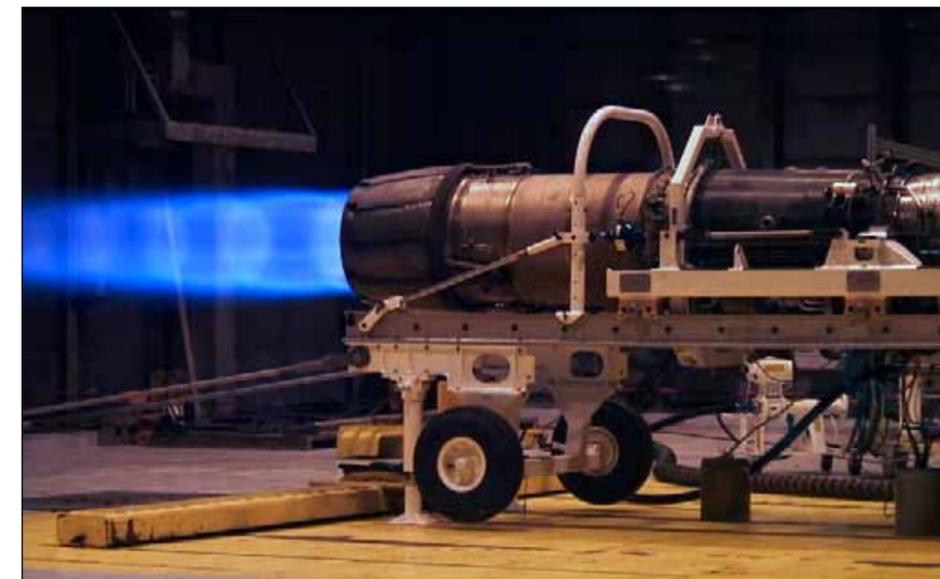


Photo by David Schrabulis



HM2 Porfirio Nino, from Maritime Civil Affairs Team (MCAT) 104, practices pronouncing words in Kinyarwanda, the local language of Rwanda, with locals from the Bunyamanza village of Macuba, Rwanda. MCAT-104 visited Rwanda to observe civil-military operations throughout the country and to build lasting relationships with African partners and conduct civil affairs activities.

The team tested an F-404 F/A-18 engine to determine if it could run on a jet fuel (JP-5) derived from a weed.

"This engine run was our first shot at certifying a JP-5 fuel derived from a renewable source," said Tony Cifone, director for the Propulsion & Power Department at the Naval Air Systems Command. "This is the first step on the road to the 'Green Hornet'."

The "Green Hornet" encompasses more than just a new source for jet fuel. It will eventually include upgrades and new technology to create a more fuel efficient F/A-18 *Super Hornet*. More tests will occur in the December to January timeframe on the F-414, the engine for the Super Hornet.

Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus pointed out during the Navy's Energy Forum held last week, that the "Green Hornet" is an important element in accomplishing his five Green Goals, which center around reducing the use of petroleum derived fuels and increasing the use of energy from renewable sources. The intent is to have the alternative fuels in operational use in the Hornet within three years of certification.

This first test on the F/A-18 *Hornet* engine proved that a renewable source of JP-5 can be used as a "drop-in" replacement for the current petroleum-based jet fuel.

"The engine reacted the way we had expected," said NAVAIR's Rick Kamin, who is the Navy's Fuel Team Lead. "It did not

know the difference."

Likewise, the operators in the fleet will not know the difference, Kamin said as he emphasized the importance of the "drop-in" aspect of an alternative fuel.

Cifone said he anticipates the first actual flight of a Super Hornet fueled with a renewable fuel blended with the current JP-5 will occur next spring.

"Aircraft, since their inception, have been developed around petroleum based fuels. Although renewable fuels currently being tested have many similar properties to petroleum based fuels, they are not 100 percent the same. Blending is the near term solution to allow use of these fuels until on-going research provides a complete solution."

The tests the fuels team conducts to ultimately certify alternative fuels are the same for all fuels. The tests encompass standard chemistry, component and engine testing. The certification process is the same regardless of the source of the fuel. One of the unknown aspects of using a fuel derived from a non-petroleum source is how it would affect seals in the various systems.

Standard petroleum-based jet fuel contains aromatics, a class of ring-shaped hydrocarbon molecules that includes benzene and related solvents. Aromatics soak into the seals and make them swell, and ensure a tight fit against the metal.

"Self-sealing fuel bladders, for example,"

Kamin said, "need aromatics to work properly."

The fuel used in the recent run of tests was created from the camelina plant, which is in the same family of plants as the mustard seed and rapeseed. It needs little water or nitrogen to flourish and can be grown on marginal agricultural soil. An important aspect of using camelina as a renewable source for fuel is that it does not compete with food crops.

Kamin said the Navy's goal is to certify as many alternative fuels derived from renewable sources as possible. **S**

**Story by Billy Ray Brown,
Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division,
Patuxent River, Md.**

Deployed Maritime Civil Affairs Team uses Facebook to Further Mission

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 nations 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."

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 Senior Chief Mass Communication Specialist Jon 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 Facebook 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." **S**

**Story by Lt. Matt Gill,
Maritime Civil Affairs and Security Training
Command, Djibouti.**

For more news from MCAT & MCAST, visit www.navy.mil/media/smd.asp.

USS Anzio Seizes Four Tons of Narcotics

USS *Anzio* (CG 68), operating as part of the Combined Maritime Forces, a U.S.-led coalition supporting maritime security operations in the region, recently seized approximately four tons of hashish found aboard a skiff 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.

Photo by M.C. Matthew Bash



Lt. j.g. Andrew Mechling, a member of the visit, board, search and seizure team from USS *Anzio* (CG 68), disposes of bags of illegal narcotics over the side of a vessel he and his team boarded in the Gulf of Aden. During the boarding the team seized and disposed of more than four tons of hashish.

"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.

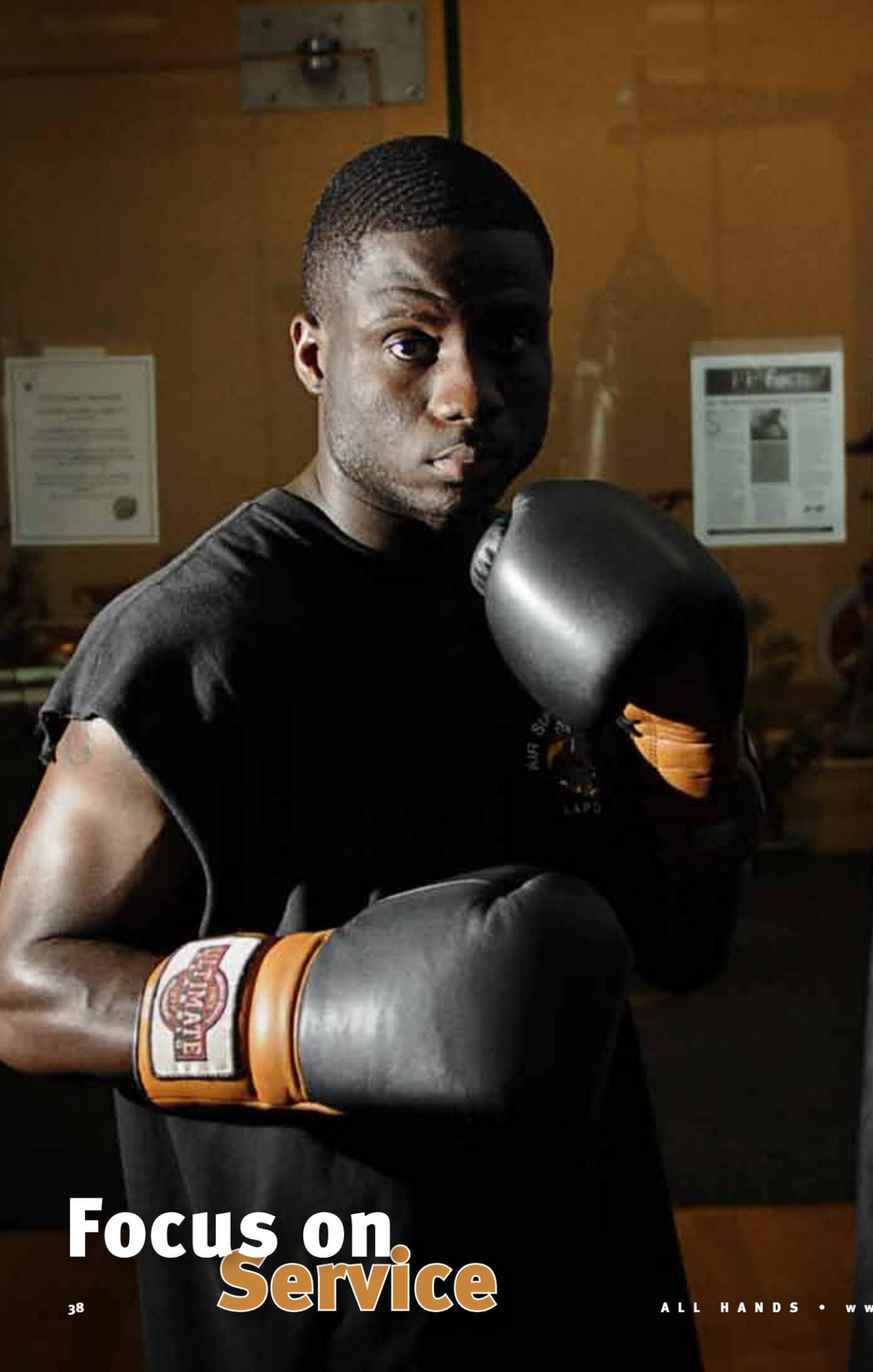
"At first we had no idea what the skiff was doing out here in these waters, we were wary that they could have been pirates," said Capt. Frank J. Olmo. "My VBSS teams are trained to handle these situations safely and efficiently."

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. **S**

**Story by Lt. Iain Jones,
Royal Navy, CTF 151,
USS Anzio (CG 68).**



FIGHTING THE GOOD FIGHT

Story by MC2 (AW) Jonathan W. Hutto Sr.,

photo by MC2 Shannon Renfroe

One would not normally have time outside of being a husband and father of three and working the night shift as a master at arms stationed in Yokosuka, Japan. Nevertheless, Master-at-Arms 2nd Class Albert Lee King Jr. finds time to be productive in his career, family and inside the boxing ring as an amateur fighter.

"I work the night shift so my family is sleep in the morning," said King. "I'll run and go do my bag work in the mornings. After I sleep, I'll do the heavy bag at my house, jump rope, shadow box and spend time with my family before heading off to work."

King can thank his wife for helping him start his boxing career while he was stationed in King's Bay, Ga.

"I told my wife boxing is something I always wanted to do," said King. "I had an uncle who use to shadow box with me as a kid. But due to a lack of money and exposure, I never pursued my dream and stuck with basketball growing up. One day while driving around King's Bay, my wife spotted a gym advertising a boxing program. [She] told me to look at it. I immediately made a U-turn, parked the car and signed up for the program on the spot. The rest is history; I've been boxing now for more than four years."

Climbing into the ring and learning the boxing craft was not easy for King. He was stopped in his first two amateur bouts. Despite the early adversity, King continued to pursue his craft

"I didn't allow the early stoppages to

discourage me from getting in the ring," said King. "I just got back in the gym training harder and harder."

The hard work paid off for King with him winning his next nine fights. He also won major tournaments in Florida and Georgia including the 2009 All-Navy National Box-Off Tournament. The Box Off is held every year for members of the All-Navy boxing team.

"This was my second year winning the tournament," said King. "Last year I won at 152 pounds. This year I won at 165. I fought a Marine from Camp Pendleton, Calif., in the championship bout. I won by unanimous decision."

Although King loves winning bouts and tournaments, training is the most gratifying aspect for him.

"I train beyond the expectation of my fights," said King. "I work to train five times a week. I wake up in the morning running 4-5 miles while sparring in the evenings. I dedicate one day out of the week to sprints. Beyond training, I love to watch boxing on television picking up techniques from professional fighters."

Floyd Mayweather, Winky Wright and Chad Dawson are the three fighters

King enjoys watching the most for various reasons.

"Mayweather is my No. 1 professional to learn from," said King. "His defense is awesome, and he is so hard to hit. Although Winky is coming off two losses, he keeps his hands up high, and this is something coaches always preach. Chad is a very slick southpaw I try and mimic in many ways."

King's future goals include earning a spot on the Armed Forces boxing team and the Olympic team either in 2012 or 2016. His future goals do not include becoming a professional fighter.

"I don't have aspirations of going professional," said King. "If I earn a spot and compete in the Olympics, then I believe I'll be done with the sport. Last year one of my Navy teammates beat me out of a spot on the Armed Forces Team. This year, I'm working and training harder for that spot in my weight class." **S**

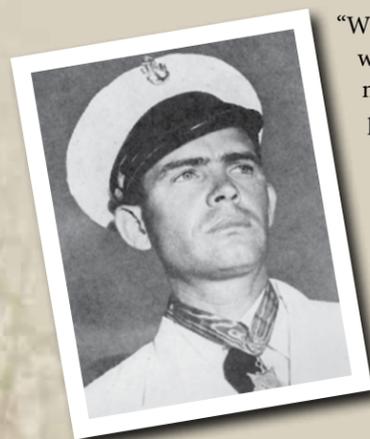
Hutto and Renfroe are assigned to Defense Media Activity-Anacostia, Washington, D.C.

Focus on
Service

A Century Of Honor, Courage, and Commitment

Story by MC2 Geraldine A. Hawkins

Early in the morning of Dec. 7, 1941, Chief Aviation Ordnanceman John Finn was awakened at his Pearl Harbor home by the sound of low-flying airplanes. “Any airport is supposed to have rigid rules and regulations about how the planes are supposed to come in,” he remembered. “We heard planes flying around, but they weren’t flying the station pattern.



“We figured out damn quick that they were attacking,” he said. “I knew that no matter what, what those enemy pilots were doing wasn’t going to go unpunished, either by myself on that day or by our country in the future.”

Finn attached a 50-caliber machine gun to a moveable platform normally used to train gunners. He pushed the platform to an area in which he could clearly see the Japanese planes; the trouble is that the enemy

pilots had a clear view of him as well.

For two hours, Finn fired on the Japanese, with shrapnel hitting him 21 times, mainly in his chest and abdomen. A bullet went through his foot and his left arm became numb. Some of the shrapnel “went in my thumb and my elbow,” remembered Finn. “They were the worst ones I had because they hurt like hell.” He had to be ordered to seek medical help before he would leave his post. Even so, he went back to the hangars after the attack and supervised re-arming the remaining aircraft. The Navy aide station sent him to the hospital, where he spent 14 days in sick bay.

Finn was responsible for at least one confirmed kill, but he insists that it was the actions of several men that brought down the enemy plane.

This year marking his 100th birthday, Finn is the only aviation ordnanceman to receive the Medal of Honor and is the last surviving Medal of Honor recipient from “the day of infamy.”

His award was presented Sept. 14, 1942, aboard USS *Enterprise* (CV 6) in Pearl Harbor by Adm. Chester Nimitz, with Adm. William Halsey Jr. present, and signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

According to Finn, “So many Pearl Harbor

survivors were just young recruits. I had been in the Navy 15 years and had been a chief petty officer for six years. That’s as high as an enlisted man could go without seeking a commission.” Making chief in 1935 involved a substantial pay raise: from \$21 to \$99 per month.

In the early 1930s he was part of the Asiatic Fleet and sailed 600 miles up the Yangtze River and the coast of China en route to the Philippines. He retired in 1956 as a lieutenant.

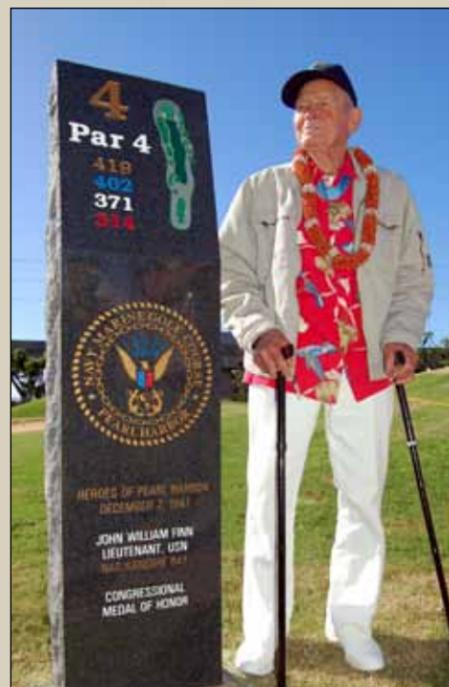
In the run-up to Finn’s 100th birthday, Navy and Marine Corps aviation ordnancemen stationed at NSA Bahrain raised the flag in his honor. The same flag was flown aboard USS *George Washington* (CVN 73), USS *John C. Stennis* (CVN 74) and USS *Dwight D. Eisenhower* (CVN 69) while those vessels were at sea. The flag was then flown aboard all aircraft carriers at Naval Station Norfolk before presentation to Finn.

“He demonstrates the valor of what an aviation ordnanceman can do when faced with adversity,” said AOC Charles Mifsud, who referred to Finn as the unofficial grandfather of the aviation ordnanceman rate. “He’s the inspiration we have to continue our job and ensure that we get our job done.”

“Everybody needs a hero, and John Finn is the hero of the aviation ordnance community,” said Lt. Marcus Creighton, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command (NAVCENT).

When asked the secret of longevity, Finn replied, “Just keep breathing.”

Hawkins is assigned to Defense Media Activity-Anacostia, Washington, D.C.



Upper Left
Medal of Honor recipient Lt. John Finn (Ret.) circa 1942

Following the December 2007 unveiling of the fourth hole marker at the Navy/Marine Golf Course, Medal of Honor recipient Lt. John Finn (Ret.) talks to local media. The golf course features similar markers for all 15 Pearl Harbor Medal of Honor recipients. Finn received the Medal of Honor in recognition of heroism and distinguished service during the Japanese attack.

Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Francis Madden, a native of Brockton, Mass., is a clear example of the rising tide of 21st century Sailors. Assigned to the Branch Medical Clinic, Washington Navy Yard, Madden has barely finished one four-year service contract and has completed one assignment as an individual augmentee (IA).

“I joined the Navy only two weeks out of high school, on June 22, 2006,” Madden said with affable manner, distinct South Boston accent and an honest, constant smile. “At that moment, I did not know what I was doing with my life. I figured if I joined the Navy I could get college money and get a better start out in life.”

Most young Sailors, within the first years of their initial enlistment contract, often spend the majority of their time trying to understand the culture and methods of the Navy. Madden made it clear to his supervisors and peers, that he could quickly “get his head around” that aspect and demonstrated his willingness to serve in a direct and meaningful way. He’d began taking college courses both online and on campus – with the clear intent to achieve a baccalaureate degree – almost as soon as he arrived from “A”-school.

“I’ve been in school while here [at Branch Medical Clinic, Washington, Navy Yard], since March 2007. I volunteered for an IA assignment, as soon as I could. I wanted to go, around the end of that same year, but I had to wait, till June ’08,” he said.

There was a four-month wait for the young Sailor before his assignment would really begin.

“That June, I started my actual training at Naval Base Ventura County, Calif., where they issued me my equipment; my gas mask and CBR gear, and provided me my desert-issue camouflage utility uniforms,” Madden said. “I got trained on my primary job for the IA: Tactical Combat Casualty

Care (TCCC) – to provide emergency response care in a combat environment and deal with complex medical needs.

Once we were done, they sent us to Camp Pendleton. The Marines taught me combat



training, and I developed my physical readiness.”

It was an intense few weeks for the 22-year old corpsman with marching and land-navigation exercises as well as learning other combat essentials in southern California’s early-summer swelter. Before he knew it, he had passed the training phases and was on an 18-hour flight to Kuwait.

Marines, Soldiers and IA-Sailors have stated. Though he was well inside the relative safety of a secure Kuwait, Madden’s account of his duty imparted a sense of challenge nonetheless. The unit he was assigned to had the main task of helping the Army complete their “in-processing” for their National Guard and active components as well as elements of the Air Force and Marines.

Camp Buehring has been one of several staging and mobilization points for joint and specific branch operations. The U.S. Army facility has played a vital role to Operation *Iraqi Freedom* through preparing and positioning the forces entering Iraq, via the northern Kuwait border.

Part of the support and preparation Buehring provides must involve medical screening and care for the newer Soldiers, Marines and Airmen augmenting or relieving the ones already “in country”.

“Once we got there, we started working. We did [watches and duty-shifts] 27 hours straight through; the watches had two-hour switches or turnovers,” Madden said. “Every three days you had duty – you but still had to work [everyday], no matter what.”

“I primarily gave dental care, but also [overall] medical care,” Madden added. “It was a good thing -- Yeah, we worked lot of hours, but that’s good! The main focus of the mission was to provide medical care to our troops and get them on their way. We were the last stop before going into Iraq.”

“I would recommend an IA assignment to any Sailor. ... You get memories that will last forever,” Madden said. “The experience is ‘once in a lifetime’... not anyone can have it and the Navy is a source that can provide it.”

Coverley is assigned to Defense Media Activity-Anacostia, Washington D.C., Graham is assigned to Naval Air Station, JRB New Orleans

WHEN THE WORLD
CALLS ON AMERICA,
AMERICA CALLS ON US.



PACIFIC OCEAN Carrier Strike Group 9 protects global commerce by helping to keep key shipping lanes open. America's Navy. A global force for good.

AMERICA'S
NAVY

A GLOBAL FORCE FOR GOOD.™