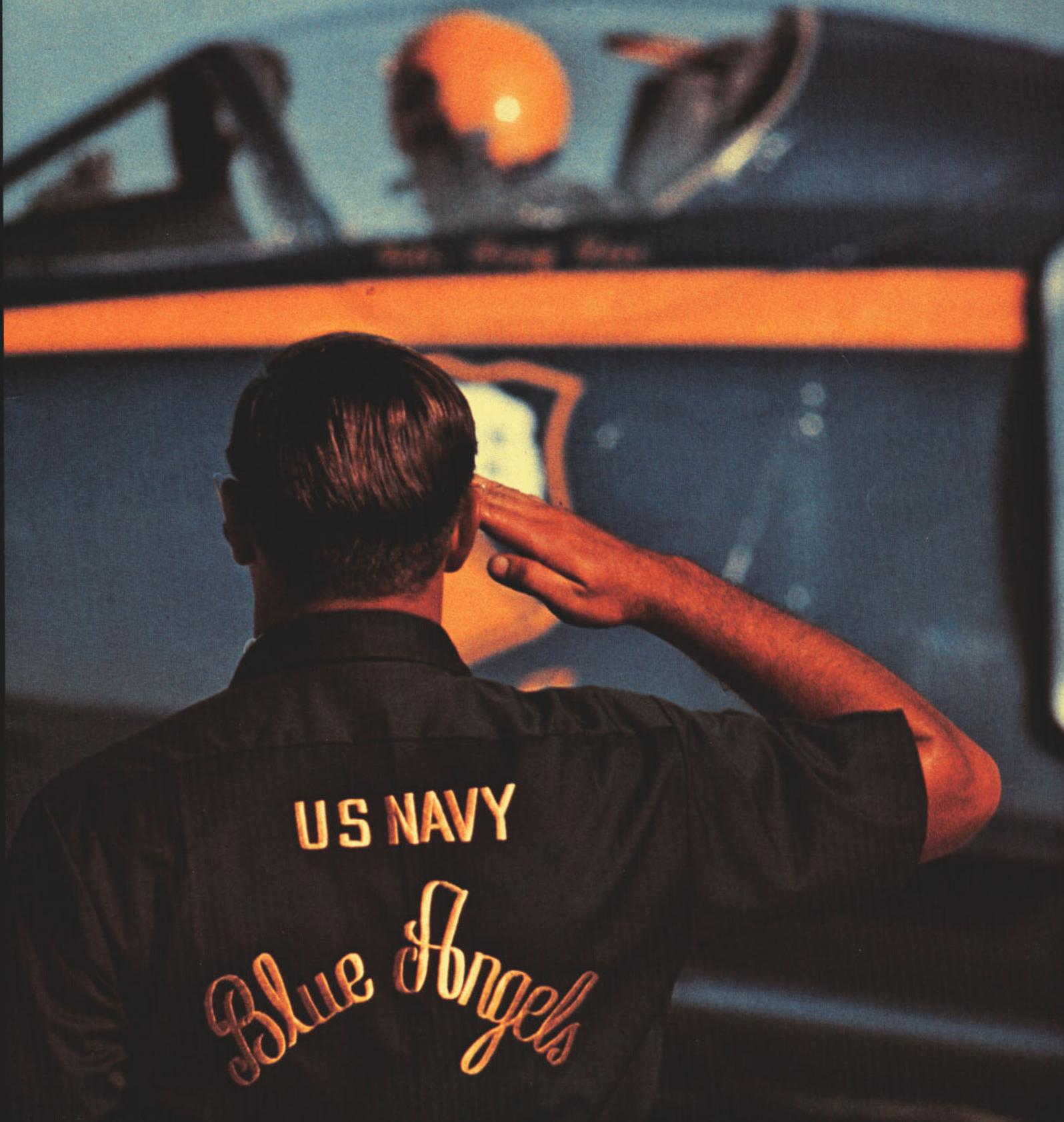


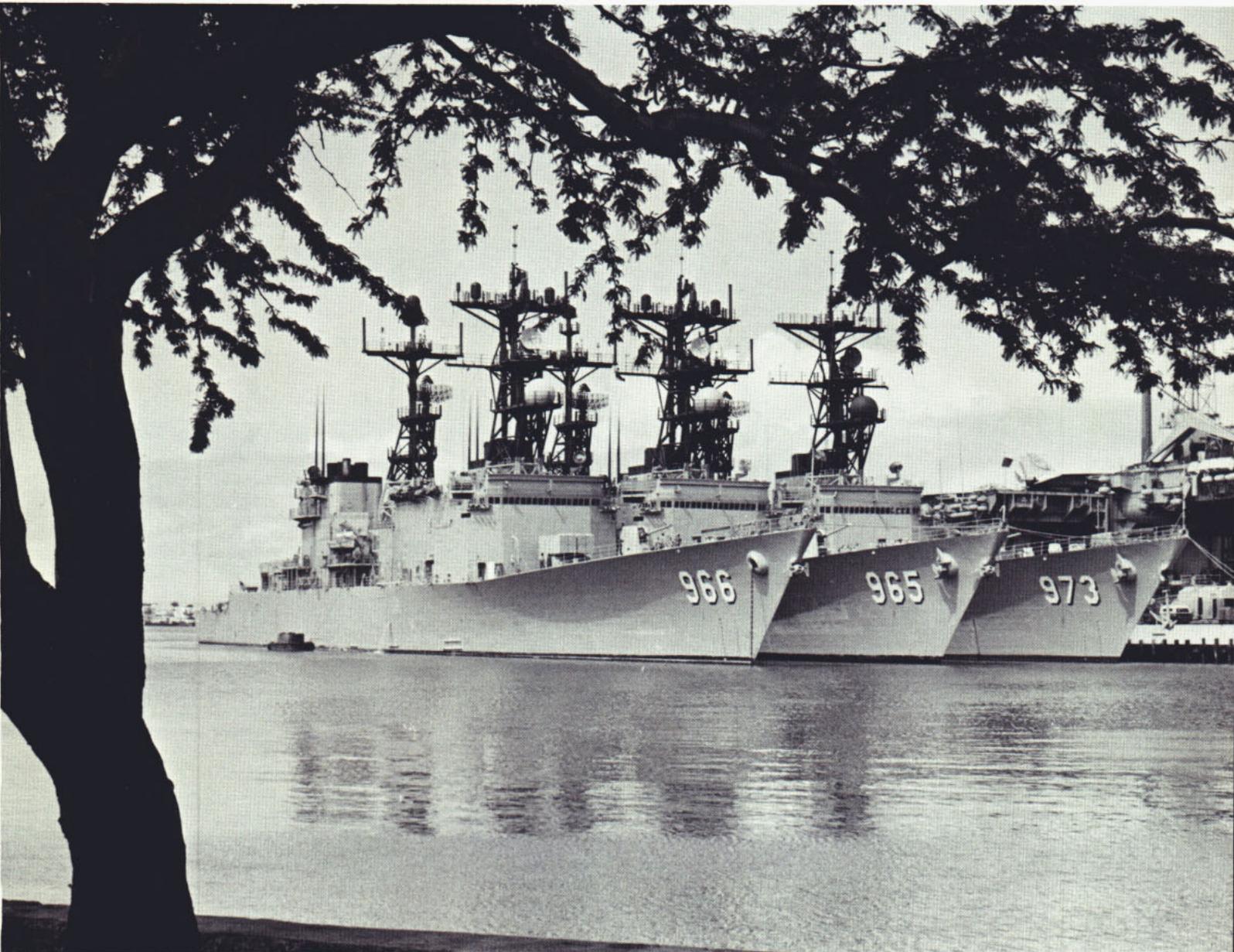
# ALL HANDS

NOVEMBER 1980



US NAVY

*Blue Angels*



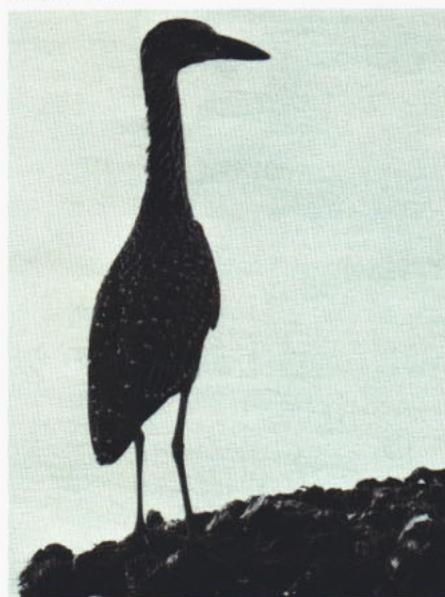
*Three Spruance-class destroyers—USS Hewitt (DD 966), USS Kinkaid (DD 965), and USS John Young (DD 973)—lie beside a pier at Pearl Harbor. Primary mission of this class of destroyer is antisubmarine warfare; they employ helicopters, antisubmarine rockets and torpedoes. Photo by JOCS John D. Burlage.*



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MAGAZINE OF THE U.S. NAVY—58th YEAR OF PUBLICATION  
NOVEMBER 1980 NUMBER 766

Chief of Naval Operations: ADM Thomas B. Hayward  
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Back: Duty at Naval Facility Cape Hatteras offers personnel an opportunity to relax and enjoy the simple life. See page 39. Both cover photos by PH1 Jim Preston.

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T. S. CROW  
MCPON

# An Interview With MCPON

**Q:** *Have you achieved some of the goals you set for yourself when you took over as MCPON?*

**A:** I feel that I have. Naturally, I haven't gotten to everything but I think after nine months, one major accomplishment that we've just been able to get on the street is the new Command Master Chief Program. It was announced just recently. We've been working very hard. I've had the benefit of working with good people at NMPC to staff out the concept of how to utilize our senior and master chiefs. I've been able to help pull it together. We'll see 36 of our surface ships have the benefit of a full-time master chief billet and people will be assigned to those jobs as we get the master chiefs into the system. We've gone through just about a complete rewrite of the OPNAV instruction that governs the job. It's a new program and I'm very proud of it and I think it's got potential to keep on growing.

**Q:** *During your travels you no doubt hear the same questions over and over again—perhaps they're phrased differently. What is the single, most important concern of Navy people today?*

**A:** Well, I don't think you can ever get completely away from pay. Pay is now being addressed at long last and we're starting to see some positive things going on in Congress and in the administration that indicate we're going to be

*MCPON Thomas S. Crow talks with ALL HANDS about Navy careers, travel and his perceptions of today's Navy.*

taking a good hard look at just how bad off we are compensation-wise. I just came back from a trip to Europe and just before that, to WestPac. It's quite a big issue with people and I think people are very much aware now that it is being addressed. I don't think we're asking for anything more than to be able to live with a little dignity in a society where the economic trend is so inflationary. Adequate compensation is what we're after and that's what we need. So, we still talk about it; it's still prevalent in every conversation, in every group meeting I've attended throughout the Navy, on ships at sea and here in Washington.

**Q:** *What other topic seems to concern Navy people the most?*

**A:** If you get past the pay problem, I think it gets down to leadership. We've got to do a better job of providing role models and examples for our people so that they can be in an organization which they are proud of. We haven't done as good a job as we should in working toward a balance between the technical part of the Navy and the military leadership examples that we need to have to keep this thing together. As a consequence, the Navy today does not seem to be the organization that a lot of young people want to belong to; we've got to bring that back. It's going to take a lot of hard work on the part of a lot of people—senior people who are in positions of authority and responsibility—who need to feel a greater sense of responsibility toward some of the young people.

I think the second biggest issue we face right now is where we're headed as far as the style of leadership we want to have from our senior people.

**Q:** *You have been described as a leader who talks straight from the shoulder and doesn't pull punches. What is your opinion of people who try to sidestep issues or attempt to put off people with sugar-coated answers?*

**A:** I don't think that kind of thing is going to get anywhere in today's society or with our people. We have people coming into the Navy today who are intelligent and aggressive in trying to get things they want. They want to hear the truth about the way things are. I think if we give them the truth and let them make their own decisions, we'll have a hell of a lot better quality individual with which to work. I've always felt that way. I need to have a clear picture before I can make accurate and good decisions; I expect that to be the same for people who work for me, too. So, when you try to sugar-coat something, all you're doing is postponing meeting up with the problem. That problem isn't going to go away.

**Q:** *How can this be accomplished throughout the Navy?*

**A:** We need the support of the people out there in the Fleet and the young sailors, all the way up and down the chain of command. I believe that when asked a question about any of these issues—the only way to address it is to

# An Interview with MCPON

tell them the way I see it and not try to tap dance around it. I can answer some things and some I can't; I don't want to mislead anybody. I feel a great responsibility to my job and that responsibility lies in large part in communications and how well I can do it. I learned a long time ago that the fastest way to get wrapped around the axle is to avoid or not answer questions directly. They'll always come back to haunt you. I think that my boss, Admiral Hayward, feels the same way. He shoots straight and tells it the way it is. I need to be an extension of that policy when I deal with my peers and that's what I've tried very hard to do.

**Q:** *In view of the manpower crunch, how do you assess the quality of recruits currently entering the Navy?*

**A:** There has been an awful lot of talk, contradictions and complaints about the quality of our recruits. I know there have been studies by DOD and others who are looking very hard at the guy we are getting into the Navy today. I can't talk to it from a big data base of going out and doing surveys on scores but I can talk to it from my own experience. I have traveled around and visited ships. I've gone to training commands and watched recruits in training—and after training—and I spent a lot of time just trying to talk to these guys and expose myself to how we're getting that much less quality than we got 25 years ago. A different kind of individual is coming into the Navy today—one who puts our leaders to a different kind of test. There have been raps about the reading levels and the basic skills of individuals. I think that's the result of the school system out there in a society that hasn't done a good job in the past several years. What society offers us is a guy who is a little less skilled in reading and writing and arithmetic. We take him in the Navy like we always did and we have to train him; we have to train him to fit into our organization and there's no other outfit like it out there. There's no one in civilian life who can train someone to be in the military. When a guy graduates from boot camp,

he's just about the same as we got 25 years ago. That's why I'd go back to the first comment I made about leadership. It really puts some of our Navy leaders to the test, especially our middle grade people who have to work with the recruits, be sensitive to them and work with them to bring them along. We do get our fair share of poor quality people but no more so than any other organization that's fighting for its share of the pie.

**Q:** *Married people sometimes say they can't make a go of it in the Navy—bring up a family on Navy pay, continual transfers, changing schools—all types of reasons are offered. Yet, you and Mrs. Crow had a large family during your service—is there some trick to this accomplishment?*

**A:** We have nine children—it was very hard. But I was very fortunate in that I supported a large family in a time when inflation wasn't even close to what it is today. We're lucky our children are now out on their own. But my wife and I—I won't say we had it good—we had some struggles during the course of our marriage in making ends meet—paying the bills. We never had the luxury of having a lot of things that we would have liked to have had as a young married couple in the Navy. But I am ex-



tremely lucky that I have a wife who was very conscious of how to run a budget and how to run a household. We lived within our means. I think it was just some careful budgeting. Now, such a thing is even more critical; you can only take a buck and stretch it so far. Our dollar in the military is over-stretched and even people who do a good job of budgeting are just marginally able to make it from payday to payday. That's why it's so important to get these other things taken care of—like our variable housing allowance, subsistence, the money to pay the rent and buy the food. The bottom line is that the basic needs of individuals have to be addressed. Even with good budgeting, the people who hate to get into financial trouble are in trouble—but I damned near have to be an E-10 to make ends meet in the Navy and that's pretty bad. I'd like to see a change.

**Q:** *Some months earlier you expressed concern regarding an erosion of leadership as it concerns the enlisted population. Does this situation still exist in the Navy?*

**A:** I think it has improved. I think people have gotten very conscious. I don't know that I can take any great amount of credit for that but I think there's a group of people out there who are just like me—the same vintage I am—who are master and senior chiefs in the Navy who have seen the same thing happening. I think we all got very conscious about this at about the same time frame. I think we have made some headway. I think we've gotten people to kind of sit back and reevaluate who they are and what their jobs are in the Navy. I do see some improvement but I also say we've still got a long way to go. It's not only a problem with our senior and master chiefs, but the same situation exists within the junior officer ranks—the LTJGs, LTs and LCDRs. Those people have got to address their abilities and their ways of providing role models that we need. I think the problem is in

**Right:** MCPON Crow talks to crewmen aboard one of the many ships he visits during his tours throughout the Navy.

both groups and I think we're looking at ours, the chief petty officers. We want to get things back in balance.

**Q:** *What do you think is the biggest complaint Navy women have today which could turn them against making the Navy a career?*

**A:** The women are experiencing some difficult times in the military. I think they've been subjected to far too much publicity. I think that women in the Navy are doing a good job wherever they're assigned. We've had problems of various kinds that come from a big increase in the numbers of women that

we have to deal with. Also, we've sort of broken new ground in the kinds of assignments that are open to women. These things don't come without problems; any organization that takes on that kind of concept goes through growing pains. It's very hard to put your finger on any one particular problem women in the Navy are having today, other than the constant battle of establishing their credibility in their ability to perform the jobs they're assigned. I'm very satisfied with the way the vast majority of women perform in the military. I would just hope that we won't continue this growing pain problem too much longer. Our leadership

and the people who are responsible for getting women into the working environment must realize that it's here to stay and it's not going to go away. Some adjustments are going to be made to their work centers, living areas and the like. I think it's time we got on with the program and do what we have to do.

**Q:** *Do you think the time will come when a woman will be named the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy?*

**A:** I think it's entirely possible. One of the problems we've had is the fact that women were first brought into the Navy in such rapid-fire succession that



# An Interview with MCPON

they have not really had the opportunity to develop their own senior petty officers, especially in senior and master chief groups. You can almost count them on one hand. One of the things we drastically need more of in the Navy today is women in authority positions, in leadership roles and in the senior petty officer ranks. That's starting to happen now. We're starting to see the advancement cycles producing more and more senior petty officers from the women's ranks. I see that as a fairly normal evolution—this business of a woman someday being chosen to be MCPON. I've had the occasion in my travels and talks, to meet and work with some very good women who are in good leadership roles and doing a hell of a job. So I think that that's going to be a normal evolution and they will be, at the same time, right up there in the running with the rest of our master chiefs

for nomination and selection to this job. I certainly hope so.

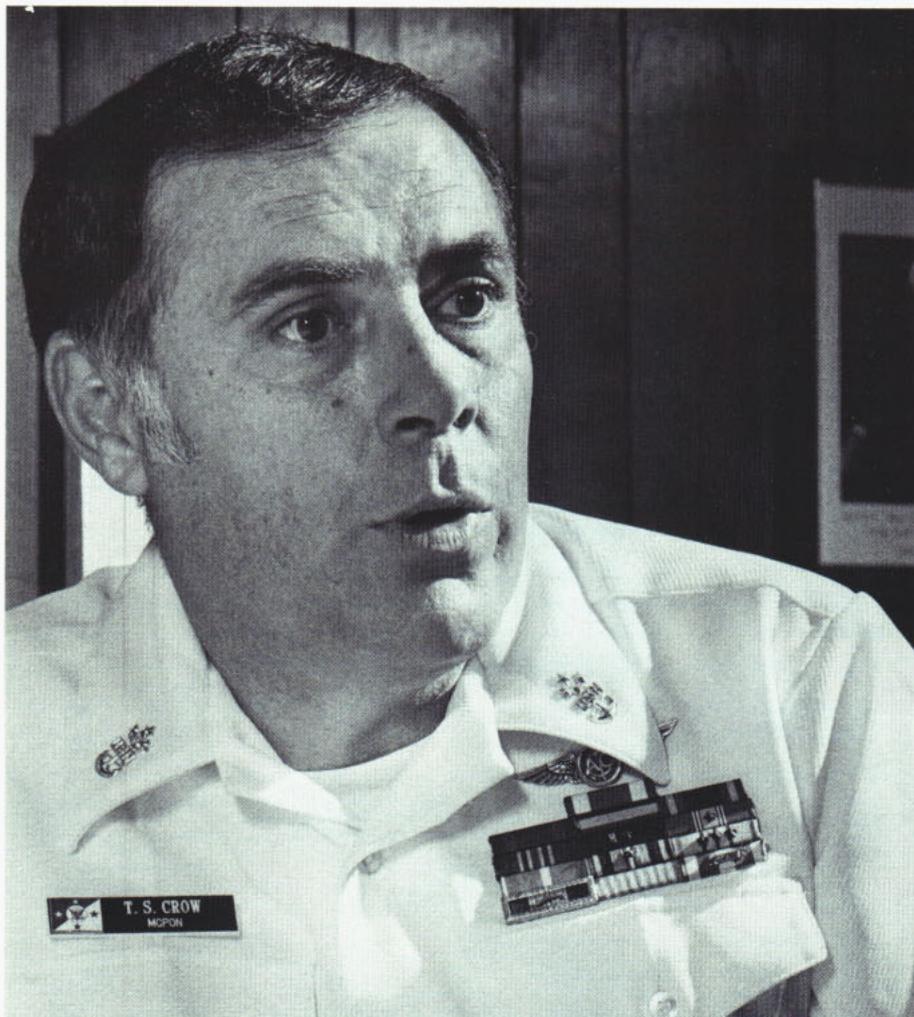
**Q:** *Have you and Mrs. Crow experienced some things for which you were not prepared after you took over as MCPON—things, perhaps, which may have taken you by surprise?*

**A:** I don't really think so. Part of that probably stems from having been exposed to this kind of a job at COMNAVAIRPAC out in San Diego where I was the senior enlisted advisor. I did a lot of the same kind of work. In fact, I've covered some of the same territory in my travels as the force master chief out there. I think I was fairly well prepared to come here and not get a lot of surprises. If I had any surprises, they were pleasant. I had my doubts about the support and the cooperation that I would receive here in the Navy Depart-

ment in trying to do this job. It isn't done without difficulties, sometimes. But I've been really pleasantly surprised and feel good about the cooperation and support I have. People here listen to what I have to say and they do what they have to do to try and correct perceived problems. That's been a surprise.

**Q:** *How did Mrs. Crow adjust to your job?*

**A:** My wife—having been a Navy wife and raising kids in the military—knew the problems that exist out there. She's been an ombudsman at another command, so coming here just kind of expanded her scope. She goes with me to commands and makes an effort to provide inputs by listening to wives groups and ombudsmen and looking at things on bases that have to do with the family—exchanges, commissaries, child-care centers, hospitals—whatever we think has some impact on the Navy family. She tries to look at them and give some kind of feedback as to how she sees it and what she hears from the wives. I think it's been a valuable and a good experience for both of us. She's come to the Navy Annex to get briefings from various sections of NMPC that deal with family issues. For example, she's had briefings on the housing situation and the Navy's long-term plans for building more military housing. She's had briefings on the compensation issues—where they stand, what the prospects are, what the Navy is supporting and pushing, so she's got some good background. She's had briefings about the Family Services Support Centers to keep up to speed on what's happening in that program—how fast it's growing—to give her some information about what kinds of services we are providing. When we go out on the road and she gets up in front of people—Navy wives, ombudsmen—she can talk from a firm foundation. It's strictly her perspective; nobody programs her. She's also very outspoken. When she gets back to Washington, she gets with those same people and de-briefs them on what she's heard. She feeds back information to me in the course of our trips and I include it



in my reports to the Chief of Naval Personnel and the CNO.

**Q:** *How—in your opinion—can junior enlisteds aid the Navy's retention efforts?*

**A:** We talk about leadership that's sensitive and fair, and we ask for involvement from our petty officers toward these young people—the first-termers. That's what it's going to take; an awful lot of sincere dedication on the part of a lot of petty officers. I see the need for us to work together to support the CNO because he's been out there in the lead fighting this battle of compensation. Our job is working with those things we can have some control over—the everyday working environment, the attitude that we have toward our people, a sincere concern for their welfare and well being, working hard to provide a working environment that can give a guy some job satisfaction. We also have to be involved with training, with motivating people and providing role models. That's what we all have to do.

**Q:** *Looking on the other side of the coin, what is your major complaint with today's Navy people—based on your experience as MCPON?*

**A:** I guess that if I were to try and pick out any one major complaint, it would be that I run into far too many senior people who—for some reason or another—have not been able to make up their minds as to whether they're professionals or whether they're just in a transient status. It really bothers me. I can look back over my own career and I can fairly easily pick out the point where I decided to make the Navy my career. I think it was pretty early. I did a first tour in the Navy and—once I decided to reenlist—I became career designated and I accepted it. That's my life now. I'm a professional Navyman and I have no desire to do anything else. I find far too many guys today who are wishy-washy about making that decision. They make it on the surface, sometimes, but they don't make it inside and

develop the commitment it takes. Once you make a decision to become a professional at whatever you're doing, you must work with the organization to make it better and not be hovering around the outside and taking pot shots at everything. It bothers me when I look around at my peer group and see a lot who—in spite of several years of serving—haven't been able to make up their minds as to a career. I think that's bad; it's something they need to reevaluate. You have to make a decision; that's another mark of leadership. We've got too much now that indicates indecision on people's parts.

**Q:** *In what time frame should a career decision be made?*

**A:** My personal opinion is that it should be sometime during an individual's second hitch. If a person has reenlisted after a first time, he may have done so for a multitude of reasons. A lot of things are involved in that first decision to reenlist. It could be the bonus alone. But I would certainly hope that at some point during that second enlistment, that individual would really evaluate where his life was headed and, before he's gone too far down the road, he would choose what it's going to be. And if he chooses the military as a way of life—chooses to become a professional Navy man or woman—that he or she sticks to it and supports the things that make this organization what it always has been traditionally.

**Q:** *People today seem to be concerned with creature comforts and what the service can do for them by way of compensation, recognition, and—especially—their rights and benefits. Shouldn't all, in turn, be concerned with the quality of their service in today's Navy?*

**A:** I think that's probably part of the problem. We have a society out there comprised of "what can you do for me" types of individuals. We have our fair share of that kind of person in the military—it's a continuous string of "what can you do for me?". It's the other side



of the coin they should look at. What can they do for the organization, what are they doing for the Navy, what are they doing to support their place in that chain of command? I think a lot of people could do a better job with more of a balance to it. We need more of the other right now.

**Q:** *Do you think that Americans are just too complacent about their liberty, their way of life?*

**A:** Yes, I think they are for the most part. I think there's a lot of assumptions made that the average American out there, even in spite of inflation, is probably living better than he or she did 20 years ago. The average American has a lot to be thankful for; still we have some people who are very poor and very much in need of a lot of things. At the same time, the average American, as I see him or her, is pretty well off, in spite of trying to make ends meet with inflation.

**Q:** *What can Navy people—officer and enlisted alike—do to help improve the public's appreciation of their efforts?*

**A:** It's a case of pride in service. Pride in service is really where the bottom line is—we have to visibly display who we are and what we are, besides what we stand for. Whenever an in-

# An Interview with MCPON

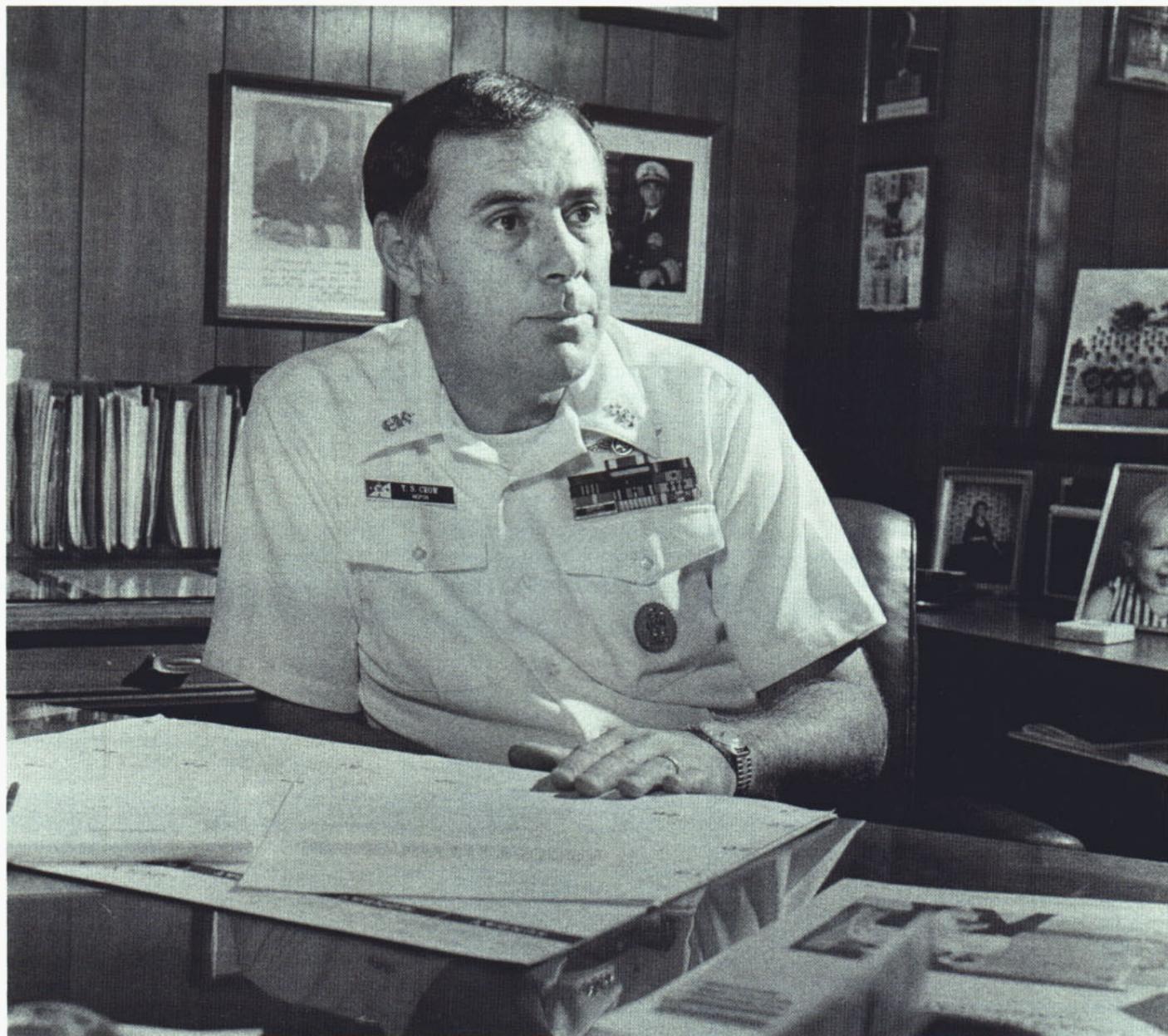
dividual goes out the gate in uniform, the way he wears that uniform, the way he carries himself, military bearing, behavior, standards of quality in appearance—those are the things that have always made us unique as opposed to being a civilian on the outside. We just have to do a better job. We have to get over the feeling our young people have who just want to go outside the gate and blend with what's outside the gate as opposed to blending with what's inside that gate. Navy people should stand tall and be proud—that's an image the American public will look upon with favor.

**Q:** *What do you and Mrs. Crow find most rewarding in your travels to Navy commands?*

**A:** To me, the most rewarding thing—and I know I speak for Mrs. Crow, too—is seeing the caliber of Navy families, the Navy people with whom we associate. They rotate from one place to another, yet they seem to have the ability to adjust to their environments very quickly. They're active in their communities. And they're a rare breed—Navy wives keep their families going in Charleston, Norfolk, San Diego and other places while their husbands are

on-station in the Indian Ocean, on extended deployments. Despite the loneliness, they cope with the everyday problems, make sacrifices, and ask for little in return. Wherever we go, we find people whose morale is high, despite the obstacles. It's very rewarding to know that people like that are a part of our Navy Family. This has given Mrs. Crow and me a tremendous amount of satisfaction—we know the high caliber people we have in today's Navy.

**Below:** *MCPON Crow has served in office since September 1979.*



# The Top Master Chiefs

## They're Billets – Not Merely Titles

Seaman John Q. Sailor is serving at Subic Bay, R.P. He's been in the Navy for about two years and is getting ready to sew on his third class crow. Seaman Sailor likes the Navy and takes his job and career seriously.

However, like many of his peers, he often feels the enlisted community is left out of the policy making aspect of the Navy. He wonders just where he fits in and if the enlisted people have any say as to what's going on.

Sound familiar?

Well, what Seaman Sailor and many of his peers don't realize is that the enlisted community does have representation at all levels of command from the smallest squadron right up to the Chief of Naval Operations.

It starts with the Command Master Chief (C M/C). From there, the enlisted chain of communications continues with Fleet or Force Master Chief (F M/C) until it reaches the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON).

The MCPON, Fleet/Force and Command M/Cs are the enlisted community's direct liaison with command, affording enlisted members the representation they need. At the same time, these master chiefs also represent the command to the enlisted community and keep the commanding officers and commanders aware of the feelings and ideas that exist within.

Before 1967, some commanding officers saw the need for an appointed senior enlisted adviser (SEA). SEAs



**Right:** MCPON Delbert Black  
January 1967-March 1971

# The Top Master Chiefs

advised their commanding officers on policy pertaining to enlisted personnel and helped enlisted personnel and their dependents straighten out problems within the particular command.

The biggest stumbling block with the SEA was that there was no structured Navywide program for senior enlisted advisers. It was more of a title than a job and usually was a collateral duty. Thus, many qualified senior enlisted personnel were discouraged from seeking this duty.

A major breakthrough came in 1967 when Master Chief Gunner's Mate Delbert Black was selected the first Senior Enlisted Adviser of the Navy. Black's title was soon changed to Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON).

Master Chief Black saw a need for better enlisted representation and took steps to establish the Chief of Naval Operations Chief Petty Officer Advisory Board. It not only gave the enlisted community the representation it wanted but also demonstrated the CNO's recognition of senior enlisted personnel and the value of their knowledge and judgment to the Navy.

With the development of the CNO CPO Advisory board, lines of communication were established among the senior enlisted. The board members (senior enlisted advisers from Navy commands worldwide) soon discovered that many of the feelings and problems experienced at a specific command weren't indigenous to that command but were the same as those experienced Navywide.

A more concrete organization was set up in 1971 at the suggestion of the CNO CPO board, then chaired by MCPON John D. Whittet, and the idea of a Master Chief Petty Officer of the Fleet/Force (MCPOF) and a Master Chief Petty Officer of the Command (MCPOC) became a reality. It was an organized system of enlisted representation, in which MCPOFs and MCPOCs were full-time duties. This represented a dramatic change in the attitudes of the Navy toward enlisted personnel at all levels of command.

The MCPOF/MCPOC program



*MCPON John D. Whittet  
April 1971-September 1975*

underwent constant revision throughout Master Chief Whittet's tour and continued into Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy Bob Walker's tour. The titles were changed to their present form (fleet/force/command master chief) and a greater emphasis was placed on the functions of the senior enlisted. Consistent with this, the CNO CPO Advisory Board was expanded and the name changed to the CNO MCPO Advisory Panel.

During the tour of the current MCPON, Thomas S. Crow, a new fleet master chief billet and two more force master chief billets were added. Now, every enlisted man and woman in the Navy is represented by a force master chief who reports to a fleet master chief.

Contrary to what some sailors think, the fleet/force and command master chiefs don't offer an alternative to the chain of command. In fact, they are an

important step in the chain. They strengthen the chain of command by acting as the primary liaison between the individual and the chain of command.

Enlisted personnel make up the majority of the Navy's population. Thus, commanders rely heavily upon the advice given by FM/Cs and CM/Cs when establishing policy or working on problems dealing specifically with enlisted members. Their advice is invaluable to all commanders.

The FM/Cs and CM/Cs exist in order to keep the command aware of existing or potential situations and practices which affect the welfare, morale, job satisfaction, and utilization of the Navy's enlisted men and women.

OPNAV instruction 5400.37B recom-

mends that additional duties of the master chiefs include attending staff meetings, assisting in the formulation and change of policies, strengthening leadership, and representing the command at military and civilian functions. In order to carry out these responsibilities a master chief is either a member of, or functions in close coordination with, the Command Retention Team, the Career Counselor, the Quality Control Retention Board, the Awards Board, the Human Relations Council, the Habitability Board, the Commissary, Navy Exchange, and BEQ Advisory Board, the Humanitarian Reassignment Screening Board, the Navy Wives Clubs, and the Ombudsman Program.

The F M/C and C M/C also work with enlisted personnel on a person-to-person basis. They counsel, advise, and render assistance where possible to enlisted individuals and their dependents, either through the regular chain of command on military matters, or for personal problems through letter, phone call, or personal interview.

Through the F M/Cs and C M/Cs, the enlisted community and command partake in a mutual exchange of feelings, attitudes, and ideas to further a better understanding of each other and to boost morale.

What the master chiefs learn at their specific commands doesn't just stay there. Semi-annually, the five fleet master chiefs meet in Washington, D.C. with the MCPON and annually all fleet and force master chiefs get together for the CNO Master Chief Petty Officer Advisory Panel. From this panel have come such recommendations as a revision of the enlisted evaluation system, a return to jumper-style uniforms, and improved habitability for shipboard personnel.

Although some believe fleet, force and command master chief are simply titles given to senior E-9s at particular levels of command, they are not merely titles. They're billets, and they're certainly not taken lightly. Selection is based on demonstrated leadership abilities, general experience with the fleet, and knowledge of and experience with the mission of the area or type

command involved. In most cases, selection is made from eligible master chiefs from within the specific area.

In the case of a command master chief, the billet is taken from one of the E-9 billets on board and redesignated. Prior to recent changes, many commands established command master chief billets at the expense of technical expertise. The new program eventually will add C M/C billets and the specifically designated person to the command structure of all surface ships and stations with 250 or more authorized enlisted billets.

Commands not having separate billets for command master chiefs may have a command master chief, senior chief, or chief assigned by the commanding officer on a collateral duty basis.

As in the case of fleet or force master chiefs, the command master chief must have demonstrated leadership abilities and a good general knowledge of the type of activities that take place at the prospective command.

Although not outlined by instruction, one requirement for any of these jobs is the ability to recognize trends of thought. Finding the solution for a problem at a particular base is good, but if the problem is Navywide, it may not be as simple as the individual perceives. C M/Cs and F M/Cs must be able to see this in order to recommend the actions that must be taken.

The fleet/force and command master chiefs are an extremely important link in the chain of command. They provide the Navy's enlisted men and women the representation and assistance with command that they need. However, their effectiveness can only be heightened through recognition and support from enlisted members. There is no longer a reason to feel like Seaman Sailor because, through these senior enlisted personnel, everyone has a voice with the Navy's highest echelons.

*By JO1 Mark S. Malinowski*

*MCPON Robert J. Walker  
September 1975-September 1979*



# San Jose

## Shows the way

Serving an initial hitch in the Navy doesn't necessarily give a sailor the chance to learn *everything* about his or her career. Recruit training, "A" schools, working on the job and mastering shipboard life all demand time and attention. First-termers stay pretty well occupied.

Then there comes the time when that first hitch is drawing to a close—a decision has to be made about staying in or getting out. The decision is one that can be made only by the Navy person;

it's a decision that must be based on facts, with all the available up-to-date information.

Aboard the combat stores ship USS *San Jose* (AFS 7), Commanding Officer Captain Jerome L. Johnson and his career counselors—Senior Chief Petty Officer John T. Sparks and Petty Officer Second Class Roger Edison—decided to give crew members the necessary information. *San Jose's* team wanted to give them an edge in personal decision-making and wanted to do it in a way

that couldn't leave room for misinformation.

And so, they formulated a plan. They called their event Career Information Day (CID); it was based on a program

**Below:** PO2 Roger Edison (center), Command Career Counselor aboard *San Jose* tells crew members about the benefits that go along with advancement. **Upper right:** Seven is not just a number; for *San Jose*, it means "magnificent." **Lower right:** Master Chief Marion Sowell, Navy Recruiting District San Francisco, lent his expertise to Career Information Day.



instituted by *San Jose's* next senior command, Service Group One.

"The idea was not just to follow basic career information instructions and hang in there with about 40 percent first-term reenlistments; we had to do better," said Johnson. "Retention is the number one priority on our ship. For that reason, we wanted the crew to meet specialists who would give direct answers to searching questions about career opportunities."

The big day was May 23. Representatives from Navy commands throughout the San Francisco Bay area came aboard *San Jose*. They represented Navy Campus, aviation and submarine careerists, Navy Recruiting District San Francisco, the diving school, the reserve center and the United Service Organization—to list a few. At a central location aboard ship, they exhibited their "wares" and offered information. Crew members had been told in advance that it would be their day—now they could get answers on the spot.

During presentations, recruiting was played down; pressure or coercion was out. Only factual information was put forward on what the Navy has to offer and there was plenty of room left open to consider why a decision to stay in could possibly outweigh a decision to get out.

Johnson felt it is only natural for young sailors to ask: What's in it for me? How do I qualify? How can the Navy help me achieve job satisfaction?

"And that's only the start of it," he said. "After that, it's up to the ship—our counselors and, especially, our specialists—to give the facts and keep interest at a peak. You have to let sailors know their goals are attainable. Then they can ask other questions—that way, things just keep mushrooming."

"It's rather easy to look a guy in the eye and tell him about the Navy. But it's hard to argue with a man who says that he can earn \$15 an hour outside doing the same thing he does in the Navy," said the captain. "With this in mind, we don't create arguments; we don't attempt to change anyone's mind."

"The visiting team did exactly what was needed to create interest and main-

tain credibility. They pulled no punches and answered questions honestly and factually," he said.

When the visiting career information specialists left *San Jose*, they left behind some important ingredients for suc-

cessful retention—motivation, determination and Navy sailors who know what their reenlistment options are.

—By JO1 Bill W. Love  
and JO2 Roger Gassiot  
—Photos by PH2 L.J. Berry





## In Search of Killer Mines

No naval weapon in history ever caused such fear and horror as did the deadly sea mine. Even rumors or suspicions of a nearby minefield sent cold chills racing up and down the spines of the most fearless. Lurking silently beneath the sea—like poisonous serpents waiting to attack unsuspecting prey—explosive sea mines destroyed some 1,100 Allied ships during World War II. The number of enemy vessels sunk or damaged by sea mines during that war approached 2,000.

Past lessons clearly show that a few hundred lethal mines dropped in key harbors or sea passages will disrupt traffic and create havoc for even the most formidable navies. Therefore, maritime nations today continue to search for more effective countermeasures and tactics to use against the deadly sea mine.

On the Gulf of Mexico near Panama City, Florida, engineers and scientists at the Naval Coastal Systems Center (NCSC)—working jointly with NATO and other allies—are developing some highly-advanced minesweeping technology. NCSC is the Navy's foremost mine warfare research facility.

"Mines of the future will be much 'smarter,'" said physicist Jerry Rosborough of the center's Undersea Countermeasures Department. One of Rosborough's jobs is that of NATO and

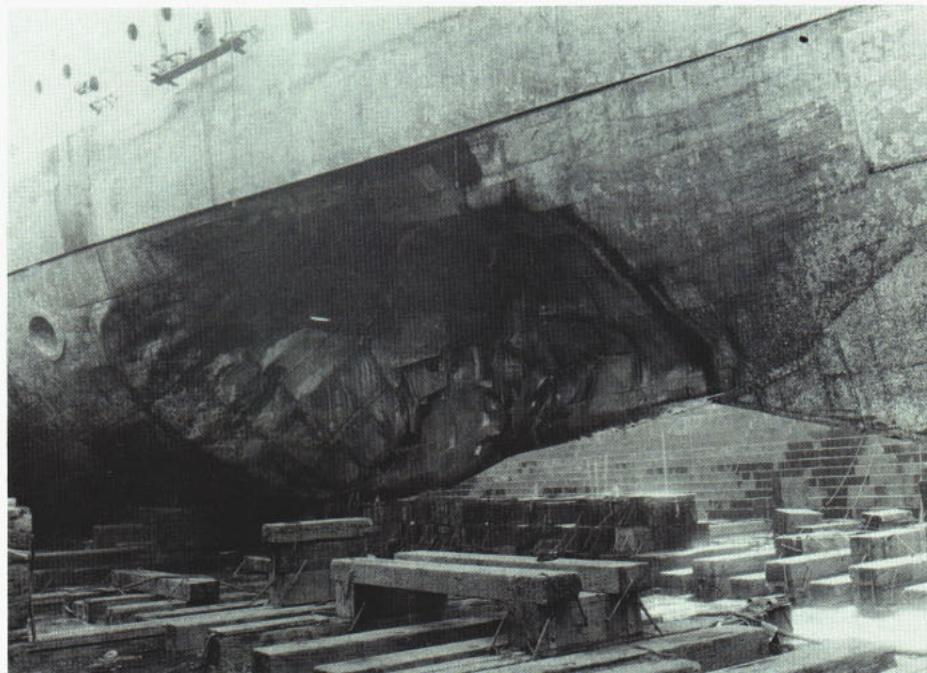
foreign programs coordinator of joint research and development (R&D) for new mine defense technology. "To counter any threat from a hostile minefield," said Rosborough, "we're working together with several countries to develop some pretty smart countermeasures systems."

Lieutenant Commander Edward W. Dyer, assistant department head of NCSC's Air Department—the unit tasked with the testing and evaluation (T&E) of airborne-deployed systems—believes that whatever mine warfare technology nations come up with, "you can be sure it'll be pretty sophisticated."

Working with some of the minesweeping systems already in the fleet are

Helicopter Mine Countermeasures squadrons HM-12, HM-14 and HM-16. Together, these three fleet squadrons represent the Navy's newest, fastest, most mobile defense against mine warfare. They fly the RH-53D *Sea Stallion* helicopter, a Navy aircraft dedicated to Airborne Mine Countermeasures (AMCM). (In 1974, RH-53D minesweeping helicopters helped clear the Suez Canal of mines which had kept it closed since 1967.)

Deployable in C-5 air transports, mine countermeasures squadrons can cross continents and arrive in the vicinity of mined waters long before minesweeping ships can. With their portable sweep gear in tow, they sweep shallow and



**Left:** The Germans laid hundreds of mines like this one during World War II. **Right:** A 1918 photo of USS Minnesota (BB 22) in drydock after striking a mine.

narrow waters where ships can't sweep.

Three AMCM minesweeping devices already approved for fleet use are the MK-103, MK-104 and MK-105.

The MK-103 mechanical minesweeping device sweeps against submerged contact mines—the familiar cabled mines portrayed vividly in Hollywood war movies. Explosive cutters attached to a “V”-shaped sweep gear cut a mine's mooring cables, allowing it to float to the surface where it can then be destroyed by 50-caliber machine-gun fire or by other means.

The MK-104 sweeps against acoustic influence mines. By carefully following a predetermined sweep path over the minefield, pilot, crew and aircraft can avoid injury and damage from exploding mines.

The MK-105 sled sweeps magnetic influence mines (magnetic influence mines, like acoustic influence mines, usually rest on the sea bottom). The sled consists of a gas turbine-powered generator mounted on a hydrofoil platform.

Before new airborne minesweeping hardware can be cleared for fleet use, however, it must first pass the T&E phase. For this job, the Navy has gathered at NCSC's Air Department some of the fleet's most experienced AMCM people. The unit is made up of six Navy pilots, 14 crewmen and three RH-53Ds.

“We're testing some very special equipment,” said Dyer, “not only minesweeping devices but the Navy's first generation of helicopter-towed mine-hunting systems. We're working to give the fleet the tactics and hardware to handle any mine threat they might encounter.”

“The HM squadrons in the fleet are the users of the minesweeping gear that we test,” said Chief Aviation Electrician's Mate Wayne A. Lienhart. “When we get through testing a new piece of sweep gear, the bugs are out. When it leaves here, it goes to one of the HM squadrons; for an Op Eval (operational evaluation). It's kind of a shakedown cruise for the squadron—the people, not the gear. We've already tested the gear, but they've

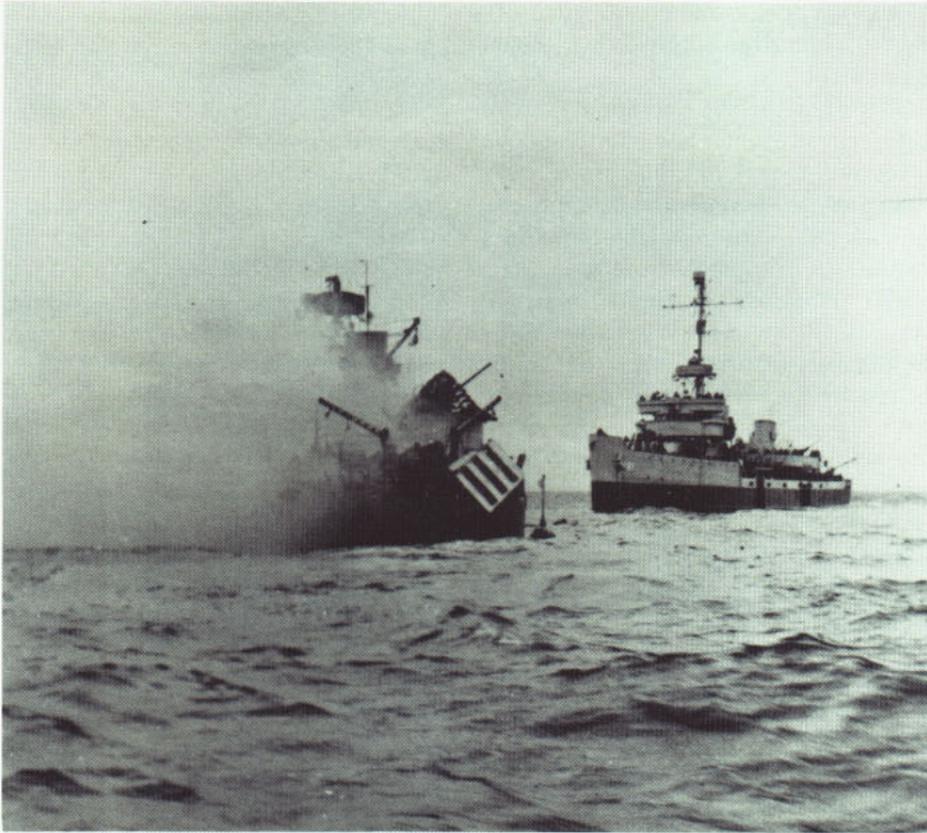
got to learn how to use it.”

Working with the towing minesweeping gear—especially during the T&E phase—is not a simple matter. While some of the sweep gear is rather small, like the MK-104, which looks like a two-and-a-half foot, 40-pound fishing lure, other systems are monstrous—thousands of feet of cable, chain, tow wire and dozens of connecting parts.

Crewmen must stow reels of cable, hydraulic winches, floats, cutters and other parts in a precise arrangement on racks inside the fuselage of the helicopter. Loading all the equipment, streaming it out during an exercise and then hauling it back during recovery requires expert handling. One wrong move could foul and damage a piece of gear, or even entangle and throw a crewman overboard.

“Like any research activity, our kind of work can be extremely dangerous,” said Lieutenant Robert D. Colenda, a pilot and safety officer of the Air Department. “But we're very safety conscious; safety is above and beyond everything.





In fact, we have a 13-year accident-free safety record. That's a good score for this kind of work," he said.

Because every pilot and crewman has had at least one or two tours with airborne minesweeping in the fleet, safety procedures are ingrained; nothing is taken for granted. Colenda said the men make a good team, the most professional and dedicated he's ever worked with.

Professionals don't take unnecessary chances. Before attempting the first full-scale deployment of new sweep gear, crewmen practice setting up the gear, loading, unloading and then loading it again, each time in the prescribed arrangement. They practice with dummy sweep vehicles to ensure that no major mistakes or problems arise when they take the real hardware out to Gulf waters

**Opposite page:** *USS Tucker (DD 374) was sunk after hitting a mine in 1942. Left: USS Tide (AM 125) sinks after hitting a mine in 1944; two surface craft stand by. Bottom: An RH-53D helo tows the Mk-105 magnetic minesweeping system in the Gulf of Mexico.*



over NCSC's test minefield.

The normal aircrew complement is seven—two pilots and five aircrewmembers. During cold weather operations with the fleet, crewmen wear full survival gear. Hands often become numb during streaming and recovering of gear. It's physically hard work and requires a lot of training.

The command's NATOPS (naval aviation training operations procedures standardization) instructor, Aviation Electrician's Mate First Class Lester E. Moore, is the crewman who checks the others to ensure standardized procedures are being used on mine-sweeping missions. "Every crewman here is qualified as a first crewman," Moore said. "We don't have trainees.

**Upper right:** AE1 Lester Moore (left) and AEC Wayne Lienhart inspect the tow hook system before launch. **Below:** The Naval Coastal Systems Center at Panama City, Fla. **Lower right:** Aircrewmembers launch an AQS-14 mine-hunting system.

Every man may take charge of a mine-sweeping operation and they're all qualified to operate the onboard navigational equipment."

During a towing operation, Moore said, "the crewmen become the pilot's 'eyes' in the back of the aircraft."

In a sweep exercise, the pilot must be quickly alerted to the slightest changes in altitude, drift, and wire tension that's under thousands of pounds of stress. Also, the flight pattern over a live minefield must be followed to the letter, otherwise the towed sweep device may set off a mine prematurely and cause the helo to become engulfed in a mass of surging water.

"Our crewmen requalify at least once a year," said Moore. "That's part of my job as NATOPS evaluator. I give the tests."

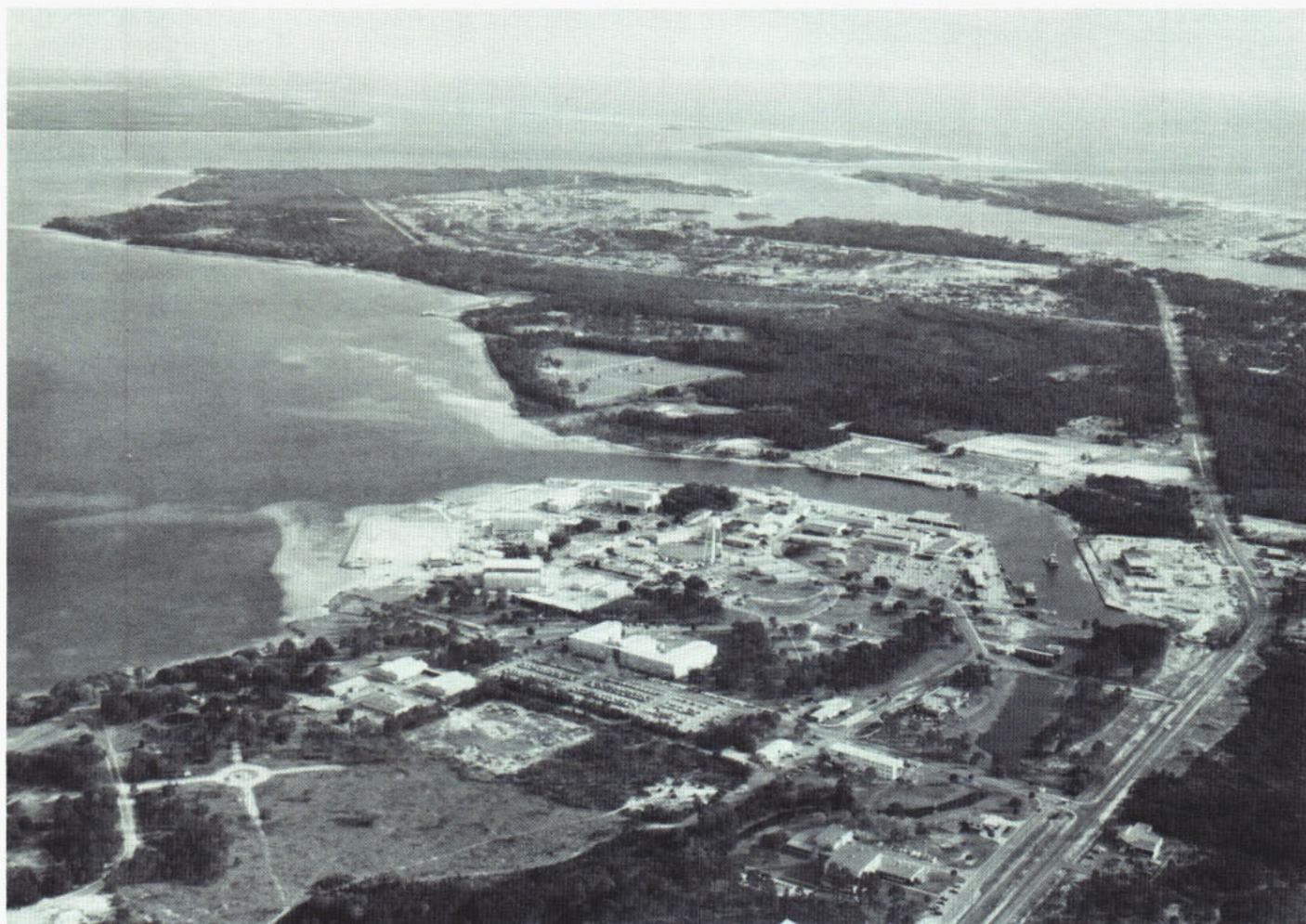
Passing oral and written examinations—especially the first time around—requires a lot of study. Crewmen must

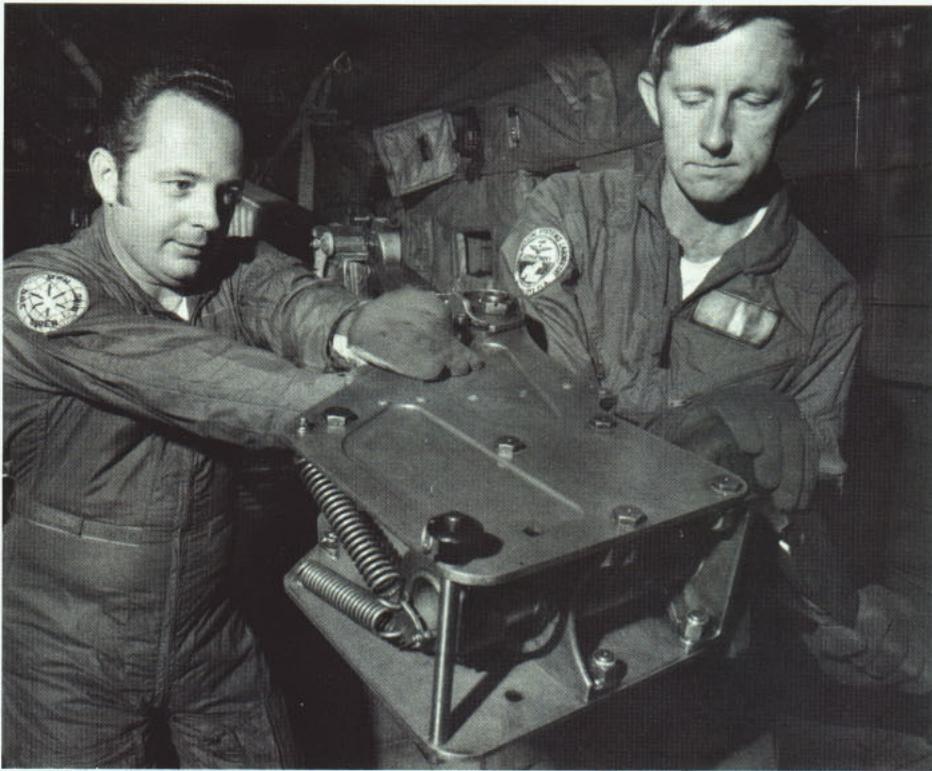
keep eyes and ears open at all times because there's as much hands-on training as there is technical reading to be done.

"Besides, if there's a new piece of gear that's never been tested before," said Aviation Machinist's Mate Second Class A.W. Robinson, "we've got to start all over. Everything about it might be new—so, it's good that we've all got some experience. I've been working with airborne sweep gear for five years and I'm one of the youngest guys here," Robinson said.

The time involved for practice sessions and for the actual in-water tests of sweep gear explains why the T&E phase for new gear takes months of work. But when the T&E is complete, the hardware is then ready for the Op Eval—if all goes well for the squadrons during the shakedown phase, a new and better minesweeping system joins the fleet.

The potential of sea mines to destroy





surface ships and submarines, to blockade major shipping lanes, or to be used defensively to protect a harbor or anchorage against naval attack has only begun to be fully explored.

Without effective countermeasures, and without the speed, mobility and effectiveness of Airborne Mine Countermeasures, that most sinister of all mines — the “unsweepable” mine — may someday render a powerful fleet impotent, unable to move freely without the risk of severe casualties.

That is why the work being done at NCSC is so important. Without it, deadly sea mines may again spread fear and horror.

—Story by JO2 Steve Bellow



# Glistening Pride

## The Blue Angels Maintenance Crew

On any weekend between mid-March and mid-November, thousands of people watch in awe and excitement as six glistening A-4F *Skyhawk* jets streak through the sky in a demonstration of aerial artistry.

Widely known as the Blue Angels, the pilots of these aircraft exemplify the best of naval aviation. Through aerial performances, spectators witness the professionalism employed by the Navy and Marine Corps and view first hand the quality of equipment that their tax dollars buy.

Totally devoted to the pursuit of perfection in flight, the Blue Angels are an example of what dedicated practice and total concentration can achieve in a flying environment that has little margin for error.

These naval aviators are but a small part of what is officially designated the United States Navy Flight Demonstration Squadron, home based at NAS Pensacola, Fla. Behind them stands a team of 70 professional and dedicated maintenance and support technicians that are truly the Navy's finest. Without this maintenance element, the Blue Angels aerial performance just could not exist.

Commander Denny Wisely, commanding officer of the Blue Angels and pilot of the number one aircraft, explained, "Our pilots are literally form-fitted to one aircraft for the entire show season. When we take the show on the road we have six aircraft that have to be "up" (ready) for every flight. We therefore demand 100 percent aircraft availability all the time.

"But they don't just keep these aircraft in good flying condition. Our maintenance technicians keep them in



perfect condition." When one considers that there is only 36 inches of airspace separating the wingtip of one plane from one canopy of another in a Blue Angels formation, the last thing a pilot needs to have on his mind is the mechanical condition of his aircraft.

The same holds true with the two solo pilots who perform opposing maneuvers. At 500 miles per hour, only an 18th of a second separates their aircraft from the ground. Closing on each other at speeds in excess of 1,000 miles per hour, a two-second error in timing can mean displacing their crossing as much as the combined length of nine football fields from the intended center point.

In this environment, the Blues have built into each maneuver a small margin for personal error. But there are no safety margins set for mechanical failure. There exists an absolute trust between pilot and enlisted technician that is backed up by professional excellence second to none. In the 34 years that the Blues have graced the sky with their aerial skill, not one show has been cancelled because of maintenance problems.

The success of this maintenance effort is the result of a total team effort. As with any successful unit, it is the individuals who make it all happen; in this squadron, the individuals are truly special.

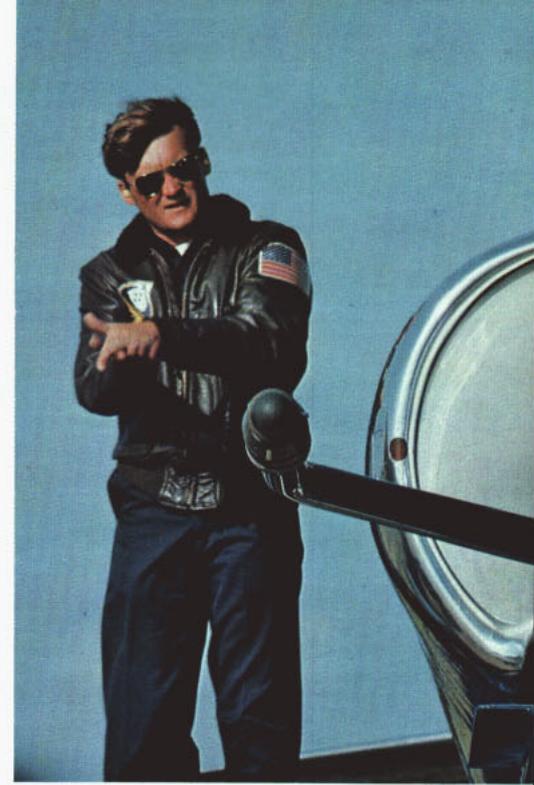
"This crew is unique because of the caliber of people we have," explained Wisely. "In a fleet squadron, you probably have five or six individuals who make your maintenance effort run. The rest are still in a learning and work process under the direction of those top performers. But in this organization our whole maintenance department is filled with top caliber people.

"When I was a fleet CO, I spent the majority of my time scrutinizing the maintenance effort to ensure we were flying safe airplanes. But here, the bulk of my time is taken up with flying and working closely with the other guys who fly the blue jets. It works only because I've got the cream of the crop in the enlisted ranks from across the fleet doing our maintenance. It's a professional effort on which we all rely."

Like the pilots, the maintenance technicians and support personnel are hand-picked volunteers. Superb screening insures that the Blue Angels maintenance tradition is continuous.

Master Chief Aviation Machinist's Mate "Packy" Morgan, maintenance chief for the Blues, explained why. "Our job is to perform top quality, unquestionable maintenance in an environment that can best be compared to aircraft carrier flight operations. It's hectic to say the least. The difference is that we operate this way day in and day out. It takes a special kind of person to be able to handle this kind of continuous pressure.





*Each morning finds members of the Blue Angels' maintenance team performing thorough checks on all aircraft systems to ensure readiness.*



“The most important thing we look for in an applicant is his ability to accept working as a member of a team. Most people think we look only for someone who has a lot of experience. Experience can help, but we can still teach a guy everything he needs to know if he’s motivated professionally. We look for someone who is willing to cross train and get involved in the total effort.

“Moral character also is important. We’re continually in the public eye. It’s essential that we project a positive image of the Navy. Our maintenance effort doesn’t allow us time to be concerned with discipline problems anyway.”



ALL HANDS



In this continuing search for technicians, the Blues focus primarily on assertive first and second class petty officers looking for a challenge and the opportunity to work side by side with others who have the same kind of dedication.

A tour with the Blue Angels offers opportunity, challenge and travel. For a mid-career sailor, this seems to be just the kind of action he would be looking for.

**"I applied to the team for selfish reasons,"** said Aviation Structural Mechanic First Class B.K. Scofield. "I wanted to see what it was like being with the best of a group of rates. I also wanted the opportunity to go to neutral duty between my sea and shore billets.

"The additional attraction of being able to travel without long family separations was also good. I may not get to spend every weekend at home, but it's not like going to sea for a six-month deployment."

Aviation Support Equipment Technician First Class Steve Farris really enjoys the community relations aspect of the Blues' mission. "Meeting people and showing them what the Navy is all about has been exciting. I always volunteer to go with the pilots when they visit schools and hospitals. One of the things that really makes this job something extra is sharing some of your time with these children."



Morgan's reasons also were selfish. "With 21 years behind me, I had been around the world and was beginning to run out of challenges. Retirement was becoming a major consideration. Then I saw the Blues. A short talk with the maintenance officer got me thinking that maybe this is what I needed. It didn't take long to decide not to throw in the towel."

In recent years however, it has become increasingly difficult to attract enough qualified individuals to the team.

"It boils down to the same kind of problems that the fleet has—pay and

benefits," Wisely said. "It really hurts when the civilian community is attracting the same individuals we are seeking."

The basic procedures for applying to the Blue Angels are simple. A volunteer submits a request through his commanding officer to the Blues. The applicant's record is carefully screened and if all looks good, an interview is arranged. This meeting, usually between a shop supervisor, the maintenance chief and, perhaps, the maintenance officer is set up somewhere along the show schedule if feasible. This affords the Blues the opportunity to interview the



applicant firsthand. It also gives them a chance to present their side of the team's story.

"We try to tell them about the whole picture, both the good and the not so good," Morgan explained. "Painting somebody a rosy picture would only lead to problems for both of us."

But even with a complete indoctrination, it isn't until a prospective crew member reports to Pensacola that he can really begin to understand this concept.

The first few weeks on board can be shocking. There are a lot of things to grasp all at once.



"For the first month a new guy will walk around all bug-eyed, his mouth wide open—you can read his mind—but this is something we expect. We always allow a guy a month or two to break into the team's way of doing things," the maintenance chief said.

"I was well briefed before taking over as maintenance officer," Lieutenant Commander Ben Woods said. "But even then it was still quite a shock. The best advice I got was to sit back and watch. In every case I found that the procedures these guys use are good. Once in a while I find something that can be improved, but it isn't without first taking a good

hard look. Teamwork is what it is all about."

Adapting to this team concept is something that takes time. For a newcomer who was in all likelihood a stand-out and in many cases a supervisor at his last command, it's hard to understand that he is no longer elite and is now just one of the troops.

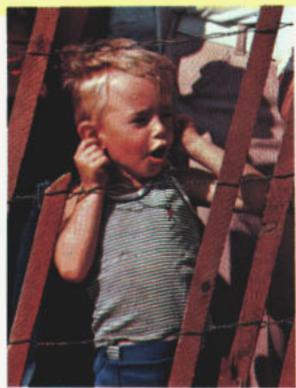
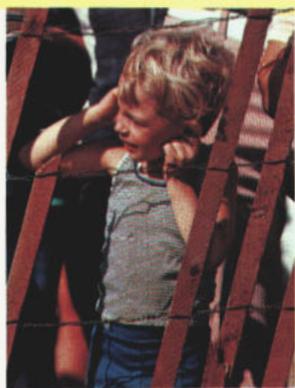
"You're expected to give whatever it takes to get the job done," Chief Aviation Electrician's Mate "Red" Larson explained. "The bottom line is to get it done as fast as professionally possible. This gets to be a bit tough sometimes for a new guy when it comes time to do jobs like red ragging airplanes."

"Red ragging" is the Blue Angels terminology given to the process of spit polishing the blue jets, something every crew member becomes well acquainted with. It's an exercise in making an airplane a reflection of Blue Angels pride.



*As show time arrives, thousands of spectators watch as the Blue Angels maintenance team assists pilots into aircraft and then gets the six blue Skyhawk jets on their way.*





"Red ragging is something that nobody ever looks forward to, but it's just another job that has to be done and everybody does it," Scofield said.

The whole Blue Angels program relies on teamwork. The pilots rely on it in their flying and the technicians rely on it to accomplish the maintenance. The relationship between the pilots and the technicians depends on it, too.

"When a pilot says there is a discrepancy on an airplane, whether we can duplicate it or not," Woods explained, "we are trusting that there is one and we will fix it.

"The opposite holds true. When we

say something is fixed, the pilots never question us."

Blue Angel number two, the Marine Corps representative on the team, Major Fred Stankovich, expanded on this. "It's really amazing how you get to know every sound in your airplane when you fly the same one day in and day out. You get to know it like you know your car. Even a slight unfamiliar noise becomes noticeable. In the fleet where there are 18 pilots to about 12 airplanes in a squadron, this personal relationship with your aircraft doesn't occur. Here it makes for some interesting maintenance gripes.

"Try to imagine what it's like trying to explain to a technician that your airplane doesn't sound right. You have to work together trying to pinpoint just how it sounds different and where it may be coming from. These guys work like good doctors, getting you to describe the symptoms until they can diagnose the problem. We've been able



*The ohs and ahs of the crowd accompany the performance of the six Blue Angels as they display precision aerial maneuvers high overhead. The maintenance team then assists in the recovery after the air show.*



The commanding officer is proud of the effort that goes into this requirement. "What amazes me most about this outfit is the speed and proficiency with which our guys perform maintenance on the blue jets. I just say I have a gripe and 'pow,' there's a crew tearing into it."

This also took some getting used to for the maintenance chief. "We don't have a big board full of gripes waiting to get done. It's not odd to find that a pilot will debrief the trouble shooters, but before the paper work can be worked up, the gripe will be fixed and the technicians will be waiting to sign off the gripe."

With this kind of maintenance effort,

**cross training becomes essential.** A team of only 22 technicians departs each week to give support at a particular show site. This small rotating crew is made up of a cross section of rates needed to maintain the Blue Angels maintenance effort. In order to get the job done, everybody has to know something about everybody else's job.

"In the fleet you sometimes have to push shops into helping one another," Woods said. "For the most part a guy will do his job, and the next guy will do his. But here, when we're on the road as a small group, it's essential that everybody helps each other. Cross training makes it easier."

And another thing, you won't find

to locate minor discrepancies before they develop into major problems. I find that unique."

Also unique to the Blues is the fact that every maintenance gripe is a "down" gripe—in other words, the airplane doesn't fly until it is fixed, no matter how minor the problem. An "up" gripe is unheard of around the Blues.

*When the show ends, work for the maintenance crew begins. The planes are polished and all gripes are repaired before the crew heads for home on the Blue Angels' C-130 transport "Fat Albert."*



many squadrons with storekeepers or parachute riggers as crew chiefs. "I always wanted to be more involved around airplanes, but a parachute rigger just doesn't get that opportunity," Aircrew Survival Equipmentman Second Class Randy Martel said. When he joined the Blues two seasons ago that opportunity was finally in his grasp. Martel studied hard, completed all the necessary courses and became a crew chief.

"We have a draftsman, not even an aviation rate, who's out there helping around the airplanes. And he knows what he's doing," Woods said.

"It really shows up when you have one of those all-night engine changes," Morgan said. The first time I heard that I cringed and thought this just can't be done. But to see it happen is a joy. You really get an appreciation for the kind of talent you have here."

In the past two years, four enlisted technicians have been picked up for officer programs and in spite of the pressure, the squadron still performs above average in advancement examinations. "By having a better understanding of the overall process, as these guys get with cross training, you become more proficient at your own speciality," Woods explained.

Dale Specht, the civilian McDonnell Douglas Technical Representative permanently assigned to the squadron, also offers an educational experience for the team. "Dale probably knows more about the A-4 *Skyhawk* than anybody I've ever known," Woods said. "You can pick up a bolt on the hangerdeck and he can tell you how many there are in the plane and where they are located."

The team is respected just as much by Specht. "Here is a situation where I can see a definite goal being achieved. The amount of work that this small group gets done will equal, and most times surpass, that of any good-sized squadron."

Gearing up for the long, rigorous show season is a yearly event. The Blue Angels experience isn't something that just happens. There is an initial training cycle that must be completed before the sea-

son's first performance can take place. To the Blues, this period is known as Winter Training.

In the remote desert of El Centro, Calif., the Blue Angels fly twice a day, seven days a week, from early January to the end of March. It is here that the several new pilots work with veterans to hone professional skills to Blue Angels standards. It is also at this time that the new crew members are worked into the maintenance program and become part of the team.

As the days go by, the formation flying gets tighter and tighter. The crew begins to click. Then about the time of the first practice airshow, the process becomes complete. Pride begins to burst from each individual of this cohesive unit. They are now ready to hit the road.

"This is what it's all about," Farris explained. "This is where all our efforts are put to the test. Taking Naval Aviation right to the people. It's a thrill I find hard to describe."

Loaded down with the road crew, baggage, tool boxes and a stock of spare parts, the Blue Angels Marine Corps C-130 transport, affectionately known as "Fat Albert," takes to the skies along with the blue jets so that people in places like Cleveland, Ohio; Seattle, Wash.; Philadelphia, Pa; Fort Collins, Col. and Scotts Bluff, Neb., can experience the thrill of a Blue Angels performance.

"It takes a lot of motivation, high morale and spirit to keep things running smoothly throughout the whole show season," Wisely said. "Probably one of the team's biggest faults is that we become so professionally oriented, we get accustomed to the above average performance. These guys never get all the credit they deserve, but their efforts never go unnoticed either."

Lieutenant Commander Jack Ekl, Blue Angel number six, expanded on this. "Our technicians are the most neglected people on the team. In the beginning you're amazed at how efficiently and quickly they perform; you get used to it. Then every once in a while they catch you off guard with one of their dazzling all night performances,

like changing an engine and having it ready for a morning test hop. I just sit back in awe."

"In keeping up with the pace we have to maintain, we really exercise the Navy's adage of taking care of our own," Larson said. "Working under stress situations as we often do, we have to keep each other going, sometimes pumping up and sometimes pumping down. That's how we manage to keep attitudes and egos in perspective and get the job done."

"This experience has shown me fellowship that I once thought could only be found in John Wayne war movies."

It is this fellowship, this dedicated professionalism and an unending determination to achieve perfection that yields the necessary driving forces to make this team what it is.

"We work hard because of the pride we have in being a member of the Blue Angels," Scofield said. "We know we're not the stars of the show. But just being a part of making it all happen is something to be darn proud of."

"When people come to see the Blue Angels, they don't watch individuals, they watch six shiny blue jets," Stanovich said. "That's the end toward which we all work. I may fly the show, but I wasn't the one who makes them look so good. And we sure can't fly an airshow if the planes don't work."

One of the crew members summed it up this way. "Sometimes when you're out there working through a cold night, trying to fix one of those seemingly endless problems, you ask yourself if it's really all worth it. Does anybody really care? But you start thinking what it would be like seeing only five of the six planes out there for the show tomorrow. And sure enough, when the show rolls around, there are thousands of people watching. You forget the sleep you didn't get the night before—especially when the formation does one of those maneuvers that brings a chorus of 'oohs' and 'aahs' from the crowd. You really get some kind of good feeling."

—Story and photos  
by PH1 Jim Preston

# 'Special' People Return With Kilauea

The ammunition ship USS *Kilauea* (AE 26) and her crew had been away from home for seven long months. As their deployment to the Western Pacific and Indian Ocean drew to a close, the sailors grew extremely homesick. They knew that it was just a matter of days and hours and minutes now until they would be reunited with their families. They also knew that the time would pass slowly, as it always does aboard ships en route home after a long deployment.

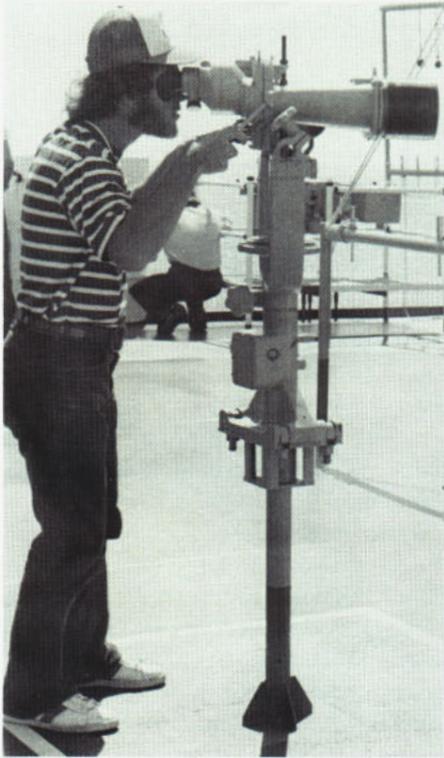
More than likely, the final transit home from Hawaii to Concord, Calif., *Kilauea's* home port, would be uneventful. For many of the 341 crewmen on board, the next few days certainly would be the hardest and longest part of their seven-month voyage.

But, it seems that was not to be the case for *Kilauea*. The journey home turned out to be a memorable adventure that crew members probably will talk about for some time to come.

It all started when 46 "tigers"—

fathers, sons and close friends of some of *Kilauea's* crewmen—met the ship in Hawaii. After visiting famous attractions, like Honolulu's Waikiki Beach and the USS *Arizona* Memorial in Pearl Harbor, the group embarked on *Kilauea* for the trip back to the mainland. Needless to say, the passengers, especially the youngsters, bubbled with excitement about the arrangement. Members of the crew were just as excited; they couldn't wait to show off their ship to those special people.





**Left:** *Kilauea's Tigers display a banner proclaiming a happy return to Concord.*

**Above:** *A tiger sweeps the horizon with the aid of the ship's "Big Eyes."*

**Right:** *Kilauea's whaleboat, with provisions aboard, comes to the aid of "High Spirit."*



Shortly after they got under way, *Kilauea* set a course about 300 miles north of Hawaii, where a 40-foot sailing boat with two men aboard was in distress. *Kilauea* was to attempt a rescue.

The following day, with the aid of the ship's two CH-46 helicopters, the sailing vessel was located. One of the sailboat's men was brought safely aboard, the other was given provisions and navigational assistance to get him and his craft to Hawaii.

*Kilauea's* "tigers" witnessed the entire search and rescue operation and were visibly impressed. Crew members expressed a different emotion—that of pride, not just because they possibly saved the lives of two stranded voyagers but also they had been able to share the success of that mid-ocean drama with their guests.

As the days passed and the ship proceeded eastward toward the California coast, members of various departments

took turns showing the guests through the ship. And, for a group of salty fleet sailors, the crew revealed an eagerness akin to youngsters showing off new Christmas toys.

In no time at all, *Kilauea's* special passengers were studying navigation and learning the effectiveness of radar and the importance of flags, signal lights and semaphore. There wasn't a job or piece of equipment aboard ship that escaped their curiosity.

Each evening, the guests put their questions aside and relaxed while watching a movie or a TV program on the ship's closed-circuit TV system. One evening, as a special treat, supply department personnel prepared a candlelight steak dinner for all hands.

The cruise had passed quickly, but near the end the minutes passed so slowly that "channel fever" spread like wildfire—overtaking even the 46 novice sailors who had joined *Kilauea* only a few days before. Ahead lay San Fran-

cisco and the Golden Gate Bridge. Beyond that, heading north, was the San Rafael Bridge. Then to the east was San Pablo Bay—and home.

Colorful balloons that had been set free near Mare Island Naval Shipyard filled the sky. The balloons were a signal to families waiting on the pier that *Kilauea* was nearing home. A huge "Welcome Home" sign hung from a bridge; an airplane flew in wide circles overhead, its banner boasting to all: "Best AE in the West—USS *Kilauea*." Two tugboats, using their fire hoses, sprayed water high into the air; and the rousing sound of "Anchors Aweigh," played by a Navy band ashore, filled the air.

After all mooring lines were secured, family members on the pier rushed forward to meet their loved ones among the crew. The excitement and anticipation was unlike anything *Kilauea's* crew of 341, plus 46 (plus one rescued cast-away) had ever seen.

# Bearings

## Saipan's Guest Cruise



Jason Colthurst, under the watchful eye of his grandfather, R. Cox, is ready for that healthy serving of cake. Jason is the son of Saipan's ops officer, Cmdr. W.R. Colthurst.

Somewhere off Cape Hatteras, "the littlest helmsman" had his hands full guiding a Navy vessel through the choppy waters. The ship weighed in at about 40,000 tons; eight-year-old Roy weighed somewhat less.

Sailors aren't really getting any younger on board the Norfolk-based amphibious assault ship USS *Saipan* (LHA 2). Roy was actually just one of 120 brothers, fathers, sons and friends invited along on a recent guest cruise from Moorehead City, N.C. to Norfolk.

Bused from the naval base to Moorehead City, the guests boarded *Saipan* beneath rainy skies. Following warm showers and hot roast beef suppers, the visitors were entertained with a demonstration of the assault ship's water wash-down system: a defense against chemical and nuclear fallout that covers all outer surfaces with a saltwater mist.

Later activities included a helicopter air performance, special tours of the crew's living and working spaces, and an invitation to the younger guests (and the young at heart, of course) to steer the amphibious vessel from the bridge.

*Saipan* arrived at Norfolk early the next morning, and the guests returned to shore via landing craft. They were impressed with the ship and its mission. But most of all, they enjoyed the crew's hospitality.

Roy—the littlest helmsman—was convinced that watching cartoons on *Saipan's* own WLHA-TV 7 was the high point of his cruise.

But his friends would probably be more impressed by his ship-steering adventures. Let's face it; when you're a helmsman, there's no time for station identification.

—By JO2 Howard Samuelson

## Thai Youngsters Visit Kilauea

During a four-day port visit to Pattaya Beach in Thailand, crew members of the USS *Kilauea* (AE 26) entertained a group of orphans aboard ship, while other *Kilauea* sailors went ashore to help out at the orphanage.

The youngsters of St. Nicholas Children's Orphanage who came aboard *Kilauea* were escorted to the flightdeck, where they climbed aboard one of the ship's two CH-46 helicopters. When they reached the bridge, each youngster took his turn at the helm, and then on the signal bridge, each child got a look at Pattaya Beach through the ship's telescope. Next, each of the visiting "sailors" sent a flashing "message" using one of the ship's signal lights. After the tour, it was hot dogs and french fries, as they watched cartoons on the ship's closed circuit TV system.

All in all, it was an exciting day for the children, none of whom had ever been on a U.S. Navy ship before. Father Brennan, orphanage director, was on hand during the tour to interpret for the children, but as it turned out, most of them already had everything pretty much figured out on their own—or so it seemed with all the smiles, chatter and excitement.

## Record Setting Skipper

With his son along as a passenger, Captain James H. Flatley III landed his F-4J *Phantom* aboard the ship he commands, USS *Saratoga* (CV 60). It was the 1,500th carrier landing in the captain's career and he claimed a new record in naval aviation. It's easy to see why his son, Midshipman James H. Flatley IV, took part in his father's proud moment.

Setting records is nothing new for the *Saratoga's* skipper. He was the first pilot to land a C-130 *Hercules* transport plane aboard an aircraft carrier—a risky operation that requires the engines to be thrown into reverse seconds before touchdown. While operating in the Tonkin Gulf during the Vietnam era, Capt. Flatley became one of the few naval aviators to chalk up his 1,000th carrier arrested landing.

## Letter from the Queen

Receiving a letter from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, was a royal occasion for Aviation Maintenance Administrationman Second Class J.A. Raubar, aboard USS *Independence* (CV 62). The letter, on Buckingham Palace stationery, was a thank you for the model ships of Queen Elizabeth (QE 1) and Queen Elizabeth II (QE 2) Raubar had built and sent to Queen Elizabeth.

The scale models Raubar built are replicas of the two British vessels.

The letter stated, "It is very kind of you to send this gift for the Queen, who has agreed to accept it and sends her thanks. It is Her Majesty's intention to offer the models on permanent loan to the National Maritime Museum."

For one U.S. Navy man, that was the crowning touch.

## Incentives for Recruiters

Recruiters who do a top-notch job of bringing quality people into the enlisted ranks now cash in on special rewards.

An unprecedented incentives program—announced recently by Navy Recruiting Command and effective from Feb. 1, 1980—offers enlisted recruiters the opportunity to extend on recruiting duty, again and again, if they desire. If a recruiter meets quantity and quality standards of productivity, he or she may be eligible for meritorious advancement, achievement and commendation medals, and letters of commendation, which count toward the advancement multiple.

Nomination for awards will be based on an accession point credit system, with higher points given for enlisting candidates whose mental group and educational level qualify them for advanced programs, such as in the nuclear or electronics field. Recruiters will not receive credit for persons who fail to complete recruit training.

Rear Admiral F.H. Miller, Commander, Navy Recruiting Command, said the new incentive program places "the proper emphasis on recruiting productivity."

Recruiters who achieve five or more high quality recruits, or equivalent points through the combination of enlistment of recruits for other programs, per month for a 12-month period, will be nominated for meritorious advancements. Chief petty officers and senior chief petty officers in this category will have their performance documented to their selection boards.

Achieving the equivalent of four or more high quality new contracts per month for a 12-month period will result in the nomination of the recruiters for a one-year extension on recruiting duty. This reward can be earned any number of times, and acceptance is at the option of the recruiter.



*"You mean to tell me this isn't the 25th century?" Gil Gerard, known to TV fans as Buck Rogers, seems to cast a suspicious eye on Lieutenant Jeff Nickerl of the 20th century (and also a member of VF-121 at NAS Miramar) as he and Aviation Structural Mechanic Airman Charles Haselkamp strap Gerard into an F-4J fighter. Buck's probably just a little hesitant about flying in such an antique, that's all. (Photo by PH3 Joan Zoph)*

Attaining the equivalent of 3.5 high quality contracts per month for a 12-month period will nominate the recruiter for the Navy Achievement Medal or the Navy Commendation Medal in place of a third achievement medal.

The equivalent of three or more quality contracts per month for 12 months will qualify the recruiter for a Letter of Commendation from the Commander, Navy Recruiting Command.

The new program is designed for those ambitious petty officers who can pass stringent screening procedures to become recruiters and who are willing to meet recruiting goals.

Individuals reporting to recruiting duty receive a thorough indoctrination during their initial training at the Navy Enlisted Recruiting Orientation School (ENRO). The five-week course in Orlando, Fla., provides instruction in sales skills and tasks.

Graduates of ENRO will have a six-month field training period at their assigned recruiting station to demonstrate and master their newly-learned recruiting skills. After this initial orientation period, recruiters who average less than two new contracts per month by the end of their fourth month, or who fail to maintain that minimum number per month thereafter will be automatically

transferred out of recruiting duty.

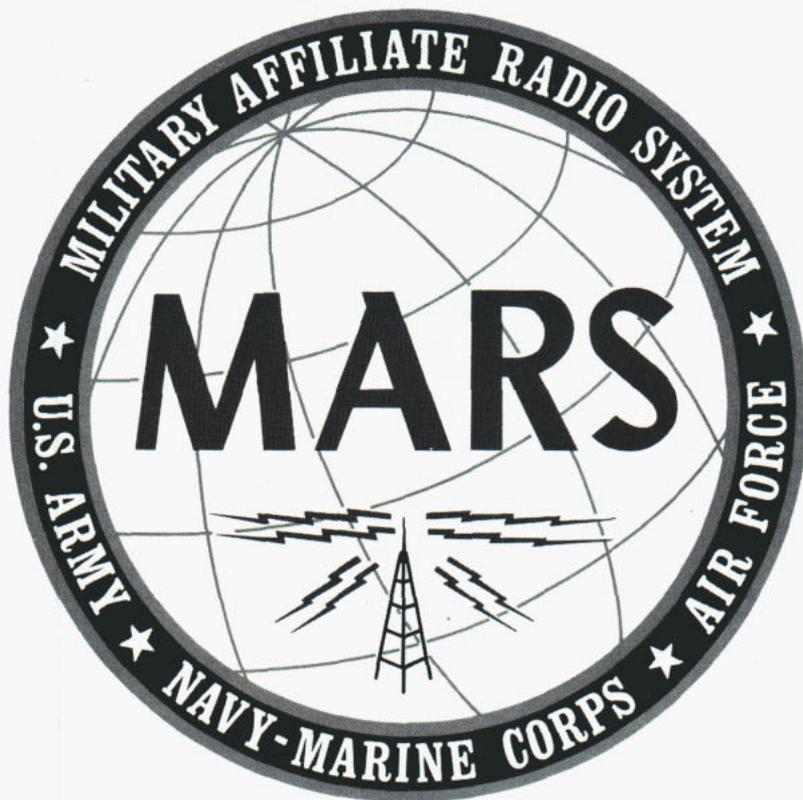
Recruiters who were on recruiting duty or in orientation training on Feb. 1, 1980, are eligible for the incentive rewards, and will be subject to the minimum monthly production requirements. Recruiters who entered recruiting duty before Feb. 1, 1980, are not subject to the minimum production requirements. All recruiters who meet the minimum will receive the Special Duty Allowance (SDA), which currently is from \$50 to \$150 a month, based on tenure as a recruiter.

Detailed information on requirements for an assignment as a recruiter is in Article 11.0 of the Enlisted Transfer Manual.

To assist candidates interested in becoming a Navy recruiter, the Navy Recruiting Command's two recruiter screening teams, one on each coast, visit naval bases, ships and stations to conduct interviews and to pass on first-hand knowledge about recruiting duty.

Navy Recruiting Command suggests that interested candidates see their command career counselor and plan to attend a briefing by the screening team in their area. More information on the teams' schedules may be obtained by calling the Navy toll-free number 800-841-8000.

# Your Connection With Home



MARS may sound like a movie thriller about extraterrestrials but it is actually a system which can bring home a little closer to Navy men and women. MARS is the Military Affiliate Radio System—not the red planet.

Navy-Marine Corps MARS is a network of amateur radio operators who help provide links between Navy and Marine Corps personnel and their families. In addition, MARS fulfills its primary mission of providing emergency communications on a local, national

and international basis as a supplement to normal naval communications.

Although Navy-Marine Corps MARS guarantees the Navy additional lines of communication during a disaster or emergency, the organization is best known for providing phone-patch calls and teletype message service for Navy and Marine Corps personnel overseas and aboard ship to their families and friends in the United States.

"MARS operators contribute their own time when they serve as communi-

cation links," said Gary Skillicorn, a civilian electronics engineer with the Navy Department in Washington, D.C. "Every MARS link operator I have spoken with knows he is performing an important service to Navy and Marine Corps personnel," said Skillicorn. "MARS calls and messages can really be a morale booster for people who haven't heard from home in a while."

Navy Captain Donald Veazey, who has been retired for 18 years, operates a MARS station from his home in Alexandria, Va. He says phone-patch calls can be as much of a morale booster for station operators as for the servicemen who use MARS.

"I feel very emotionally attached to those kids out there," said Veazey. "Very frequently, when there is a stress situation with the family of a deployed Navyman, a MARS phone-patch spells the difference between that man functioning effectively or not.

"I get pretty darn close to the men I make calls for. A lot of them have come to visit me when their cruise ended and some have written after I helped them make a call home."

Veazey added that MARS also serves as a semi-official communications network for Navy personnel who want to contact their detailers. (LINK Magazine, July/Sept 1980)

"In 1979, alone, I made more than seventy-five MARS calls a month for Navy men at sea who wanted to talk to their detailer. A lot of Navy men don't realize that even if they are deployed,

their detailer is only a phone call away."

To place a call from overseas or aboard a deployed ship to the United States, a MARS operator makes a radio call to an available MARS station nearest the caller's home. The stateside station then calls the desired number and patches the call through regular phone lines once the caller has reversed the phone charges.

Radio-patch calls, usually limited to five minutes, require the caller to follow security guidelines and must be punctuated with the "over" and "out" of radio communications. But, the amount of money a MARS phone-patch saves an out-of-country caller makes it a definite asset.

"It would cost a lot more for an individual to call the States direct, from Japan for example, than it would over MARS. Through MARS, a person can place a call and pay only the cost of calling from the stateside MARS station to home," said Skillicorn.

For the past several years, working with the USO, MARS has been able to offer free phone service to personnel calling home from overseas during the Christmas holiday.

"The way it has worked in the past," said Staff Sergeant Donald Myers, an administrative assistant for the Chief of Navy-Marine Corps MARS in Washington, D.C., "is that the USO has supplied selected MARS stations with a credit card number with which to charge the phone call. Calls, therefore, have been placed at no expense to the service member.

"MARS hopes to offer the same service for a few days before Christmas this year, but right now we are still in the process of working with the USO on establishing a program like we have had in the past."

Myers stated Navy and Marine Corps commands will be informed through their commanding officers of the program's details should a similar program be initiated this year.

Teletype messages—called MARSgrams—are another service provided

by Navy-Marine Corps MARS operators. MARSgrams are transmitted over regular teletypewriter or voice circuits to a MARS stations nearest the U.S. destination. The receiving MARS station calls the message's recipient, reads the MARSgram and, if the person desires, forwards the teletyped message to the stateside address.

"It's a good feeling to help someone who has been away from home for a while get in touch with family or friends in the States," said Skillicorn. "But the MARS calls that stand out in my mind are the emergency calls."

On one occasion, a MARS operator in the United States received a call from a MARS station aboard a deployed Navy ship. The ship's crew had problems with their ship-to-ship communications network and needed to contact the medical department of an aircraft carrier operating in the same area. The MARS station radio-patched the two ships and was instrumental in getting the necessary medical help from the carrier.

"Emergency phone-patches are nothing extraordinary to most MARS operators," said Fred Chapman, coordinator of worldwide afloat MARS

operations. "There was another occasion where a Navy wife in Gulfport, Miss., needed help from her husband on a deployed ship. She got her help, but might not have, had it not been for MARS."

While MARS service is offered to more than 250 ships and overseas shore bases, Myers said many Navy installations and ships have never established the groundwork necessary for MARS service, which includes obtaining call signs and operating frequencies as well as general operating instructions.

"MARS conversations involve every aspect of life," said Veazy. "I've heard everything from marital disputes to proposals of marriage; notifications of a death in the family to a bedside chat between a new mother and the proud father who has yet to see—but is often able to hear—his new son's or daughter's cry over miles of ocean."

Questions about MARS may be directed to: Chief of Navy-Marine Corps MARS; Admin Section; Bldg. 13; U.S. Naval Communications Unit; Washington, D.C. 20390. Phone: AUTOVON—251-2267/Comm.—301-238-2266/67

—by JO1 Lon Cabot



*Gary Skillicorn operates a MARS link-up in Washington, D.C. during mid-day hours when it's possible, to assist Navymen with phone calls to their detailers.*

# Currents

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## SECNAV Approves LDO (Aviator) Program

The Secretary of the Navy has approved establishment of a limited duty officer (LDO) aviator program for paygrades E-5 through E-7. The first 35 enlisted personnel selected for the program will be ordered to Pensacola in April 1981. After completing aviation officer indoctrination, primary flight training, and maritime (PROP) training, the new officers will be assigned to an initial three-year tour as primary flight instructors. Follow on assignments will be to a variety of aircraft carrier billets such as assistant flight deck officer, assistant aviation fuels officers, and assistant hangar deck officer. Subsequent shore tours will include the training command, FACSFAC, FASO, TYCOM and FUNCWING staffs, NARFS and NAS billets. Sea tours will then include carriers, afloat staffs and some overseas air stations. Details of the program and eligibility requirements are contained in NAVOP 159/80.

## Cash Awards for Good Ideas

Commanding officers have been granted authority to make cash awards to Navy people who generate ideas for increased efficiency, economy, productivity, or otherwise improve operations. In some cases, awards of as much as \$1,500 may be at the local command level. Higher levels of command may approve additional awards, and if the idea is applicable Navywide, the Secretary of the Navy may award as much as \$10,000. Types of suggestions eligible might include: new or better tools, equipment or machines; more efficient work methods, conservation measures; health or safety improvements and cost reductions. The new awards will be based on monetary savings resulting from the idea. In cases in which idea benefits cannot be measured in dollars (such as safety suggestions), awards will be based on an evaluation of the degree of improvement and the criticality of the field improved. Policy guidance for the new program is contained in SECNAVINST 5305.2, while OP-NAVINST 1650.8A outlines implementing details of the program.

## Priority Given to Fleet Requests for "A" School

Are you looking for a reenlistment incentive for some deserving seaman in the fleet? The recently issued NAVOP 140/80 has affirmed policy that fleet requests for "A" School will receive priority in quota assignments. Motivated, fleet experienced personnel have a greater probability of successfully completing "A" School than new recruits. In addition, it's been shown that individuals who enter "A" School after serving in the fleet reenlist more frequently than "A" School graduates who enter directly from recruit training. The fleet "A" School plan for FY 81 allocates more quotas than previously to sailors attached to fleet units and places particular emphasis on ratings most frequently requested through reenlistment programs. Dedicated funding is also being provided to fleet commanders to support returnable travel. Commands are urged to identify qualified personnel and encourage their applications. The *TransMan* (NAVPERS 15909C) addresses application procedures.

## Potential POV Import Problems With 1981 Auto Models

Prior to purchasing 1981 automobiles, personnel who contemplate an overseas assignment are cautioned to inquire about effects of using leaded fuels in 1981 model automobiles purchased in CONUS. Also, the capability to remove/reinstall emission control systems and costs involved should be determined. The manufacturers do not recommend taking some 1981 models equipped with gasoline engines to overseas areas where unleaded fuel is not available. Under the present DOD POV Import Control program, modification of pre-1981 models is no problem since the emission control system, or its components, can be removed and preserved while leaded gasoline is being used. Later, the components can be reinstalled for use in CONUS or its territories. For some 1981 models, however, the new components are expensive and the unit will have to be tested for compliance with EPA standards prior to reimportation into CONUS. One major manufacturer has taken the position of discouraging exportation of all 1981 vehicles equipped with its new emission control system. Diesel engine equipped automobiles are not affected.

## Single BAQ Authorized for Ships in Overhaul

On Sept. 24 the president signed into law a bill which provides for Navy members to receive basic allowance for quarters (BAQ) at the single rate while assigned to ships during periods of overhaul. The BAQ is authorized when members cannot live on the ship because of overhaul work, and when government quarters are not available. The single BAQ during overhaul is authorized for FY 81 only.

## Navy Billets at Sergeants Major Academy

Sixteen senior chief petty officers will be given the opportunity to attend the Army's Sergeants Major Academy, convening semi-annually in February and August, at Ft. Bliss, El Paso, Texas. The 22-week course is designed to provide an educational experience involving military-oriented subjects and associated electives offered by local colleges. A large portion of the curriculum is devoted to individual and organizational behavior, leadership, communications, and contemporary problems as they affect morale and discipline. Prerequisites for attendance (no waivers granted) include:

- Be in paygrade E-8 (selectees must be frocked or advanced to E-8 prior to the class convening date)
- Have a secret clearance
- Have less than 23 years total active service
- Have top 10 percent or better marks on most current evaluation
- If selected, be willing to incur 24 months obligated service following graduation

Eligible personnel desiring to apply should submit a request to COMNAVMILPERSCOM (NMPC-492C); copy to OP-01D) via their commanding officer, utilizing a NAVPERS 1306/7 request form. Requests should be submitted to arrive at NMPC NLT Feb. 15 for August classes and Aug. 15 for February classes.

# Cape Hatteras



# Tasting the Simple Life

As an old seaman's saying goes, "Hatteras has a blow in store for those who pass her howling door."

For centuries sailors have steered their ships clear of the treacherous waters along the small chain of barrier islands located off the coast of North Carolina.

Known as the Outer Banks, it is here that the warm waters of the Gulf Stream clash with the arctic waters of the Labrador Current. The result is hazardous currents and a shallow shelf of shifting sand.

These shallows, called the Diamond Shoals, extend 12 miles out to sea. Hundreds of ships, hampered by severe storms which are common to this region, have met their fates in these waters, characterizing it as the graveyard of the Atlantic.

But not all sailors in the area need heed the warning beckoning from Hatteras' century-old lighthouse. In contrast to the dangers lurking in these waters for ships, these waters are a source of recreation and relaxation for the sailors stationed at the Naval Facility Cape Hatteras.

Located in the back yard of North America's tallest light house, the Hatteras naval facility has been serving the fleet as a data-gathering Oceanographic Research Station since its commissioning in 1956.

For the 150 Navy men and women here, living in this remote island community offers the interesting opportunity to sit back, relax and enjoy the simple things in life.

"It was a real shock when I arrived here," Lieutenant Gene Caughman said. "I had imagined a small town, but this was much smaller than I had ever expected.

"But it didn't take long to get a feel for the area and welcome the slower pace that a small community like this offers. It was refreshing after being at sea and homeported in a large city."

Lieutenant Commander Patrick Dennis, the commanding officer of the



# Cape Hatteras

facility expanded on this. "The environment here is unique. Because we are somewhat isolated, we operate more like an overseas command. But because of our size and the environment around us, we don't have the hectic pace that a much larger command would have.

This is the nature of the Outer Banks. And the year-round residents, known as "islanders," have kept it this way in spite of the annual influx of summer tourists.

"I find the local people here akin to New Englanders," Ensign Shippen

Bright said. They are hard-working, honest fishing people who are very close to one another. An outsider could look at it as being clanish.

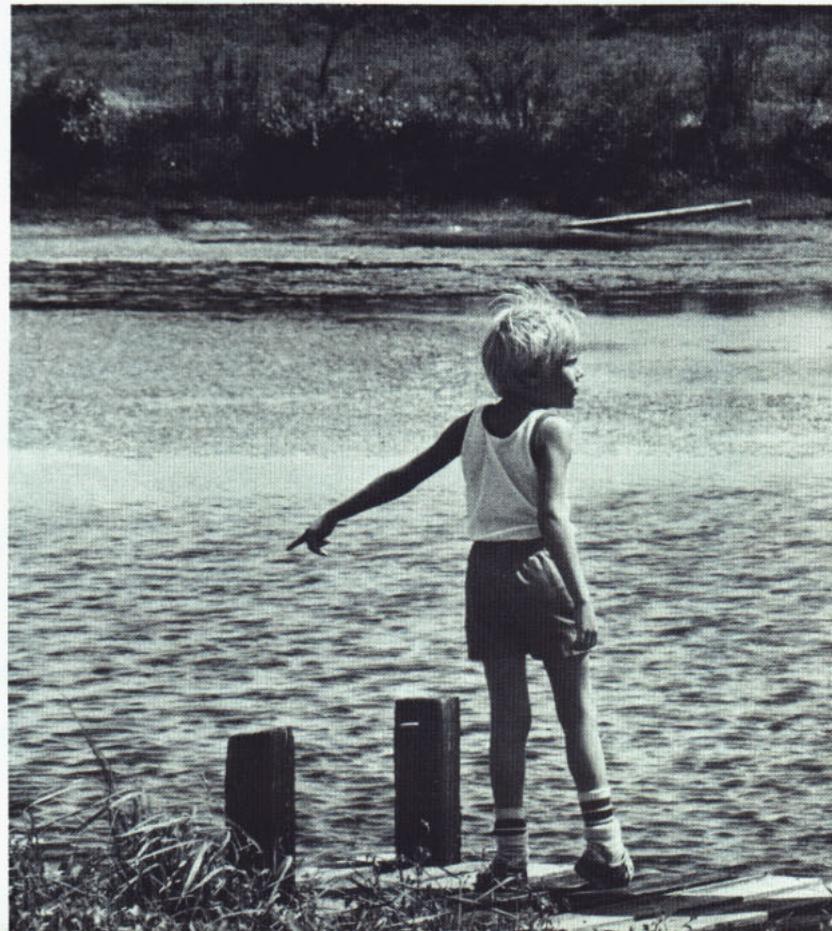
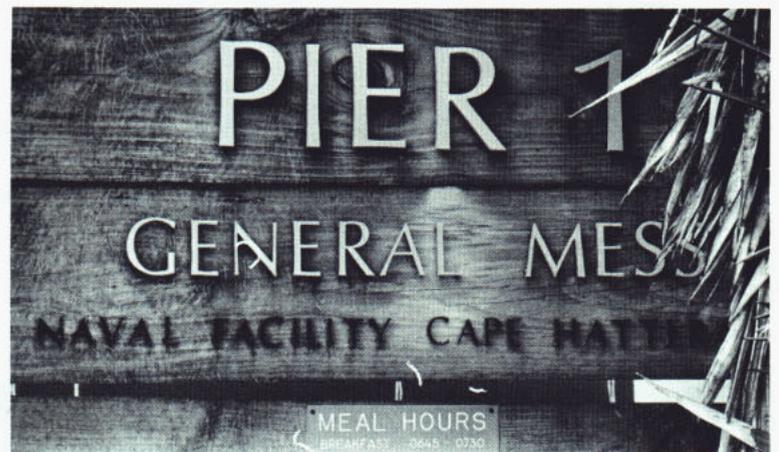
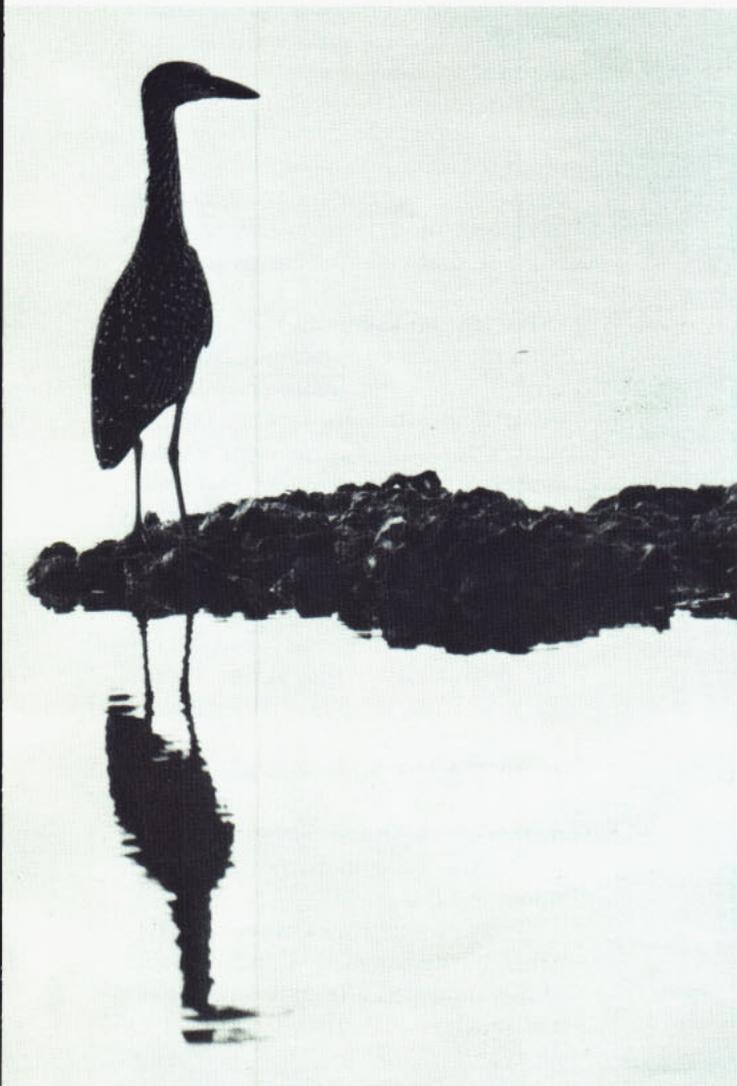
"These people look on outsiders with suspicion. You have to make the effort to earn their trust, but once you gain it, you can count on them for life."

The islanders stem from a more rugged life, one based on survival. Many are descendants of shipwreck survivors. A few can trace their family trees to the pirates who found retreat here in the early 1700's; the most famous

of these was "Blackbeard" otherwise known as Edward Teach.

Battling the elements, islanders today have displayed their courage by rescuing mariners in distress. Forty-nine residents have been awarded the Life-saving Medal, given by Congress for acts of heroism.

Because this area was accessible only by boat until 1960, the islanders managed to curtail commercialism to a great extent. Even when the bridge was constructed, connecting the island to the mainland, residents found no need



**Above:** An abundant resource in wildlife is present along the Barrier Islands. **Center:** Sign in front of the facility's combined galley. **Opposite page:** View of the naval facility from the Hatteras Lighthouse. **Right:** Chief Warrant Officer Norman Overfield enjoys some time with his sons at one of the island's freshwater ponds.



for the luxuries of the big cities. They managed to keep life simple and plain.

For most of the personnel assigned to the naval facility, duty at Hatteras is a welcome change. Chief Warrant Officer Norman Overfield said this was his only choice for shore duty after he heard it was available. "Coming off five years of sea duty, it has given me some long awaited time with my family."

Personnelman Second Class Dan Cramb also enjoys his tour here. "I was on a ship on the West Coast. We were

overmanned by one personnelman and the detailer said he wanted one of us at Hatteras. I jumped at the chance.

"At a large command, you are involved in only a part of the personnel rating, but here I'm responsible for all aspects of it. Even with the more relaxed pace, I get ten times the work done; it's been a rewarding experience."

Ocean Systems Technician Second Class Jean Robinson, who lives in a cottage on the island, feels that this is the kind of place the Navy should send anyone who has been under stress. "I don't think you'll find anybody around here with ulcers. A traffic jam is anytime you have more than five or six cars and the nearest traffic light is 55 miles away."

Mess Management Specialist Second Class Leroy Elmore has sought and found opportunity here. The leading petty officer of the base dining facility and his wife Julie have leased and manage a restaurant in town. They are planning on operating one of the few island facilities which will stay open during the winter.

"It's similar to running a military dining hall," Elmore said. "Keeping a civilian business open during the off-season here should prove challenging."

And the seasons in Hatteras govern everything. As one can expect, it isn't too difficult finding things to occupy your spare time during the summer. The population on the island increases from 3,000 to around 50,000 during the summer.

"The water activities are the main at-

traction," executive officer of the facility, Lieutenant Larry Walker said. "We have 100 miles of National Seashore at our doorstep."

During the summer months the personnel at Naval Facility Cape Hatteras are on what they call "Hatteras hours." Their workday is from 6:45 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. These abbreviated working hours are to boost morale in compensation for the hard winter existence.

Walker explained, "In the summer, everything is geared for the tourists. Most of the activities are available only during the daytime. This affords our people the opportunity to take advantage of ongoing activities while they can."

The water is the chief source of recreation here. Some of the best surfing to be found on the East Coast is in Hatteras. But for Bright, if you're not interested in honing your skills on a surfboard, body surfing is at its best.

Robinson passes some of her free time scuba diving among the many wrecks in the area. She also enjoys just hitting the beach and soaking up the sunshine.

The biggest pastime at Hatteras is fishing. "I've heard that this place is called the surf fishing capital of the world," Caughman said. "I can't really say for sure, but you can come out here in the fall when the blue fish are running and you can't find an open spot on the beach. People come Friday evening and don't leave their places until Sunday afternoon."

There are all kinds of fishing—be it



# Cape Hatteras

surf, pier, deep sea, clamming or crabbing—the waters are plentiful. There is even fresh water fishing at some of the island ponds.

Overfield hadn't done much fishing before coming to Hatteras, but now it's a family pastime. "We go out to the Hatteras point every day. Some of the islanders say it isn't the best place to fish, but it's become my favorite spot. Where else can you stand in the surf and get breakers from both the front and the rear at the same time?"

There are still those who aren't interested in filling their off-duty hours on the beach. Especially someone like Engineman Fireman Apprentice Bruce Huber. "I grew up working on a farm. When you're used to putting in a 16-hour day, seven days a week, it's difficult to just sit around on the beach in your spare time."

With the experience of being a fireman in his hometown of Schulerville, N.Y., Huber was picked as the second lieutenant of the naval facility's volunteer fire department.

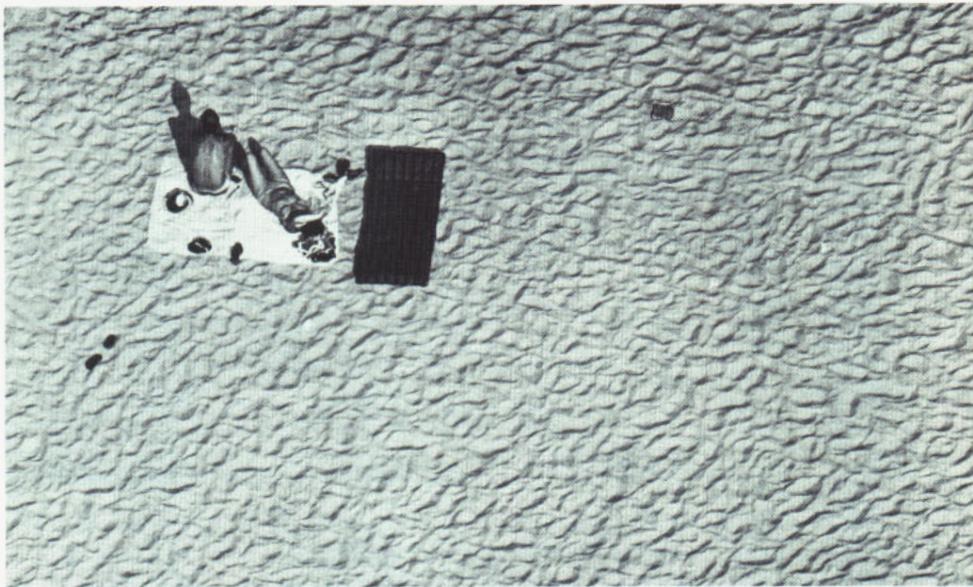
Both the fire and ambulance crews of the community and the facility work hand-in-hand with one another. When one is on call, the other is available for back up. "With the nearest hospital 110 miles away, we have to be able to count on one another," the executive officer explained.

Community involvement is also present with the summer softball league. The island program is a very popular weekday event, and all the games are played at the naval facility field.

But when the summer comes to an end, and the population dwindles, one can find only weathered beach houses boarded up and "closed for the winter" signs in the windows of shops and restaurants. It becomes harder to fill off-duty hours.

"This place looks deserted in the winter," Construction Electrician Third Class Al Pierce remarked. "You sometimes wonder if people forgot you were out here."

"It's really important to keep everyone involved in various activities during the winter months," said Dennis. "We



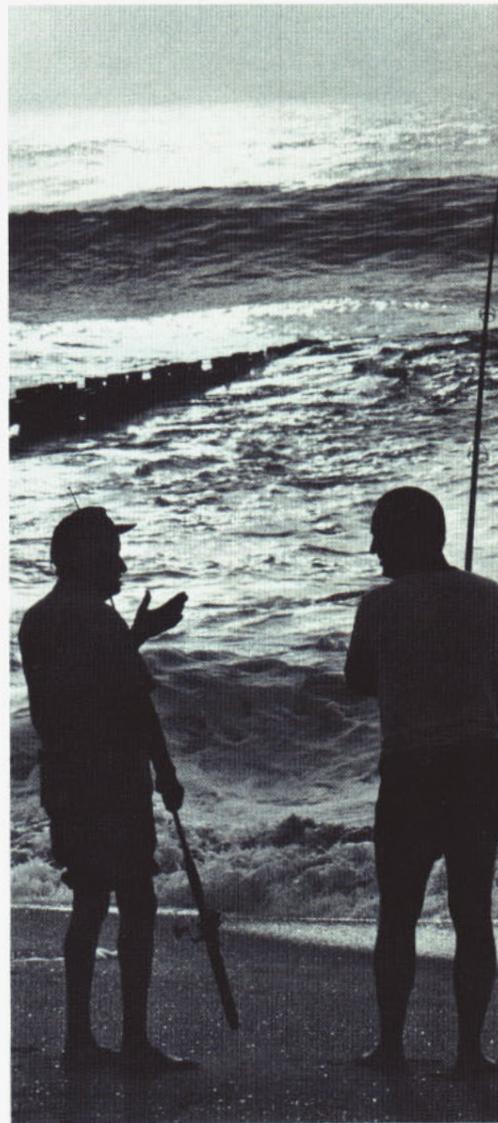
**Above and right:** Sunbathing is one of the many summer pastimes along Hatteras beaches but surf fishing is said to rank among the finest in the world year round. **Upper right:** Two Seabees perform maintenance on the facility's water treatment plant. **Bottom right:** A sunset marks the end of another day where the simple things are special.

have to develop and plan recreational programs and provide off duty programs such as educational study courses. We begin to focus our attention on this during the summer months."

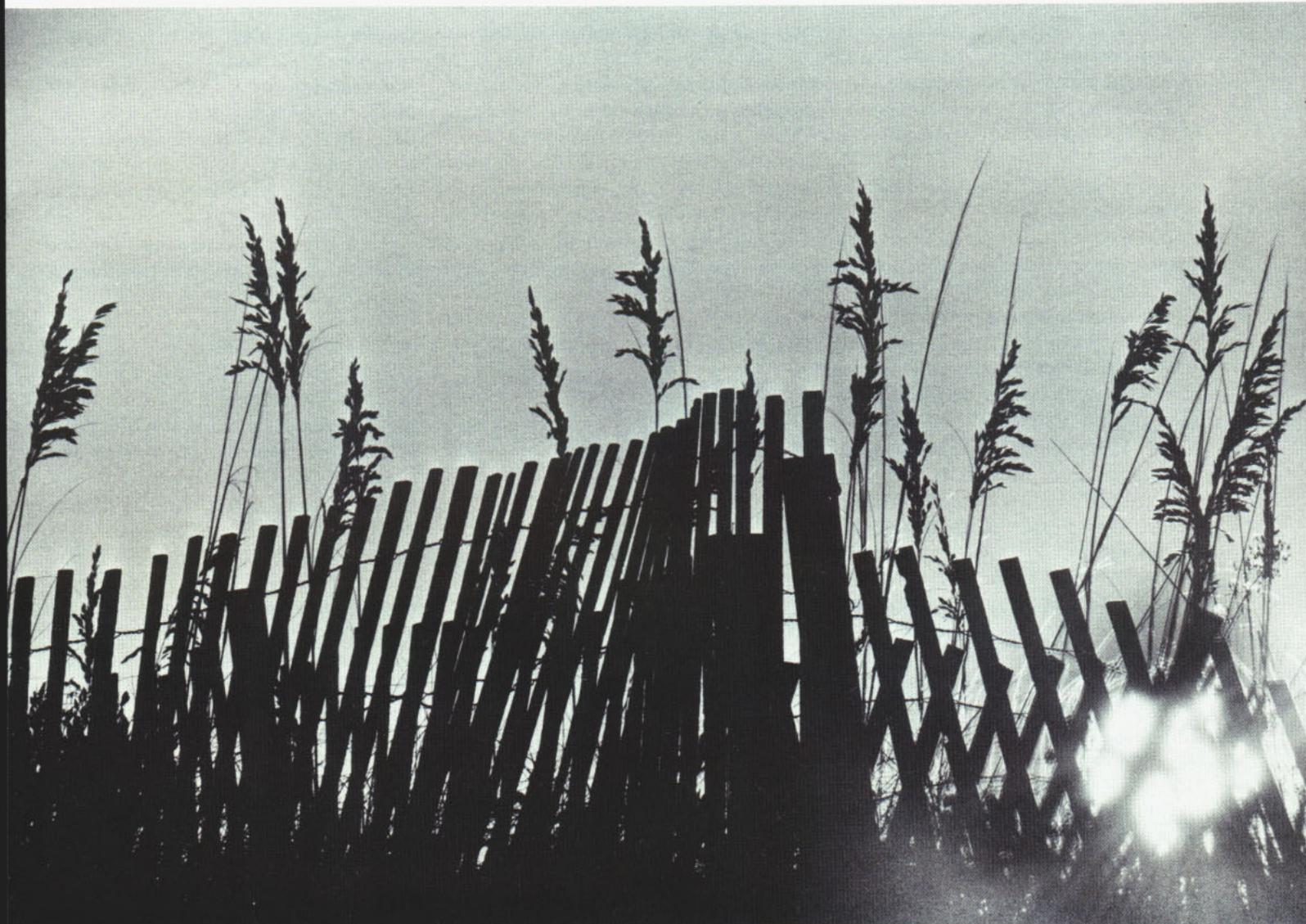
"In the winter we organize every conceivable kind of activity," Caughman added. "Since we have the only club of any sort on the island, it becomes the focal point for evening entertainment. We have a dart tournament, pool tournament, even a pinball tournament. Anything we can come up with we try. Our two-lane bowling alley also gets extensive use in the cold months.

"The biggest thing you have to accept is that this area is not going to adjust to your life-style. You have to adjust to it."

In this day and age, it's difficult to find people who aren't caught up in the fast lane of life. Such a place is Cape Hatteras. For those stationed here who take advantage of what such a community has to offer it can be refreshing.



—Story and photos by PH1 Jim Preston



## Havoc in Ironbottom Sound

The Battle of Savo Island of August 9, 1942, went down in history as one of the worst defeats ever inflicted on the U.S. Navy. Military historians have concluded that the bizarre circumstances leading up to that battle are as unique as the actual battle itself. Stan Smith, in "The Navy at Guadalcanal," wrote, "One could lose the battle and still win the war although, after the Savo debacle, it hardly seemed possible."

It all began when a reconnaissance plane reported Japanese construction of an airfield on the island of Guadalcanal in the Solomons. To prevent the Japanese from completing that airfield—an outcome that would surely give the enemy a decided advantage in that part of the world—two naval task forces and a train of destroyers and transports carrying some 19,000 Marines of the 1st Marine Division were ordered to invade the Solomons.

Rear Admiral Frank Jack Fletcher, veteran of Coral Sea and Midway battles, (see *All Hands*, May 1979, "The Battle of the Coral Sea") took command of the invasion fleet, as well as a supporting force built around carriers *Saratoga*, *Wasp* and *Enterprise*. Next in command was Rear Admiral Richard Kelly Turner, commander of the amphibious forces, which included two Australian heavy cruisers and one light cruiser (on loan from the Southwest Pacific Command) and four U.S. heavy cruisers. Major General

Alexander J. Vandegrift commanded the Marines.

When the invasion fleet arrived in the Solomons on Friday, Aug. 7, 1942, the enemy on Guadalcanal and on Tulagi—another Japanese base 20 miles across the channel—were so hopelessly outnumbered that retreat into the muddy, malaria-infested jungle was their only recourse. By the next afternoon, the U.S. Marines had control of Tulagi and the airstrip on Guadalcanal, despite repeated attacks from Japanese torpedo bombers and fighters from the enemy stronghold on Rabaul, some 600 miles northwest of Guadalcanal. By Saturday night,



everything was calm. Almost too calm.

Sailors on the beach worked feverishly to unload Admiral Turner's convoy of transports which had anchored off Tulagi and the Lunga beachhead. The admiral waited aboard his flagship *McCawley*, worrying about more enemy air attacks the next day. He ruled out the likelihood of a counterattack by enemy ships; reports revealed no enemy fleet anywhere in sight.

As a precaution, however, Turner ordered his warships to patrol the sea passages leading to the transports.

Cruisers *Vincennes*, *Quincy* and *Astoria*, and two destroyers, *Helm* and *Wilson*, patrolled the western flank north of Savo Island, the tiny island lying between Guadalcanal and Tulagi. Australian cruisers *Australia* and *Canberra*, and U.S. cruiser *Chicago* with destroyers *Bagley* and *Patterson* guarded the southern entrance. Destroyers *Ralph Talbot* and *Blue*, stationed a few miles farther out, were to provide warning of any danger.

An eastern force, which would escape the holocaust that night, consisted of light cruiser *San Juan*, destroyers *Monssen* and *Buchanan* and Australian cruiser *Hobart*.

**Left:** Capt. Harold S. Lewis, commanding officer of the USS *Chicago* (CG 11), assists Rear Adm. Alex Sinclair, Commander Task Force 75, as tribute is paid to USS *Chicago* (CA 29), a victim of the Battle of Savo Island. **Right:** USS *Quincy* (CA 39) is illuminated by Japanese search lights in this photograph taken by the Japanese cruiser during the battle.

Most of the ships of Turner's force had set Condition II, allowing half the crew to rest. Having been at general quarters for nearly 24 hours, these men were exhausted, tense and in desperate need of sleep. So, while half the crew retired to their bunks, the warships patrolled the harbor. No battle plan had been issued.

News of the American landings, in the meantime, had reached Rear Admiral Gunichi Mikawa at Rabaul. By Saturday, his quickly-organized task force, consisting of five heavy cruisers, two light cruisers and one old destroyer, was steaming southward at a comfortable 24 knots, timing its arrival at Guadalcanal for midnight.

Mikawa's plan was to enter the harbor under the cover of darkness (Japanese torpedo crews had no equal when it came to night fighting), destroy the warships guarding the landing force, blow up the unloading transports and then escape before daylight when American carrier pilots could retaliate. A good

plan, but Mikawa had to steam hundreds of miles in full daylight before reaching Guadalcanal.

From the very outset, Mikawa's luck ran high.

Some B-17 Army pilots, flying close to Rabaul, had reported six unidentified ships on a southeast course. Because the ships were sighted so close to Japanese bases, American commanders receiving the report saw no cause for alarm.

A second message—this one reported by a Navy submarine about 60 miles from Rabaul—warned that two destroyers and three larger ships of unknown type were moving southeasterly at high speed. This sighting, too, caused little concern.

Sighting number three was made by an Australian pilot who spotted the Japanese force east of Bougainville. But he did not report the sighting until after he had finished his patrol and returned to his base on the eastern tip of New Guinea. To make matters

worse, the pilot's report of three cruisers, three destroyers, two seaplane tenders or gunboats, heading south at 15 knots was mishandled by the authorities who passed it along. As it turned out, Admiral Turner did not receive the message until more than eight hours after the sighting. Even then, the identification of "two seaplane tenders or gunboats" led Turner to assume that the enemy ships' destination was the northeastern coast of Santa Isabel, some 150 miles away. Unfortunately, Turner's assumption was wrong.

Other reconnaissance flights by units throughout the Western Pacific missed spotting Mikawa's ships because of foul weather and a heavy overcast.

As storm clouds darkened the sky, Japanese sailors on board the approaching ships dressed for battle and made final preparations for their night attack. Two searchlights had been affixed to each ship, fore and aft, and hooded blinkers, invisible outside the



# Savo Island

Japanese column, permitted safe communications between ships.

It was about this time that Admiral Fletcher, who had taken up a strategic position southeast of Guadalcanal, decided to pull out. Sending a message to his superiors at headquarters a thousand miles away on New Caledonia Island, Fletcher reported: "Fighter plane strength reduced from 99 to 78. In view of the large number of enemy torpedo planes and bombers in this area, I recommend the immediate withdrawal of my carriers. Request tankers sent forward immediately as fuel running low."

Without waiting for a reply, Fletcher ordered his supporting force to withdraw.

Naval historian Jack Coggins wrote in "The Campaign for Guadalcanal": "It was not lack of fuel but fear of air attack (needless, as it happened) that caused Fletcher to retire. Loss of *Lexington* at Coral Sea and *Yorktown* at Midway had made him overly

cautious. Now, with three of America's four Pacific carriers under his command, the responsibility weighed heavily."

So, while Mikawa's pagoda-topped war machines barreled toward Guadalcanal, Fletcher's "covering force"—a battle ship, three carriers, six cruisers and 16 destroyers—headed out the back door.

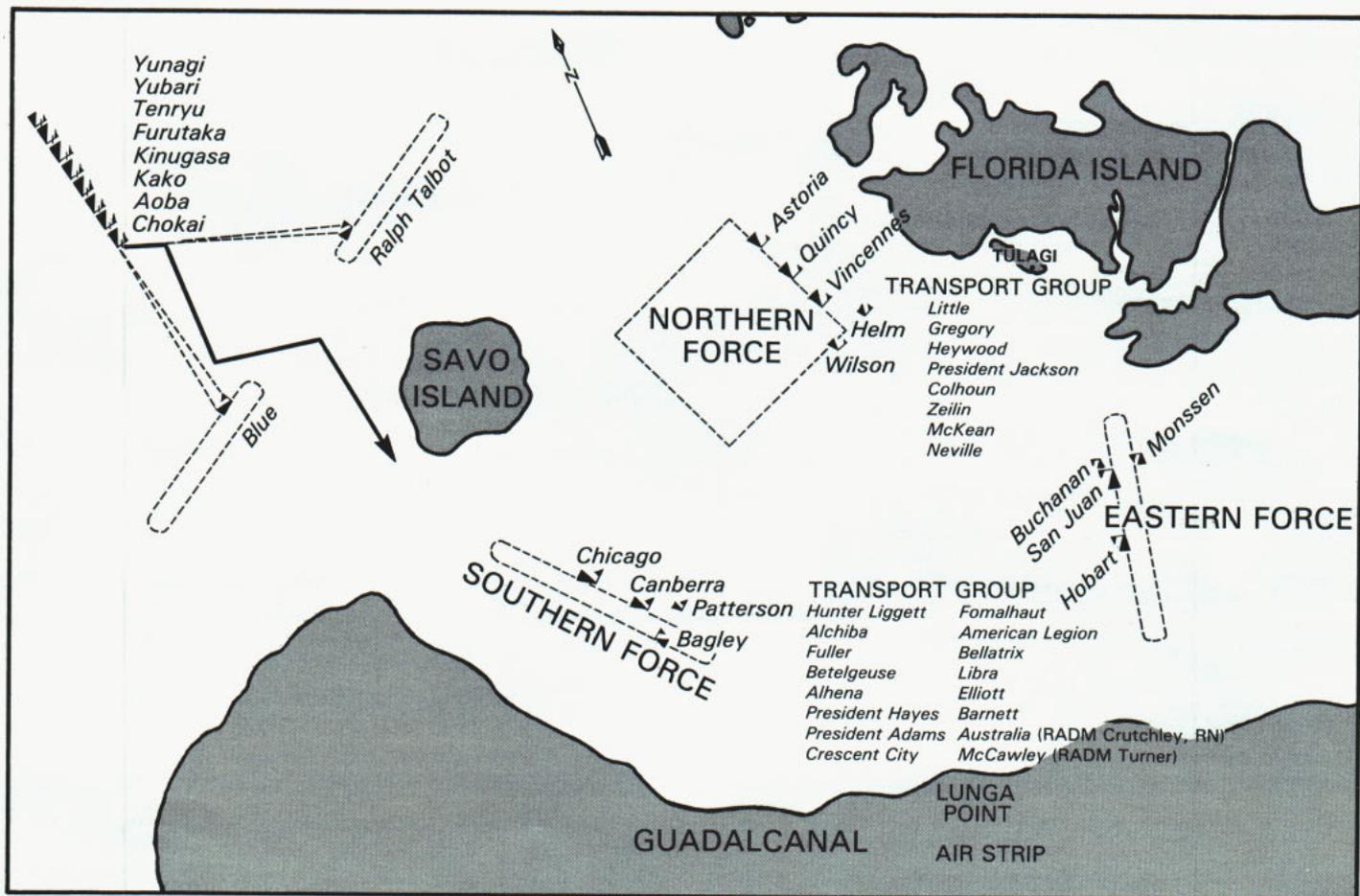
Needless to say, Turner was boiling mad. About 8:30 p.m., the admiral sent an urgent message to Victor Crutchley, the British admiral in his flagship HMAS *Australia* in the southern picket line. Ordered to report aboard *McCawley* immediately, the English admiral pulled *Australia* out of formation, leaving Captain Howard D. Bode in *Chicago* in charge of the southern force. Expecting the admiral to return shortly, Captain Bode made no plans to change *Chicago's* position with the absence of *Australia*. In the end, it probably wouldn't have made much difference anyway.

On board *McCawley* in the transport area, Crutchley met with Admiral Turner and General Vandegrift to discuss the effect of Fletcher's abrupt withdrawal.

The stage was now set. The catastrophe that was about to take place shortly after midnight that Sunday would last 40 minutes, but from that time on, the body of water surrounding Savo Island would be called Ironbottom Sound.

When lookouts on *Chokai*, Mikawa's flagship, sighted picket destroyer *Blue* off the starboard bow, *Blue's* lookouts were looking the wrong way. Even the destroyer's radar operators missed being alerted because they mistook the "pips" on their radar units as coming from the nearby islands themselves. As Mikawa's force steered away from *Blue*, the Japanese trained their guns on the American destroyer, ready to fire at the slightest wrong move.

Coming upon *Ralph Talbot* next,



Mikawa again changed course. Then, as he resumed full speed, he left *Blue* and *Ralph Talbot* plodding their beats. The two American destroyers were unaware that an enemy task force had just slipped past.

A short while later, destroyer *Patterson* in the southern force sounded an alarm: "Warning, warning, strange ships entering harbor!"

Three Japanese float planes, alerted by Mikawa, now dropped flares which turned the ships of the southern force into luminous targets. *Canberra* went to battle stations, but it was too late. Men on board the Australian warship didn't stand a chance as enemy guns and torpedoes fell upon them almost immediately. Wounded and dying sailors struggled to get ammunition and hot shells overboard to prevent the ship from blowing apart.

It was hopeless. *Canberra* eventually had to be abandoned and eventually sank.

Mikawa's column of ships now turned on *Chicago*. Throughout the heavy American cruiser, exploding ammunition, flying debris and flames sent sailors to their deaths. With part of her bow blown off, *Chicago* was left crippled by the enemy, which now inadvertently split formation while bearing down at full speed on the northern patrol. Having divided their force, the Japanese could now subject the northern group to a devastating crossfire.

By the time destroyers *Patterson* and *Bagley* of the southern group got into position to attack the Japanese, the enemy had already disappeared to the northeast.

Hidden again in darkness, the enemy ships passed to the right of Savo Island, came upon cruiser *Astoria*, turned searchlights on and opened fire at point-blank range. *Astoria's* gunnery officer ordered general quarters and directed his eight-inch gun mounts to fire upon the attackers.

Captain William G. Greenman rushed to the bridge and demanded to know who had sounded the general alarm. Thinking that *Astoria* was firing on her sister ships, he ordered, "Cease firing!"

While enemy shells continued to turn *Astoria* into an inferno, the captain reconsidered his first order and shouted, "Commence firing!" Whoever they were, they had to be stopped.

Too late. The American warship had already been reduced to a blazing wreck.

For hours, crewmen would fight the flames and plug holes in the ship's sides, but in the end the order would pass to abandon ship; *Astoria* would rest at the bottom of Ironbottom Sound.

Likewise, cruisers *Vincennes* and *Quincy*, battered and burning furiously, would go down, too. Destroyers

*Helm* and *Wilson*, ignored by the enemy in the darkness and confusion, were unable to help the cruisers of the northern force.

On their way out of the sound, Mikawa's ships again met, but this time crippled, the destroyer *Ralph Talbot*, turning it into a floating mass of useless iron.

Admiral Mikawa now snapped off his searchlights, and with engine throttles wide open, headed toward home, leaving untouched the main target of his planned assault—the transports off Lunga Point and Tulagi.

Mikawa struggled with the idea of turning back, but finally decided it was too risky. Fearing reprisals from enemy carriers which he believed to be close by, the Japanese admiral dared not press his luck. He had no way of knowing—lucky for Turner and Crutchley in the transport area—that Fletcher's supporting force was retreating to the south at that very moment. Mikawa could have annihilated Turner's transports and, in so doing, changed the course of the war.

Perhaps Japanese historian Masanori Ito, in "The End Of The Imperial Japanese Navy," best summed up Mikawa's mistake, "It would have been worth the sacrifice of his entire force if he had knocked out the enemy transports at Guadalcanal."

Because he didn't, the U.S. Marines—who depended on the transports for supplies—were able to stay on Guadalcanal.

The long, bloody Guadalcanal campaign had only just started. In the months ahead, fierce land and sea battles would overshadow the Battle of Savo Island but the struggle and suffering that took place that fateful night would never be forgotten.

—Story by JO2 Steve Bellow



The Australian heavy cruiser *Canberra* sinks off Savo Island the following morning. USS *Blue* (DD 387) is alongside *Canberra's* bow to remove survivors. USS *Patterson* (DD 392) approaches the sinking ship's stern.

# Mail Buoy

## Aerobic Dancing

SIR: The article on "Individual Sports" in the June 1980 issue of *All Hands* was in the spirit of National Recreation Month. However, I found the segment concerning aerobic dancing misleading. Aerobic dancing is more complicated than just dancing to disco music. A true aerobic dance session incorporates a pre-warmup routine for flexibility and a warm-up dance which begins slowly and increases in tempo to begin the process of aerobic exercise. Each session has seven or eight routines of continuous rhythmic movement.

Dance routines are carefully choreographed to meet the objectives of a cardiovascular exercise. Heart rates are checked between each dance. At the end of each session, a cool-down dance is performed along with five minutes of walking and stretching to bring the heart rate back to normal. All dances are cued so there are no complicated routines to memorize.

Aerobic dance instructors are highly trained and must maintain their qualifications. They are also certified in cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

Because it is extremely difficult to achieve maximum benefit from aerobic dancing without a certified instructor, I would encourage participants to sign up for a class. Many Special Services offices offer such classes as part of their recreation programs. —Carolyn S. Conklin.

## Main Battery

SIR: Many times during my naval career, I have heard people refer to the main battery of a ship as being some other armament besides guns. Could you clarify this for me? —GMGC D.G. Evans.

• While the original definition of the term "main battery" was an expression of a ship's gunnery striking power, today's usage is more oriented toward the specific mission of a ship of any class. Thus, the main battery of an aircraft carrier would be defined as its aircraft; of an amphibious ship as its assault craft; and, of a cruiser, its guided missile battery. —ED.

## White Plains It Is

SIR: I finally read something in *All Hands* (May 1980) about my ship, USS *White Plains* (AFS 4), but it was only about half a page. I don't understand why stories about other ships are longer. I think it would be great to let people know that supply ships work, too. If it was not for us and the other supply

types, the big, tough aircraft carriers could not keep going. No one stops to think about that.

We left Japan Nov. 26, 1979, but we were loaded to only about 60 percent. When we arrived in Subic Bay Dec. 3, we loaded up and over a normal fill, about 140 percent. This, about 2,100 pallets of stores, was brought aboard by the small division of storekeepers called S-2. We had three days of hard work but got it done and ready for sea.

When we did make it out to the Indian Ocean we had a lot to do. Getting the supplies ready for two task groups back to back is hard. Sometimes the cargo divisions had to have help from other divisions—people had to put in many endless nights and days without sleep. But still that is not all we did.

The USS *White Plains* was the first U.S. ship to make runs to a Persian Gulf port

where we took on more stores for the ships.

The ships liked what we did for them but does anyone think just how hard it was—especially when we didn't get any mail from home? I know. I worked many days in the heat getting everything ready for other ships. Most of the time our own mail wasn't in what the plane brought. They would say we didn't need anything because we are a supply ship and have everything. But we don't.

We were out and away from our families just as long as any of the other ships. In fact, I think longer—about 178 days. I say let's hear it for our overseas station ships. Let the people back home hear what we are doing. We have families, too. —SK3 Randell E. Himes.

• We applaud SK3 Himes who has told his own story, and a good one at that, of *White Plains*. —ED.

SIR: The following poem was sent to me by Mr. Lloyd G. Hall, the father of LTJG John Hall, one of the officers on USS *Von Steuben* (SSBN 632). Mr. Hall and 46 other fathers and sons rode *Von Steuben* from Charleston, S.C., to Norfolk, Va., Jan. 7-9, during a dependents' cruise. It was the ship's

last underway period before commencing an 18-month overhaul at Newport News, Va.

The poem captures the awe and wonder of the world of the submariner, I have never read words that express my feelings more clearly.

—CDR R.E. LaGassa

## De Profundis

*Oh black-hulled monster of the chartless deep,  
In solitary splendor, roam the seas;  
Your undetected isolation keep,  
Much as a starship spanning galaxies.*

*Grim missile-bearing wanderer, all alone  
Beneath the polar cap or southern sea;  
On course as steady as a star might own;  
As silent as leviathan might be.*

*My thanks for a taste of what your life has been,  
A wondrous calm beneath the raging gale;  
Trusting to sonar's "sight," that which unseen  
Might be a rocky shoal—or love-sick whale.*

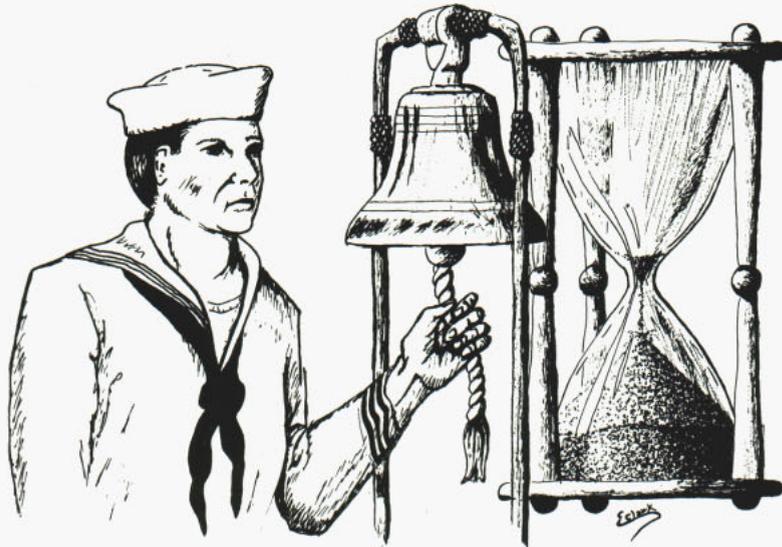
*If I were young again and had to choose  
'Tween reefs and currents—and a sky of thunder;  
I think I'd take the plunge—and try to lose  
Myself in depths full sixty fathoms under.*

*Then here's to the day your planes shall cleave the foam,  
Your klaxon barking, "dive," the final sound;  
The boundless oceans once again your home,  
And silence all pervading—closes 'round.*

—Lloyd G. Hall

# Stern Shots

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Before the invention of timepieces, seafarers marked time aboard ship with a so-called hour glass that ran out every 30 minutes. The glass would then be turned over, to start measuring another 30 minutes, and the ship's bell would be struck so all hands knew a half-hour had passed. At the end of each half-hour, the bell would be struck one more time. Thus it was struck once at the end of the first half-hour and eight times at the end of the four-hour watch.

Even with today's new digital clocks, the practice still continues aboard Navy ships. Match the eight bells with the correct time.

- |                |       |         |
|----------------|-------|---------|
| 1. One Bell    | _____ | A. 1500 |
| 2. Two Bells   | _____ | B. 1230 |
| 3. Three Bells | _____ | C. 0730 |
| 4. Four Bells  | _____ | D. 0930 |
| 5. Five Bells  | _____ | E. 1300 |
| 6. Six Bells   | _____ | F. 1400 |
| 7. Seven Bells | _____ | G. 2000 |
| 8. Eight Bells | _____ | H. 1030 |

Answers: 1-B; 2-E; 3-D; 4-F; 5-H; 6-A; 7-C; 8-G.

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# Duty in Hatteras

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