Navy Teamwork at HM-14
March 1997
Any day in the Navy 1997

May 8, 1997, is just like any other Navy day. That’s why it’s so important to us.

We are asking our readers to record the events and the people on their ships and installations that day. All Hands will use these images to tell the Navy’s story in our October 1997 edition.

We want photographs that capture the faces of Sailors, Marines, Navy civilians and their families. We’re looking for imagination and creativity. Your subject might be something you see every day but says something special about your people or your command. Or, you might get a shot of something unusual, a once-in-a-lifetime photo opportunity. Our only rules are that the subjects in the photographs reflect the diversity of the Navy, and there are no safety or uniform violations.

Use different lenses — wide angle and telephoto to give an ordinary photo a fresh look. Shoot from different angles. Don’t be afraid to bend your knees or find a higher viewpoint. Experiment with silhouettes and time-exposures. Shoot color or black and white.

Whatever you shoot, remember it’s the people, not the hardware, that make the Navy what it is.

Photos must be shot during the 24-hour period of May 8. Submit processed and mounted color slides. Or, send us quality black and white or color prints, either 5x7 or 8x10.

Submissions must include full credit and cutline information: full name, rank, duty station and phone number of the photographer; the names and hometowns of identifiable people in the photos; details on what’s happening in the photos; and where the photos were taken. Captions must be attached individually to each photo or each slide. Photos must be processed and received (not postmarked) at All Hands by May 30, 1997. Photos will not be returned.

Our mailing address is:
Naval Media Center
Publishing Division
ATTN: All Hands, Photo Editor
NAVSTA Anacostia, Bldg. 168
2701 S. Capitol St., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20373-5819.

Address questions to the Photo Editor at DSN 288-4209 or (202) 433-4209.

- Photocopy this form and attach a completed copy to each photo you submit.

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On the Cover
AO2(NAC) Angela E. Bissonnette, an Indiana, Pa., holds up an SH-53’s landing safety pins during a pre-flight check. Bissonnette is assigned to Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron (HM) 14, Norfolk. Photo by PH1 D.L. Anglin.

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BUPERS lists homebasing Fleet Concentration Areas

The Navy’s homebasing policy continues to help Sailors “homebase” when and where the billet structure allows. This effort is being further integrated into regular detailing.

Homebasing is not a guarantee of consecutive tours in the same geographical area for the remainder of one's career.

Fleet manning and readiness is the Navy’s priority. Homebasing meets the Navy’s quality of life goals by increasing geographic stability for Sailors and their families while reducing costs associated with permanent change of station (PCS) moves.

Homebasing is a continually evolving process with two major aspects: First, it allows Sailors to serve all sea tours and as many shore tours in the same Fleet Concentration Area (FCA) as existing billet structure will support. Second, it keeps Sailors in a given geographic area longer.

The Navy has approximately 66,000 E-4 through E-9 billets outside FCAs, including heartland and overseas billets. Because the billets are outside FCAs, Sailors should expect two out-of-area tours during a 20-year career. That equates to about 70 percent of the total time of a Sailor’s career spent in the same FCA.

Out-of-area tours vary by rating, community, paygrade and Navy needs. Sailors should request their FCA based on community requirements in that area.

The FCAs, their inclusive area, and primary enlisted communities are:

- **Fleet Concentration Areas**
  - Seattle
  - Lemoore, Calif.
  - Port Hueneme, Calif.
  - San Diego
  - Great Lakes, Ill. (TCA/MHB)
  - Washington, D.C. (MHB)
  - Tinker AFB, Oklahoma City
  - Gulfport, Miss.
  - Corpus Christi, Texas
  - Corpus Christi, Texas
  - New London, Conn.
  - Earle, N.J.
  - Norfolk
  - Cherry Point, N.C. (MHB)
  - Charleston, S.C. (TCA/MHB)
  - Jacksonville, Fla.

TCA=Training Concentration Area
MHB=Medical homebase (Medical ratings only)
— Norfolk, Va.: Dam Neck to Yorktown, including Portsmouth and Chesapeake. (Surface, air, submarine, medical, limited TAR)
— San Diego: San Diego to Camp Pendleton. (Surface, air, submarine, medical, limited TAR)
— Corpus Christi, Texas: Corpus Christi, Ingleside, Kingsville. (Surface mine counter measure force; limited air, medical, surface TAR)
— Jacksonville, Fla.: Jacksonville and Mayport, Fla.; Kings Bay, Ga. (Surface, air, submarine, medical, limited TAR)
— Seattle: All Washington State (Surface, air, submarine, medical)
— Hawaii: All Oahu. (Surface, air, submarine, medical)
— Port Hueneme, Calif.: Port Hueneme and Pt. Mugu. (Construction battalion)
— Gulfport, Miss.: Gulfport and Pascagoula, Miss.; New Orleans (Construction battalion, limited surface, medical, surface TAR).

Navy releases Nutrition and Weight Control Guide

Because not every Sailor has an easy time meeting and maintaining body fat standards, the Bureau of Naval Personnel (BUPERS) recently released the Navy Nutrition and Weight Control Self-Study Guide (NAVPERS 15602A) to provide assistance.

Every member who measures out-of-body fat standards will receive this self-help guide from their Command Fitness Coordinator (CFC). It is designed to be self-paced and provides basic information on effective methods to safely lose weight through proper diet and exercise.


If you are unable to enter BUPERS Access or the homepage, BUPERS will send you a copy on disk. To receive a copy on disk, send a clean, formatted 3 1/2 inch disk, and a self-addressed, return label to BUPERS, PERS-601C, 2 Navy Annex, Washington, DC 20370-6010. Printed copies may be ordered through the Navy Supply System (stock number 0500-LP-0098780).

Training on the use of the manual is available for CFCs as part of the Healthy Lifestyles Forum (HLF). HLF is a four-hour training session held quarterly on the Chief of Naval Education and Training Electronic Schoolhouse.

Remaining HLF training dates for FY97 are May 30 and Sept. 5. Quotas may be obtained from a variety of training sites.

Additional information and a list of training sites may be obtained in NAVADMIN 282/96, or by calling LT Leslie Cox, BUPERS Nutrition Programs Officer, at 703-695-4058 (DSN 225).
Top 10 tips to do well on advancement exams

1. “Use the whole three hours, use time wisely in taking the test (actually, take the test four or five times):
   — Read through the exam;
   — Answer the questions you know;
   — Make educated guesses; and
   — Look for obvious mistakes as your first answer is not always the right one.”
   JOC(SW/AW) Steve Strickland
   Naval Media Center, FSD, San Diego

2. “Do like I did. Hunt down and make copies of every publication in the bibliography and put it in a single binder with a copy of the bibliography on the cover. Review these publications every chance you can. Find the references to other publications also and add them to the bibliography list and the binder. When you feel comfortable with the information put a check next to each one till you’ve finished them all.”
   ENS Jerris L. Bennett (aced QM1 exam)
   USS Arleigh Burke (DDG 51)

3. “Concentrate your study in the rate training manuals (know the rate training manuals).”
   IC1(SW) Charles Rouse (aced IC1 exam)
   Naval Media Center, FSD, San Diego

4. “Start studying two months in advance. Leave plenty of time to study each subject.”
   CEC Ivan J. Burkett
   NMCB-7, Gulfport, Miss.

5. “I recorded notes from my rate training manual on tape and would listen to them in my car, on my walkman or whenever I had some spare time.”
   DT2 K. H. Kuedituka
   Los Angeles

6. “Try to get a variety of duties within your rating. The more exposure you have to the various responsibilities Sailors in your rating have, the more likely you’ll be able to understand it and put these aspects of your job in context.”
   JOC(SW) Michael B. Dean
   NROI, Det. 206, Washington, D.C.

7. “Convince yourself that getting promoted is something you really want, then don’t make excuses for not committing yourself to the accomplishment.”
   DK2 Gregg Licardale
   PSD/Disbursing, Naval Station San Diego

8. “When you close the books after a night of reading, keep mentally reviewing the material you studied while you get ready to go to sleep. Believe in a little luck, but don’t forget the preparations you’ve made will only increase the odds of you getting advanced.”
   DK2 Gregg Licardale
   PSD/Disbursing, Naval Station San Diego

9. “Go back and review the rate training manual and eliminate any outdated information using current instructions.”
   DT2 K. H. Kuedituka
   Los Angeles

10. “Make the time to study. Going on a long trip? Take your rate training manual with you. Watching your favorite TV program? Read a couple of paragraphs during each commercial. Keep your manuals next to the couch in your living room. It’s a strategy that worked for me.”
    JOC(SW) Michael B. Dean
    NROI, Det. 206, Washington, D.C.
TEN WORST THINGS YOU CAN DO PRIOR TO TAKING AN EXAM

The following tips are offered for those personnel who DO NOT want to advance off the Navy-wide advancement cycle.

1. Don’t use the current rating bibliography. Guess what the exam might cover.

2. Wait until the last week prior to the examination to begin studying. It keeps the material fresh in your mind.

3. When in doubt, always choose the answer “C.”

4. A good night’s sleep the night before doesn’t help. A semiconscious state helps you recall information.

5. Never use a study group. Helping a shipmate learn advancement information will not prepare you for the test.

6. Remember, warfare specialties, personal awards and earning degrees are outside activities that do not increase promotion opportunities.

7. Don’t worry about performance marks, since they have no impact on promotion.

8. You get points for being the faster finisher of the rating exam. Don’t bother to carefully read the exam or your answers.

9. Some rates permit the use of dividers, calculators, maneuvering boards or special material during the examination. The Educational Service Officer has all of these items, so don’t bother checking beforehand if ESO has the items or will allow you to bring your programable computer to the test site.

10. Take your time getting to the examination. Not bringing your identification card or being a few minutes late doesn’t matter.

These tips came to us from the Chief’s Mess at Naval Surface Warfare Center Indian Head, Md.

MARCH 1997
The well-known look of bell-bottomed dungarees may soon be “out of style” for the Navy. The reason for the fashion fracas is a six-month “test” of two new types of dungaree uniforms worn by the Navy’s junior enlisted Sailors aboard ships, including the aircraft carriers USS Nimitz (CVN 68) and USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74).

Master Chief Electrician’s Mate (AW/SS) Steven R. Hillis, Nimitz’s command master chief, said the ship was chosen because, “an aircraft carrier fits the bill, since it has such a wide variety of jobs with the aircraft, power plants and a huge amount of shipboard maintenance. Nimitz also has a fairly large percentage of women in its crew compared to most ships in the area, so the board can test the uniforms on both men and women in the same work situations.”

The new apparel is being worn by 124 Sailors. One set is described as being similar to a set of Dickies-brand work pants and shirt, the shirt being of a lighter color blue like traditional dungarees. The other uniform features jean pants comparable to a pair of Levi-brand 501s.

Hull Technician 1st Class Shelly Rawson, of Nimitz’s Engineering Department’s Repair Division, said she gets bombard-ed with questions everywhere she goes on the ship. “They want to know how they fit, feel, how well they wash, everything! It’s still a little too early to tell which of the two types of working uniforms I prefer; they are both so comfortable to work in,” she said.

Rawson noticed some differences in the uniforms. “For example, the women’s shirt has a snap at the top of the collar, where the men’s still has a button,” said Rawson. “And the gig lines don’t match on the women’s uniforms, but they do on the men’s.”

Aviation Boatswain’s Mate 3rd Class Patrick Freitas, of the Air Department Fuels Division, is all for the new look, saying that a change for the Navy has been a long time coming.

“These new uniforms are great. They’re easy to bend in, work in — they don’t tear easily.”

– AB3 Patrick Freitas

Bish is assigned to USS Nimitz (CVN 68), and Shade is assigned to USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74).

Sailors aboard USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74) compare the traditional bell-bottom Seafarers to the proposed utility uniforms being wear tested aboard Navy ships. MS3 L.C. Fleming wears the old dungarees. FN J.A. Burnett and AK1(AW) P.A. Brooks model the new uniforms.

ALL HANDS
Imagine an inauguration with all the pomp and circumstance. Think of the colorful parade with the procession of military bands, floats and brightly dressed marchers who fill the streets as thousands of spectators watch all the pageantry. An American president is sworn in while the entire world watches. Have you ever wondered who puts all of this together?

Each April, before a presidential election, a joint task force, representing all five branches of service, is formed. The Armed Forces Inaugural Committee (AFIC) plans, coordinates and provides military support for the Presidential Inauguration and other inaugural events throughout the entire period. The military has provided this type of support since George Washington came into office more than 200 years ago.

Of the 819 service members assigned to this AFIC, 189 are Navy personnel – 37 officers and 152 Sailors.

According to Personnelman 2nd Class Woodrow Arrington Jr., of Belhaven, N.C., “Learning the different protocols of the various branches is a new experience for me. I’ve never done anything like this before.” Arrington manages the clerical staff at the command.

Ratings on the AFIC range from hospital corpsman to illustrator draftsman. Sailors work in jobs such as personnel, operations and security, logistics and communications. There are also special staffs including legal, medical and safety advisors. A motor pool provides transportation for special guests.
The Navy Platoon, United States Navy Ceremonial Guard, marches as part of the Presidential Escort down Pennsylvania Avenue.

with the AFIC at future joint-service commands and in supervising younger Sailors.

Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Courtney Forbes was selected for the AFIC while attached to the branch clinic at the Washington Navy Yard, Washington, D.C. “At first I was skeptical about what the job entailed,” explained the Gaithersburg, Md., native, “but once I got here and got an idea of exactly what I’d be doing, I found it quite interesting.”

Forbes planned and organized first aid stations at both the inaugural parade and the swearing-in ceremony. The stations are set up primarily for active-duty personnel, but serve everyone in an emergency.

Since many of the Sailors work in an independent environment within AFIC, they are grateful for the opportunity to develop sharper leadership and supervisory skills.

“I’ve had the opportunity to develop and show what leadership abilities I have,” said Christy. “It showed me what I was capable of.” Christy was the only graphic artist during the first three months at AFIC. He supported the entire graphics division by creating visual aides for command briefs and providing layout and design for the AFIC’s newsletter.

The next time you watch an inaugural parade, remember who’s behind the scenes, pulling it all together. ±
Women fighter pilots usually get the “pioneer” label, but behind the scenes in naval aviation, women like CDR Ruth Forrest, earn that distinction with little fanfare.

Forrest’s career-long dream recently became very real when she became an Aircraft Intermediate Maintenance Officer (AIMDO) aboard the aircraft carrier USS John F. Kennedy (CVN 67), homeported in Mayport, Fla.

“Women coming into the Navy today can soar if they work hard,” Forrest said. “But remember, gender exclusions have fallen by the wayside only recently.”

Many of these exclusions stood squarely in Forrest’s way for 17 years. Qualifying for department head duty on a carrier of about 4,000 people demands a solid record of sea time and success at tough assignments. Forrest said Pentagon screening boards look at people’s records and decide who gets these jobs worldwide.

“Because of combat restrictions, I didn’t have the opportunity to get the sea time that men readily get. So, I had to try other ways to qualify.” During her 19 years in a Navy uniform, she obtained the “ticket punches” for her career pinnacle — duty on one of America’s 12 aircraft carriers.

Born in Little Rock, Ark., and raised in Wichita, Kan., Ruth Forrest didn’t come from a military family. “When I first mentioned it at age 18, my mother was appalled. She said [going into the Navy] would give me a bad reputation.”

But in 1974, the year before Forrest enlisted, she worked two and three jobs, lived on her own, and made $3,900 that year. By comparison, Navy pay seemed high to her; and the G.I. Bill was an “unimaginable bonanza. In the Navy, I’d learn a trade and get paid more than minimum wage, and I wasn’t even going to have to pay rent. To me, it was well worth four years of ‘indentured servitude,’” she said.
So in 1975, at age 23, Forrest went to boot camp. Women made up 2 percent of the Navy then, compared to about 12 percent today; and they were still nudged into clerical and medical jobs. But she was on the brink of change. Once there, Forrest’s company commander designated her platoon as one to be trained in aviation support. He called them ‘airdales.’

“We didn’t even know what that was,” Forrest said, but she found out fast. Her first job was at NAS Meridian, Miss., in a squadron flying Navy T2-C trainers. “They gave the women a chance and no one was badly treated, though the male supervisors weren’t sure how to deal with us,” Forrest said. “The consensus was that we had joined the Navy to get married.”

Forrest excelled, becoming one of the Navy’s first female plane captains, working on a busy
flight line and preparing Navy jets for missions. Even today, it's highly prestigious when a young Sailor makes plane captain.

Moving on to Chesapeake, Va., Forrest's savvy grew. There, she became the Navy's first "crash captain" at a naval landing facility. Growing more attuned to the Navy's promotion system, she worked hard to finish her college degree and soon was accepted to Officer Candidate School.

Upon commissioning as an ensign in 1980, a woman's only opportunity in an operational flying squadron was in P-3 Orions, a propeller plane that's still the Navy's primary maritime patrol aircraft. In all of naval aviation, only two squadrons were open to women officers then. Male aviators who got orders to those dreaded it, Forrest said, thinking that women would drag them down.

"Gender restrictions were very strict then. It sounds like dinosaur bones when you hear it now — which is amazing because 1980 wasn't that long ago." Forrest said her only choice was to charge in, using a strategy of humor. Behind the comic exterior, Forrest was acutely aware that she was under a microscope. "Everyone was waiting for me to trip."

In time, she won the men over with a mixture of competence and wit. It wasn't long before she moved on to maintaining high performance carrier jets, earning her
selection as a maintenance officer in an A-6E Intruder squadron. The attack pilots she worked with were at land bases for their initial "fleet replacement squadron," required before flying from carriers. This provided Forrest with a way to reach her own goal of carrier duty, but she had to get "sea time."

The male Intruder pilots in her squadron flew short stints to carriers at sea to prove they could safely launch and land their jets on the carrier deck. Forrest immediately volunteered as detachment maintenance officer on all these trips. She did 15 total trips during her tour, getting sea time on eight different Navy carriers.

In 1994, when Forrest went to a Japan staff, getting sea time was still paramount in her mind. Last summer, she went afloat on USS Independence (CVN 65), shadowing the maintenance officer during Exercise Cobra Gold with Thailand’s forces. This enhanced her earlier sea experience because, back when she was with the Intruder aircrews, no full-complement air wing had been embarked. Seeing how an entire air wing and the aircraft carrier’s crew mesh in real world operations was crucial.

"JFK" isn’t a cushy, coffee-sipping desk job for Forrest. She directs the work of about 300 people. Her maintenance shops furnish aircraft components, equipment and maintenance services to keep 70 aircraft flying, day and night.

"People don’t normally see these workshops," she said. The aircraft hangar bay and the flight deck lined with planes — these are the ‘glamour spots’ of the carrier. "There’s a constant stream of aircraft components required to keep aviation squadrons in business out in the midst of a watery nowhere. Forrest runs a jet repair shop, an engine test cell and air frame repair shops. She furnishes heavy-duty tractors and other equipment to move huge F-14 Tomcats, F/A-18 Hornets and other jets around the carrier deck. Her electronics experts fix avionics gear — radio, radars, video displays, etc.

Essentially, the lives of aviators depend on the quality workmanship coming from Forrest’s department.

It’s been a long road for Forrest. "I’ve always found that organizations welcome people who strive for the best. Aircraft maintenance is hard work. But when you do it well, your gender just doesn’t matter." 

Warnken is a Reserve public affairs officer for Commander Fleet Air Western Pacific.
MORE THAN PLUMBERS

Story by JO2 Jeremy Allen

From the first battalion commissioning in 1942 at Camp Allen, Va., to the mountains of Bosnia, Seabees have worked and fought around the globe.

Whether construction electricians, mechanics or equipment operators, Seabees "can do." Their motto says it all — "We build, we fight."

The first Seabees came from civilian construction trades and were placed under the leadership of the Navy's Civil Engineer Corps. They went into deserts, jungles or mountains to clear the way for others to fly, drive and run into battle.

Since the Seabees incorporate seven different rates, it's sometimes common to learn other jobs. One of those jobs is the utilitiesman or UT.

"The only thing I wanted to be was a Seabee," said UT3 Eric M. Coder, assigned to Construction Battalion Unit (CBU) 422 at Naval Station Anacostia, Washington, D.C. "I picked the UT rate and I love it."

"We install and repair plumbing, air-conditioning, refrigeration and water and sewage lines," said UCCM(SCW) John R. Thomas, the E-8 and E-9 Seabee detailer at the Bureau of Naval Personnel. "The best part of the rate is the variety of things you can do or try."

"As a utilitiesman, I'm really a jack of all trades," said UT3 Jerry R. King, assigned to CBU 403 at

A UCCM Michael R. Oliver of Underwater Construction Team 2 drills holes in the coral bed alongside an underwater cable to install clamps to stabilize the cable at the Pacific Missile Range facility off Kauai, Hawaii. Utilitiesman and Construction Electricians become UC at paygrade E-9.

UT2 Penny Peterson cleans her M-16A1 rifle in preparation for the Seabees supporting Operation Joint Endeavor in Bosnia. Peterson is attached to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 133(NMCB-133).
Naval Station Annapolis, Md. “I’m mainly a plumber but I can help builders (BUs) and even pour concrete. UTs get the best of both worlds,” added King. “We [go on exercises] in the field with the Marines, as well as [work in] the desert and the woods.”

“I’d rather be a UT than any other rate in the Navy,” said UT2 Jean B.M. Espiritu, also assigned to CBU 403. “No matter what we lack in materials or time, we always have the ‘can do’ attitude.

“An attitude is what I had,” said Espiritu. “But now I’ve learned to get rid of the attitude and do my best.”

“Always sign your name to your work,” said King. “Do your job as though you are putting your actual name on it.”

“Sailors will always need plumbing and sewage services, so UTs are definitely in demand,” said UT1(SCW) Johnny R. Shields, assigned to CBU 403. “Take away a UT and see how bad they’d be missed. For me a UT stands for ‘unlimited talent.’”

UT2 Eric L. Colbert assigned to Seabee Unit 403, a native of Cincinnati, demolishes an old sprinkler system at Naval Station Annapolis, Md.

A Naval Construction Training Center instructor UT1 Eric Andrews demonstrates the workings of an air conditioning and refrigeration system to UT2 Edward Green and UT3 Cory Miller during the basic Utilitiesman training portion of the NMCB-74 Civic Action Team’s homeport training in preparation for deployment to the island of Yap.

“Our job is pretty technical,” said UT2 Mark A. Case, assigned to CBU 422. “Not everyone can do our job. You have to know more than just fitting pipes together.”

“So, if you like a job that picks your brain, keeps you thinking, keeps you on your feet and gets a lot of hands-on work, the UT rate is for you,” said King. “To me, all Seabees are the same — the jobs may vary, but we’re all one big family.”

Allen is a photojournalist assigned to All Hands.
Losing weight is a difficult proposition for anyone. Compound the normal obstacles of a weight loss program with the rigors of a six-month deployment aboard an aircraft carrier, and some would wonder if it could be done at all. Well, don’t lose hope — help may be on the way.

During USS Enterprise’s recent Mediterranean deployment, a study was conducted to explore the feasibility of a six-month standardized shipboard weight control program.

According to CAPT Karen E. Dennis of the National Naval Medical Center, Bethesda, Md., the hypothesis of the study was that a standardized, multifaceted lifestyle modification approach to weight loss could be implemented on ships.

Dennis believes this will help Sailors comply with weight and physical readiness standards, reduce risk factors for cardiovascular disease and lower obesity-related expenses to a greater extent than the current command-level remedial program.
Dennis said both the physical readiness and the economic implications of the research are important because of the impact to Navy policy, the health and well-being of its personnel, and the Navy’s ability to meet mission requirements.

“Sailors who fall out of standards,” said Dennis, “face not only health risks, but career risks as well. We wanted to find out if this (deployment) was a good time to try and lose weight.”

To implement the study, LT Brenda Adams, a Navy dietitian from Naval Medical Center, Portsmouth, Va., deployed with the ship.

Using 40 crew members who were near or out of standards, Adams set up two groups. The “control” group committed to losing weight on their own during the cruise and were not monitored. The “treatment” group worked closely with Adams through counseling sessions consisting of information on nutrition, eating behaviors, exercise and stress management.

What makes this study different is that, in addition to stressing increased physical activity to achieve weight loss and improve overall health, the program also teaches Sailors how to make good food choices.

The Sailors in the treatment group set goals and were closely monitored through weekly weigh-ins and a regular review of what they ate. Although final results of the study have not yet been calculated, Adams said the attitude she witnessed with the treatment group gave her reason to be encouraged.

“They felt like they made a lot of progress,” she said. “They were very supportive of the program. I have to give the guys the credit. I was available to help but they were just very motivated.”

Schafer is a Norfolk-based photojournalist assigned to All Hands.
Hits the deck!

Story by JO1 Ron Schafer

On a cold, snowy and windy day in January, one year to the day after the first arrested landing onboard, the Navy’s newest aircraft carrier said, ‘Welcome Aboard’ to the Navy’s newest fighter aircraft.

One hundred forty miles off the coast of North Carolina, USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74) played host to the new F/A-18 E/F Super Hornet as it conducted at-sea trials, one year into its three-year test program. Envisioned as the successor to the F/A-18 A-D, the Super Hornet offers longer range, greater endurance and increased payload-carrying ability.

It also has more powerful engines, improved carrier bring-back capability and enhanced survivability. After a year of testing at Naval Air Warfare Center, Patuxent River, Md., the F/A-18 E/F Integrated Test Team was anxious to put the Super Hornet through its paces at sea.

“We want to find out about its characteristics for operating on an aircraft carrier,” explained Chief Aviation Electronics Technician Jeffrey J. Woell, who specifically deals with reliability and maintainability issues on the F/A-18 E/F.

“We’re looking at the aircraft being much more...
maintainable — better maintenance hours per flight hour — which equates to more flying time. So, we need to know how will it work in the hangar bay, and how will we function to support it in the hangar bay and on the flight deck. We have to be able to support it in both areas. We need to document that information and incorporate that into our long-term maintenance planning.

Super Hornet's sea trial qualifications demonstrated an impressive reduction in final landing approach speed — 10 knots slower than its predecessor — which increases the safety margin and handling characteristics for the pilot.

With water temperature around 70 degrees and air temperature in the mid-20s, an eerie steam rose off the choppy surface of the Atlantic Ocean. Winds in excess of 40 knots blew snow and sleet across the flight deck making conditions treacherous. LT Frank Morley found a hole in the clouds he could punch through and, at 10 a.m., on that cold Saturday morning, put the first F/A-18 E Super Hornet on Stennis' flight deck. The youngest pilot in the Super Hornet test program, Morley was understandably thrilled to land on a carrier after a year of field landings. “The adrenaline rush is a lot higher,” he said. “The carrier is the most dynamic environment in the world. What's kind of ironic is that a year ago today I was here flying a normal Hornet when they did the first cats and traps on Stennis. Now

Flight deck personnel aboard USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74) prepare to launch the Navy's F/A-18E on the flight deck during the aircraft's initial sea trials.
I'm back and it's just a thrill. Every Navy pilot alive loves it and lives for it.”

Morley added that while the Super Hornet has so much more to offer than its predecessor, from a pilot's standpoint, they're very similar. “The beautiful thing is that this airplane flies very much like the ‘A’ through ‘D,,'” said Morley.

“The avionics and weapons systems of the airplane are very common, so, a Hornet pilot is going to feel very comfortable jumping into this airplane. “I think the biggest thing [a pilot’s] going to see is 14,500 pounds of gas without any external tanks,” Morley added. “To a Hornet pilot, [that’s] going to mean a lot. Every Hornet pilot you ever ask loves how the Hornet flies and [pilots are] going to continue to love how the Super Hornet flies.”

The importance of the day was not lost on the crew of USS John C. Stennis. According to the ship’s Commanding Officer CAPT Robert C. Klosterman, hosting the Super Hornet’s first arrested landing was just another highlight in the short, but already proud history of the Navy’s newest carrier.

“We’re excited about it,” said Klosterman. “It’s our mission. To be able to do something that is historic in nature at the same time is a great feeling. What better sense of mission accomplishment than to be part of the first carrier landing of the Navy’s newest airplane?”

A naval aviator himself, Klosterman admitted to being somewhat envious of Morley. “I don’t think there’s an aviator alive who wouldn’t like to be in the cockpit of that airplane,” he said. “The fact that
Lt. Morley was in there speaks highly of his skills, but there isn’t a pilot anywhere who wouldn’t trade places with him.”

The Navy plans to buy 1,000 F/A-18 E/F aircraft through the year 2015 with the first of those expected to go into operational service in the fleet in 2001. ❧

Schafer is a Norfolk-based photojournalist for All Hands.
The Navy's newest Strike Fighter, the F/A-18E/F Super Hornet, makes a final approach to the flight deck of the Navy's newest nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74), during the aircraft's initial sea trials.
Sickness, disease and death are daily enemies for the largest rate in the Navy, the hospital corpsman (HM). HMs provide health care to all Navy and Marine Corps personnel and are affectionately known to many people as "doc."

From ships to subs and on the front lines, HMs are there. "The rate was created as a direct result of war," according to Hospital Corpsman Master Chief Richard D. Osborne, HM detailing manager at the Bureau of Naval Personnel.

"HMs also have the honor of having more medal of honor winners than any other rate," said HMCS(FMF) Joseph M. Manifold, the E-6 to E-8 HM detailer. "It's the proudest job you'll ever have. We do so many things."

"[HMs] used to be called 'lobolly boys' during the Boxer Rebellion. Then they evolved into the pharmacist's mate and now they are called corpsmen," said Osborne. "They were needed to hold down the patient when the doctor would 'bleed' the disease from the blood stream."

As the medical field has evolved, so has the HM
rate. From bandages to controlled substances, corpsmen are more than just a doctor’s assistant. “HMs do everything from patient assessment to labor and delivery,” said Hospitalman Nicole D. Hopkins, assigned to the labor and delivery room, National Naval Medical Hospital (NNMC), Bethesda, Md. “Taking care of babies is an important job. Other corpsmen see people dying, I get to see people being born. It’s awesome.”

“The Hospital Corps has something for everyone, ranging from the highly technical to the highly operational,” said HMC Michael R. Forcier, assigned to the Radiology Department, Naval Medical Center, Portsmouth, Va. There are approximately 40 different HM Navy Enlisted Classification Codes (NECs).

“The Hospital Corps is unique in that it offers an individual the opportunity to capitalize on personal interests by applying them on the job,” said Forcier. “For example, there’s biomedical repair for the mechanically inclined. For the adventurous, there’s independent duty, search and rescue, field service and special operations. My own specialty, nuclear medicine, requires an in-depth knowledge of computers and radioisotopes.”

Forcier, a Cumberland, R.I., native, is one of only four chief petty officers currently serving as Navy clinical nuclear medicine technicians.

“We have corpsmen working in all areas of Navy medicine,” said Forcier. “[They serve in] fields like radiation health, cardiopulmonary medical administration, X-ray, physical therapy, psychiatry, dermatology, laboratory, aerospace medicine, preventive medicine, otolaryngology, ophthalmology, urology, respiratory and the operating room. Of course, you don’t have to specialize if you’re looking for a challenge. General duty corpsmen have a wide variety of assignments open to them. Many staff our emergency rooms throughout the Navy.”

People are the No. 1 concern for HMs. “It takes a strong desire to look out for the other person.”

– HMC Michael R. Forcier

People are the No. 1 concern for HMs. “It takes a strong desire to look out for the other person,” said Osborne. “You’ve got to really like the human body. The best part about being an HM is providing care to the crew [you’re with].”

“To me, being a corpsman is about helping people and being there for them,” said HN Kenneth Figueroa, a medical lab technician assigned to NNMC. “I make people feel like a person, not a patient.”

“That’s why it’s so important that I treat them as my own family,” added HM2 Dinorah Vazquez, a nuclear medicine technician assigned to NNMC. “We are taking care of our family, the active-duty members. We are so important because health is everyone’s priority. Without health, who cares about anything else.”

That job can be done right only with proper training. “If you do not know a procedure, ask someone,” said HM3 Jeffrey D. Bozeman, an optical support technician stationed at the Washington Navy Yard, Washington D.C. “This is a broad and diverse field. Being advanced is hard, so get out and learn.”

Being an HM means total commitment and teamwork. “No matter how much you
A HM2 James Pennypacker, from Toledo, Ohio, and HM2 George A. Frausto, a native of Blue Island, Ill., examine the quality of an X-ray. They are both stationed at Naval Station Hospital, Rota, Spain.

HM3 Nicole D. Hopkin, assigned to the labor and delivery section, carefully checks the vital signs of a newborn baby at National Naval Medical Center, Bethesda, Md.

HM3 Chess Y. Lipscomb, a Pittsburgh native, gives X-ray machine placement training for a fractured hand to HM3 Steven G. Roest of Applesprings, Texas.

might hate it, remember to do your job, learn from your mistakes and go on,” said Figueroa. “We can accomplish anything if we work together,” added Vazquez.

“Honor, courage and commitment are the Navy’s values,” said Hopkins. “For me, as an HM, it’s the same; you have to have honor for the patients who put their trust in you, the courage to do the job and the commitment to see that it’s done right.”

“HMs have a wide variety of assignments open to them,” said Forcier. “The only prerequisite is that you have a genuine desire to help your shipmates.”

Allen is a photojournalist assigned to All Hands.
AM3(NAC) Vedat Aksoy, of Rochester, N.Y., inspects a pitch control rod on an MH-53E.

Aerial Minesweeping Squadron grows into ‘one Navy’ identity

Story by JO1 Bobby Jones
Aerial mine countermeasure squadrons don't travel light. As self-sustaining, rapid deployment assets, they deploy with everything, including the kitchen sink.

To meet a 72-hour rapid deployment timeline, from notification to fly away on C-5 aircraft, the squadrons must be ready to pack up helicopters; bulky sweeping sleds; tents; trucks and other heavy equipment; small boats; kitchen utensils; and enough food for 90 days.

In addition to the men and women representing almost every aviation community, the squadrons deploy with their own doctors and corpsmen, intelligence specialists, Seabees, mess specialists and administrative support personnel.

Prior to 1994, the Navy had five helicopter minesweeping squadrons, two active-duty, two Reserve and a fleet readiness squadron. Because of their size and operational costs, the squadrons were phased out.

Today, following a major restructuring, there are only two surviving squadrons: HM-15, relocated from Alameda, Calif., to Corpus Christi, Texas, and HM-14 at Naval Air Station, Norfolk. The two Reserve squadrons, Alameda-based HM-19 and Norfolk-based HM-18, were disestablished and integrated as the
Reserve element of the two active-duty squadrons. The fleet readiness squadron was disestablished.

As fully integrated squadrons, HM-15 and HM-14 are breaking new ground in many ways. Last October, CDR John Scott became the first Selected Reservist in peacetime to command an active-duty squadron. As the commanding officer of HM-14, Scott is on a two-year recall to active duty. His executive officer is a regular Navy officer who shares responsibilities with a Reserve commander and a Reserve element officer-in-charge. Command of the squadron will rotate between active-duty and Reserve commanders.

With integration, HM-14 has 700 officers and Sailors, active and Reserve, 12 MH-53E Sea Dragons and twice the minesweeping equipment it had before.

Four officers and 160 enlisted personnel are TARs (Training and Administration of Reserves) who serve full time, to ensure the Selected Reservists (SELRES) — 18 officers and 76 enlisted — receive training for mobilization and peacetime missions.

"During the week, we’re just Sailors,” said Personnelman 1st Class Catherine Cederholm, the training department’s leading petty officer (LPO). “Nobody cares if we’re TAR, regular Navy or SELRES. We’re expected to do our jobs.”

A regular drill weekend is scheduled each month to train and support the majority of the Reserve element. “An additional weekend is set aside as “fly weekend” to give Reserve pilots time in the cockpit. Shifts of day, night, weekend and support checks keep the squadron operational 24-hours a day.

AD1 Donald Schnare, a squadron quality assurance LPO, admits that, at first, he was apprehensive about how integration would work.

“I thought TARs and SELRES would just tag along behind us while we worked,” he said. “But the TARs work alongside us during the week and on the weekend, the SELRES come in and really make a difference. I actually look forward to weekends.”

Like other squadron regular Navy Sailors, Schnare is still trying to learn the language and acronyms that are unique to the Naval Reserve, but he has found common ground when he talks maintenance to Reservists like AMS1 William Klingingsmith.

A plankowner in HM-14 while serving 12 years of active duty, Klingingsmith now works as a civilian at Naval Depot Cherry Point, N.C. Day after day, he rips apart, rebuilds and puts MH-53s back together. Because of his combined Navy and civilian expertise, he is a maintenance chief for HM-14.

"I’m one of only five maintenance control chiefs in the squadron,” he said. “I make sure that all discrep-
AD2 Gilbert Valverde, a TAR from Detroit, shows Reservist AD2 Carolyn Farrar, of Long Island, N.Y., how to remove and install a sleeve and spindle on the main rotor head of an MH-53E.

ancies have been signed off. I verify that a helo is safe to fly.”

With a full-time, demanding civilian job, Klingingsmith is limited to drill weekends and a couple of weeks a year for annual training. But, if he could spend more time in uniform, Cederholm could make it happen.

“Because we are manned seven days-a-week,” she said, “we can provide flexible drilling and annual training opportunities for SELRES. If they can’t make a regular drill weekend, they can come in any time to make it up. “The entire squadron is aware of the need to document training for our drilling Reservists, so everyone has learned to do the paperwork.”

Sharing a mission with a Texas-based squadron means regular deployments to the Gulf of Mexico where the HM squadrons can train in concert with the Navy’s other mine countermeasures assets. USS Inchon (MCS 12), homeported at Ingleside, Texas, is mother ship to both surface and aerial minesweepers and the explosive ordnance units that travel with them.

HM-14 also participates in fleet exercises up and down the East Coast. Currently, the squadron is participating in the overseas, multiservice, multi-national Exercise Blue Harrier in Northern Europe.

“This is a very active squadron,” said Scott. “The training opportunities with HM-14 are 10 times greater than [they were] with HM-18 (the Reserve squadron).”

According to Scott, the ratio equates to about 4,400 hours of annual training with HM-14, as compared to only 1,100 hours with HM-18.

AMS2 Marlon Bowser made the move from HM-18 to HM-14 when the squadrons officially integrat-
ed March 4, 1995. “I was thinking about getting out back then, but I just reenlisted for six years,” he said. “They push us, but it’s fun. I’m learning more, getting my quals signed off. I’m looking forward to deploying for 15 days in Blue Harrier.

“You get good training on weekdays,” said Bowser, who spends several days a month at the squadron. “It’s important to me. If we mobilize, I want to know what I’m doing.”

As a mechanic, Bowser has been working with active-duty counterparts, replacing swash plates with reworked ones, a requirement that downed some 200 H-53E Marine and naval aircraft throughout the fleet last year.

“I feel good working hand in hand with those guys,” he said. “The work is important. If we don’t do it right, the helo won’t fly. And nobody cares what I am. All that counts is that I’m willing to get in there and work.”

Nothing is easy with aerial minesweeping. In an exercise where dummy mines are sown into the sea bottom or a real world requirement like the 1990 mining of the Persian Gulf in Desert Shield and Desert Storm, the demanding schedule is much the same.

In the June/July 1996 issue of Air & Space Magazine, Michael Alves describes a typical minesweeping operation.

“Pilots fly arrow-straight tracks back and forth, often for miles at a time, so that every inch of a suspected field can be accounted for. But the helicopter is often buffeted by wind and by the motions of the sled in the waves below. Towing a sled on a straight path in these conditions forces the pilot to put the helicopter through all kinds of angle and attitude contortions,” he wrote.

Squadron pilots and crew do much of their training on multimillion dollar simulators. CDR A1 Kolpacke, the squadron’s senior Selected Reservist and former commander of the Reserve element, knows the simulators better than most. As a civilian, he is a site manager for the contractor providing the training systems, including the simulators. As an HM-18 pilot, he remembers the early stages of the restructuring effort.

“The aerial minesweeping community had to speak with one voice five years ago,” he said. “There was never any discussion about whether we could combine five squadrons into two, but how we were going to do it. We’re beginning to see the respect and credibility we earned in HM-18. It just takes time to adjust to a new identity.”

Both HM-14 and HM-15 are organized into detachments. Regular Navy officers and Sailors would be the first to deploy on the rapid deployment timeline. Six of the squadrons Sea Dragons would go with them. The second detachment, a combination of active and Reserve officers and Sailors, TARs and SELRES, must be prepared to deploy with them or as replacements. Remaining personnel would be utilized for shore-based training and fleet replacement crews.

In their first year as an integrated squadron, HM-14 earned the Battle E, the CNO’s Safety Award and a Meritorious Unit Commendation.

“I think we’ve come through the culture shock pretty well,” said Kolpacke. +

Jones is assigned to the public affairs office, Naval Air Reserve, Norfolk.
Core values bring Sailors together in combined squadron

Story by JOC Charlotte Crist

Shortly after Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron (HM) 14 became the second of two active-duty squadrons to fully integrate with Naval Reserve HM squadrons, the command master chief of HM-14 realized he had a problem.

“I’ve got 700 people when they are all here,” said Master Chief Machinery Repairman(AW/SW) Wynton Hardy. “At first, I tried to look at them all as simply ‘Vanguard’ Sailors, but it wasn’t that simple.

“We had to learn about drilling Reservists so we could [meet] their needs.”

Meanwhile, the Reservists were having an identity crisis of their own. Would they ever again feel the camaraderie and ownership they experienced as the “Norsemen” of HM-18?

“It was like culture shock for us,” admits CDR Al Kolpacke, the senior Reserve officer to make the move from HM-18 to HM-14. “You can’t order people to change. All you can do is make sure they don’t get lost in the shuffle. Change doesn’t happen overnight. It takes time.”

In the two years since the integration, the squadron has evolved into what it’s new commanding officer, CDR John Scott, calls a “dynamic organization.”

“A splendid thing has happened,” said Scott. “HM-14 is far more capable today with the Reserves. Through all the cultural changes, leadership has stayed committed to the process of improvement. Much of that improvement was made possible through our core values.”

By emphasizing honor, courage and commitment, squadron leaders found the common denominator with which both Vanguard and Norsemen Sailors could identify.

“We all learned a valuable lesson,” said Hardy. “We discovered that when we focused on accomplishing the mission — honor, courage and commitment cross all boundaries.”

Personnelman 1st Class Catherine Cederholm, the training department leading petty officer, is convinced that commitment has played a big role in the changes she has seen in the squadron.

“I give the Reservists a lot of credit for sticking it out during the transition,” she said. “They were willing to change and because of that, I see mutual respect between the active-duty Sailors and the Selected Reservists (SELRES).”

For Aviation Structural Mechanic 1st Class Bill Klingingsmith, a SELRES, making the four-hour drive from his home in North Carolina to Norfolk for drill weekends is more a point of honor than economically beneficial.

Today, as HM-14’s learning curve continues to provide challenges, there are definite signs of change. Almost all of the 700 Sailors are now wearing the Vanguard ball caps, and unless it involves an administrative matter, Sailors aren’t asked if they are Regular, TAR or SELRES. It’s not that important anymore.

Crist is assigned to NR USACOM Psychological Operations AVU 0286, Norfolk.
We've all heard the line from P.T. Barnum, "There's a sucker born every minute." Most of us probably laugh and figure that Barnum was right, but think we will never fall prey to a con artist.

Unfortunately, time and again, service members from E-1 to O-10 prove that they are just as gullible as anyone else.

The best way to avoid losing your hard-earned money to a fraudulent scheme is to become an educated consumer.

The first thing to remember is that con artists understand and exploit human psychology. They know that most people are friendly and will behave in predictable ways when they meet new people. The con artist takes that knowledge and uses friendliness and predictability against people.

Members of the Armed Forces present a particularly inviting target for some con artists. Service members have a steady income, they often lack business savvy and are far from home.

For example, con artists know it's easier to say, "No," to a high-pressure sales person in a store than it is to say, "No," to a friendly, personable, acquaintance in your home. Using this knowledge, some of the most successful scams involve setting up what appears to be a casual meeting in a public place and then establishing a pretext for a later meeting in your home.

In a recent scheme, two attractive women sought out male service members who were out alone or in small groups near a military base. The women approached the men, made small talk for a while and then asked them for a date. If the offer was accepted, the women arranged to come over to the member's apartment later. When the women arrived, they were accompanied by another person who was introduced as a "friend."

At this point, the service members could have become suspicious and backed out of the situation. Instead, they demonstrated the common courtesy cons depend on and invited the people into their homes. Next, the "friend" began a carefully prepared pitch, convincing the members to enter into a contract for what proved to be overpriced, poor quality, products.

"Easy payment" and "automatic allotment" scams are particularly effective with service members because the con artist knows if they can get the "mark" to sign an allotment form, the money will flow automatically until the member realizes that he or she's
been ripped off and takes the initiative to stop it. In
addition, some marks delay stopping the allotment
because they are embarrassed at having been
gullible. Keep in mind that if you are the victim of a
scam, you can help others, and maybe even get
yourself out of a bad contract, by reporting it
immediately to your command or a judge advocate.

Magazine scams are a perennial favorite of con
artists. Typically, a telemarketer will call offering a
free trial subscription to a magazine. If the service
member accepts the offer, they provide a name and
address and then conclude the phone call. The
member then gets a follow-up call from a different
person. This person claims to represent the same
company as the first caller. They go on to explain
the first caller is a new sales representative
and made a mistake in saying the trial subscription
is free.

Then they try to convince the service member the
subscription is still a good deal at “X” dollars per
month and ask the member to provide their bank
account number to the caller so they can arrange
for easy, automatic payments of only “X” dollars
per month.

First, be very cautious of arranging for allot-
ments. Second, if you’re thinking of ordering a
magazine, ask yourself how much it would be to
buy the magazine off the rack each month.

Second, add up the per month cost and multiply
that amount by 12 to get the annual subscription
rate. Compare that total to the amount the sales
person is asking you to pay. Also, remember a
legitimate subscription price is almost always
cheaper, than buying the magazine off the rack all
year. If the easy payment you’re being offered is
more than the off-the-rack rate, turn down the offer
and hang up.

Almost everyone has received a notification in
the mail that they’re a finalist in a contest or that
they’ve won some fabulous prize. The mailing may
even explain in detail the prizes involved. Invari-
ably, the letter will instruct the recipient to call a
telephone number to give information the
company needs to “verify” that recipient has
won the prize.

The first clue this is a scam is that
the number you are to call is a standard
area code or a “900” number. This
means if you call the number, you will
be paying for the privilege of being
given a high-pressure sales pitch.

The next indication the notice is
part of a scam is when it tells you all
you need to do to claim your prize is
to pay some amount (usually in
excess of $15) for “taxes” or shipping
or a “claimants fee.” Rest assured that
whatever “prize” you have won, or are
on the verge of winning, is worth less
than the amount the letter or telephone
contact will tell you to send.
Yet another common scam is the high-pressure sales pitch for “free vacations. Typically, you’ll be informed that you’ll receive a free vacation if you’ll agree to listen to a presentation for a vacation time-share or other property. So far, so good. The problem is the sales pitch is often delivered in a slick, high-pressure manner in some fancy hotel suite or at a resort.

The salesperson is trained to get you to commit yourself, and your bank account, on the spot. They make it seem that you will miss your “golden opportunity” if you take time to review the offer and consult with others about it. Don’t fall for it. If an offer is legitimate, it’ll wait for a few weeks while you check it out.

Keep in mind the thieves who execute these schemes are called con “artists” for a reason. A successful con requires thorough planning, skillful acting and precise execution. In addition, con artists rely on the fact that most people:

a) are friendly,

b) lack business savvy and
c) will buy impulsively.

You can protect yourself from becoming the victim of a con by following a few simple rules.

Never sign an allotment form for a product or service under pressure. If the offer is legitimate, the company offering it will be more than happy to provide you with additional information and time away from the sales person to think about it.

Never give out your credit card number over the telephone unless you placed the call.

Ask yourself if the offer is, “too good to be true.” If it is, your instincts are probably correct that there is some catch and the entire deal is a scam.

If you think the contract or product you are being offered is a good deal, bring it to a legal assistance office or someone in your command who is senior or experienced enough to give you good advice. This accomplishes the dual purpose of avoiding a snap decision and getting another person’s opinion.

Keep the offer in perspective. Think about what the money you might spend on a club, product or service can buy you (a down payment on a car, a nest egg for a rainy day, tickets for a nice trip on your next leave, etc.).

You’ve heard it before but it’s worth repeating, “There is no such thing as a free lunch.” Con artists and the scams they run have been around for centuries. Make sure you protect your money from their greedy hands.

Information provided by the Judge Advocate General’s office.
The mother of a 14-year-old boy wrote to the Consumer Protection Division complaining that her son had joined a music club without her consent. She said her son received as little as two days notice before unsolicited compact disks were mailed to him, giving him too little time to respond that he did not want them. As a result, he frequently received unwanted CDs and returned them at the club’s expense. Finally the club canceled his membership, citing the many returned CDs, but billed him for $15.75 to fulfill his purchase agreement.

Another consumer fulfilled his membership requirement with a music club and then requested, in writing, that his membership be canceled. He returned two unopened, unwanted CDs. The club sent a letter asking the consumer why he had returned the CDs, but then billed him repeatedly for one of them.

Music clubs have been around for years and are popular with kids and adults who buy a lot of compact disks and cassettes. Introductory offers can make the overall cost of buying from clubs lower than stores, but for some consumers, the inconvenience that may follow later is not worth the savings.

Many music clubs offer great-sounding deals to get you to join: Six CDs for the price of one, or 10 CDs free if you buy six more during the next four years. But when you read the fine print, you learn you must also pay shipping costs. In most cases, you have to fill out cards each month or every other month saying you don’t want to receive the

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How to not get ripped off

— Don’t be greedy. If it sounds too good to be true, nine times out of 10 it is.
— Be patient. If someone has to sell you something right now there’s usually a reason. It may not be a good idea.
— Be smart. Think things through before putting any money down.
— Read the fine print. Beware of any salesperson that won’t let you have a contract reviewed by your command or legal office.
— Don’t be intimidated. If you’re the buyer and he’s the seller, remember that you’re the boss.
— Walk away. Pressure tactics are very common, if you’re uncomfortable - leave.
— Tell someone. Talk to your chief, division officer, command financial specialist or staff judge advocate. You may save yourself from being swindled.

Credit Repair Scams

— If you’ve filed for bankruptcy, you may be told by a “credit repair” company that you won’t be able to get any type of credit for 10 years. This is not always true.
— To help you hide your bankruptcy, the credit repair company may promise to tell you how, for a fee, to establish a new credit identity. The plan is illegal.
— If you use this plan, often called file segregation, you could face fines or even prison.

Credit Card Scams

— Sign your new cards as soon as they arrive.
— Avoid signing a blank receipt, whenever possible. Draw a line through blank spaces above the total when you sign your card receipts.
offered selection or you will receive that offering in the mail.

The biggest problem the Consumer Protection Division hears about is billing. Most consumer complaints dealt with billing errors and most of the errors resulted from what consumers considered to be unsolicited CDs. The reason, often, is this: Throughout the year most clubs send out catalogs of offerings, usually including current special deals. Some of the clubs also send a card allowing you to choose which selection you want to order. Also listed on the card is the current featured selection. If you don’t return the card, you automatically receive the featured selection. If you don’t want the selection you can send it back, but if you don’t return it promptly the company will assume you’ve kept it and bill you. This can often take some time to sort out. During that time, the company might send your account to a collection agency.

Many of the complaints the Consumer Protection Division received included copies of letters from companies assigned to collect overdue balances. The consumers involved worried that their credit rating would be damaged if the dispute was not quickly resolved.

According to Consumer Reports magazine, some clubs will let you change your status to one allowing you to receive CDs or tapes only if you’ve ordered them. They might not agree to this until you have fulfilled your membership obligation. The companies do not advertise this option.

— Save your card receipts to compare with your billing statements.
— Open billing statements promptly and reconcile your card accounts each month just as you would your checking account.
— Report promptly and in writing any questionable charges to the card issuer.
— Never lend your card to anyone.
— Never give your number over the phone unless you are initiating a transaction with a company you know is reputable.

**Land Sales Scams**

— Be wary of sellers who offer land primarily as a great investment opportunity.
— Talk to local real estate agents to learn more about area land values and the resale market.
— If the land is underdeveloped, find out who is required to put in roads and utilities for water, electricity and sewage.

**Work-at-Home Scams**

— Be cautious about work-at-home ads.
— Many work-at-home schemes require you to spend your own money to do the job.
— Envelope-stuffing is the most common work-at-home scheme. Promoters usually advertise that for a small fee, they will tell you how to earn money stuffing envelopes.
— Assembly or craft work often require you to invest hundreds of dollars in equipment or supplies or many hours of time to produce goods for a company that has promised to buy them.
— Investigate companies you want to deal with by checking consumer protection agencies and the Better Business Bureau in the area where the company is located.
If you’re thinking of joining a music club, here are some issues to consider before you join:

— Check to see how large of a selection is offered in the category you prefer. You can call the toll-free customer service number for more information before joining. You might be able to view catalogs before making a decision and if you have Internet access you can often view a list of offerings on-line.

— Check to see how long it takes for new releases to be offered. If you like to buy new releases as soon as they become available, you might find you still have to buy your music at a music store.

— Understand the terms of the agreement. Usually, you must buy a certain number of CDs or tapes within a specified time period. Often, items purchased at special 2-for-1 sales or half-price sales don’t count toward your requirement you will probably be billed for the amount you would have spent.

— You most likely will be billed for shipping and handling charges on your introductory CDs, tapes or books. Find out how much those charges will be. This adds to the cost of joining the club.

— Ask about the return policy. Can you return a CD or tape if you don’t like it after you’ve played it? Do you have to pay return postage? Do you have to pay return postage if you receive a featured selection because you failed to return a card on time? As with all consumer transactions, the best time to ask questions is prior to making a purchase or signing a contract. Only then do you still have absolute control of the situation.

Avoid vacation rip-offs

A Maryland couple paid nearly $3,000 for membership in a club that promised vacations in fabulous resorts at discounted prices. But when the couple tried to take their promised vacations, they learned upon arrival at the hotel that their reservations had never been made. On another trip, the couple learned the resort rates were only half what their vacation club had charged them.

Almost everyone likes to get away once in awhile to see new sites or just to relax. Many of us plan trips and take care of the details ourselves—buying tickets, renting cars and making hotel reservations. Or we might consult a local travel agent for help with those arrangements. But lately, you may have noticed your mailbox filling up with notices for chances to win free trips or your phone ringing with offers of dream vacations and other prizes. You might be offered campground memberships or time-shares you are told you can pay for now and use forever. Or a travel club might offer the same sort of service: Pay now and never worry about paying for your vacations in the future. Before you sign up, beware: Your dream vacation could turn into a consumer nightmare.

Consumers can fall into dozens of traps when answering solicitations for free or inexpensive vacations, or pay-in-advance vacation plans. Many consumers who contact the Consumer Protection Division after signing up for vacation or travel clubs, time-shares or campground memberships found they didn’t get what they bargained for. They spent a lot of money for services they didn’t want or couldn’t use, and then couldn’t get their money back.
Common Complaints

A consumer, complaining about a vacation club that didn't deliver the promised services, writes: “They used a high-pressure sales pitch that sounded too good to be true.”

Many of the problems begin with unsolicited offers for prizes or free vacations. You might receive a postcard, letter or telephone call claiming you have won a valuable prize. Usually, this is followed by a high-pressure sales presentation that ends with an offer on a “great deal” that's available for one day only. The offer often involves purchasing a time-share or membership in a travel club or campground.

Consumers who spent a lot of money on vacation packages often complain the promises made during the sales pitch didn’t match the services provided after the contract is signed.

For example:
— Consumers weren't able to get vacation dates or locations requested. Some were never able to take the vacation they wanted.
— They didn’t receive promised savings because of added fees, dues and costs. Promised “discounts” weren’t available.
— Some learned they could buy less expensive vacations on their own.
— Some consumers found the accommodations to be very poor. In fact, some people refused to stay in them and paid for other accommodations.
— Consumers learned it’s very difficult to sell their interest in vacation programs which often do not have the value claimed during the sales pitch. Some consumers have never been able to sell their interest despite extensive efforts including advertising and hiring agents.

Vacation prize scams

Vacation scams abound. Vacations and trips are often used to entice unsuspecting consumers to pay money for services, time shares or campground memberships. They often dangle possible prizes in front of consumers and the consumer ends up paying money. If you receive an offer of a free vacation or trip, keep the following facts in mind:
— Check your local or state law, it is illegal in some states to make a consumer pay money or endure a sales pitch to receive a prize. If you win a prize, you must be given the prize with no strings attached.
— When you evaluate any offer for something that is supposedly free, or that offers huge, unbelievable savings, ask a lot of questions. Remember the wisdom of one consumer who learned too late: If it sounds too good to be true – it is.†

Allen is a photojournalist assigned to All Hands. Information courtesy of the Federal Trade Commission-Consumer and Business Education Office and Maryland Attorney General's Office Consumer Protection Division, Baltimore, Md.

Where to go for help

The following organizations can provide assistance, information and advice to Sailors regarding scams or potential scams:

Your local Navy Legal Office.

Your State Attorney General’s Officer or local Judge Advocate General’s Office at or the Office of Consumer Protection.

The Better Business Bureau at your state and local level.

Your local Federal Reserve Bank - Consumer Affairs Department.

Phone: (202) 326-3128

AARP – American Association for Retired Persons, 1909 K Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20049, Phone: (202) 434-6030

MARCH 1997
The success of today's Sailor is measured not only by contributions made on the job but by off-duty pursuits as well.

At first glance, Chief Aviation Structural Mechanic (Safety Equipment) (AW) Douglas L. Bryant of Fleet Logistics Support Squadron (VR) 56 seems no different than any other Sailor—dedicated professional, dedicated family man.

But, in a recent poll by Essence magazine, his ability to successfully juggle a naval career and a close-knit family had readers saying, “What a Man!”

The Essence magazine and Preferred Stock cologne “What A Man!” contest, announced in the magazine’s January 1996 issue, solicited entries from readers asking them to describe in 50 words or less, their nominee’s significant accomplishments in the areas of academic, professional, community service, religious and family involvement. When she found out about the contest, Bryant’s wife, Gwendolyn, knew she had a winner.

“We were in the store one day,” she began, “and I picked up the magazine. And from the beginning, I always had that strong feeling that he would at least place in the top 10 and he did.”

He did indeed. Thousands of entries were narrowed down to 10 finalists by the magazine’s editors. Readers were then asked to select the winner. When they selected Bryant, few who know him were surprised.

“Chief Bryant is probably universally liked by everyone,” said LCDR Steven Johnston, VR-56’s maintenance officer. “He’s just an outgoing, friendly person. He can ask anyone to do anything and they won’t mind jumping in and taking care of what he wants done.”

“If he’s in a bad mood in a maintenance meeting,” said Aviation Structural Mechanic (Safety Equipment) 1st Class John Merritt, “you’d never know it. And that’s important. As shop supervisors, if we know that maintenance control is upbeat about what’s going to happen that day, it makes me feel better.”
people do have to change because of their nature,” explained Bryant, a VR-56 TAR (Training and Administration of Reserves). “My nature has always been a good human spirit, so, everything I do here (at work), I go home and parlay it into my family life.”

Being a good role model for your children is a challenge for any parent. Bryant said he and his wife try to keep it simple by creating a very spiritual and nurturing environment for their son, Douglas Jr., and twin daughters, Tiffany and Tamara. In other words, just go with what you know.

“We’re trying to bring them up in the way we were brought up,” he said. “But that’s kind of hard to do because every generation has its own way of bringing children up. But, I figure, with the mix of my wife’s background, my background and the new wave of bringing children up, I think they’re doing quite well.”

Bryant received an assortment of prizes including, a trip to New York, and was featured in the November issue of Essence. In spite of all the publicity, friends say he’s still the same person — hard working, active in his church, devoted family man — traits his wife said made her certain he would win.

“His career, his community work and also his being a family man I think did it,” she said. “That’s what we need more of these days. More men who care about their family and can still hold a career. He’s just a great guy!”

AMEC(AW) Douglas L. Bryant and his wife, Gwendolyn. “He’s just a great guy!” she said.

Story and photos by JO1 Ron Schafer who is a Norfolk-based photojournalist for All Hands.
Seattle, Wash. — It’s cold and dark with the temperature close to 50 degrees and visibility near zero. Mud and silt continuously drift into your line of sight, obscuring your hands, just two feet in front of you. Walking becomes difficult as your legs begin to feel the effects of the icy water.

Just another day at the office for the divers of Naval Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit (MDSU) 1 headquartered in Pearl Harbor, and two Naval Reserve detachments (522 from Naval Station Everett, Wash., and 220 from Alameda, Calif.). The bottom of Lake Washington served as their primary place of business for more than just explorations.

Seventy feet beneath the surface of the lake, in the murky waters at the south end in Renton, Wash., lies a monument to another era. The last example of its kind, a twin-engine boat-plane flown during World War II known as a Navy PBM-5 Mariner, is the target of these dives. "From the standpoint of the Navy, the objective is realistic, timely training for both active-duty and Naval Reserve divers," said CAPT Marc Jones, commanding officer of MDSU-1, Det. 522. "Overall, the idea was to recover the plane and [ready it for shipping] to the Naval Flight Museum in Pensacola, Fla., for [full] restoration."

The plane went down in a freak accident in May 1949 as it was being flown to the Army Air Corps Base in Renton. As the pilot, then LT Ralph Frame, touched down on the water, one of the wing pontoons sheared off as it hit a log-boom. Both he and the crew escaped, but the wounded Mariner was bound for the bottom. After sinking beneath the surface, the plane flipped over before settling. This made the divers’ job more difficult and the accumulation of 47 years of mud and silt compounded the problem.

The task of bringing the plane up involved five phases. First the site had to be surveyed with the positions of the nose, tail and wingtips marked with buoys.

The second phase was more complicated — involving using air-lift suction pumps to remove the 1,200 cubic yards of silt covering the plane. With the suction pumps going, visibility was reduced to zero. "Zero visibility does affect our job somewhat, but a lot of the time our normal working conditions are exactly that," said Chief Boatswain’s Mate Craig Flowers, MDSU-1 salvage division officer. "That didn’t affect our progress as much as the temperature. There was cold water on the bottom and most of the time we were out there a steady rain was falling topside which added to the chill." During the latter part of the second phase, divers removed mud from inside the fuselage and patched holes in the hull.

The third phase involved turning the plane over into an upright position by using buoyant and dynamic lift. Inflatable bags were placed at strategic points around the plane’s wings and body, giving it more buoyancy.
A block and tackle arrangement from a floating crane was then used to lift the tail portion of the plane, rotating it over the nose of the plane to upright it. It was during this crucial portion of the phase that the plane’s tail gave way, breaking into several pieces. “We’re very disappointed,” said Flowers.

“We wanted to bring up a whole airplane,” added Jones. “It’s frustrating to see that it won’t happen that way now.”

During the fourth and fifth phases, the plane would have been lifted in an upright position, removed from the water and shipped intact to the museum, where it would be restored to its original condition.

“One of the missions of the Navy divers is harbor clearance. That is to take items that are fouling harbors and beaches and remove them prior to a wartime situation,” said Jones. “We also do aircraft recovery of planes that crash. The training the Reservists conducted on this site met both of those requirements.”

The crash of TWA flight 800 also showed the importance of this type of training. “In some respects, this project and the TWA crash were very similar. They were both in about the same depth range and temperature of water, but there was one main difference. [The TWA] recovery involved bodies and wreckage. In this case, we were trying to recover a whole aircraft and keep it intact, which made things much more tricky,” said Jones.

The failure to bring the aircraft to the surface in one piece did not mean that the Navy has given up on the plane. According to Jones, the Navy—in combination with the State of Washington and the Mariner-Marlin Association—a group of former pilots and crewmen of Mariner and Marlin aircraft, will turn the remainder of the plane into the first underwater preserve in Lake Washington. This will ensure that recreational divers have an opportunity to see the plane well-preserved in its permanent home.

HMC(DV) Mark Cappock, USN, MDSU-1 Pearl Harbor, and MM2 Bob Kaye, MDSU-1 Naval Reserve Det. 522, Everett, Wash., explain to the rest of the divers what was accomplished during the dive.

Story by J02 Jeff Parrott and photo by JOC Pat Hooks who are assigned to Naval Base Seattle, Wash., public affairs office.
Norfolk, Va. — Remember the days of yesteryear when the national pastime for kids was reading comic books? Hospital Corpsman (FMF) Marco Clark does.

He has collected more than 3,000 comic books from the, as he says, “Good old days.” Clark, who serves as leading chief petty officer at the Naval Reserve Norfolk Branch Medical Clinic, said he’s been collecting various name brand comic books for more than 30 years; before he could read.

The 19-year Navy veteran’s collection includes an array of vintage issues. One issued is valued at $8,000. “That would be my favorite issue of the Marvel Mutants, the X-Men, dated Nov. 2, 1963,” said Clark. “It was the first issue.”

Other editions include a signed original of Superman’s First Death, a 1960 mint condition Spiderman vs. Fantastic Four edition, a 1965 antique Dare Devil, and the original and new Iron Man. Oh, and remember Nick Fury, Agent of S.H.I.E.L.D.? How about Captain America, the Submariner, The Mighty Thor and Batman. He even has June and July 1971 copies of Superman on an Indian reservation.

Clark, or Iwenta (E-win-a-ta), which translates as “First born, First of the sun,” is a Native American Indian and member of the Lumbee/Cherokee tribe of North Carolina. “Those two particular issues were significant to me in that they reflected ‘real-world’ events during that time.”

What Clark is referring to was the “Wounded Knee” incident of 1971 on the South Dakota reservations. The incident involved the Tribal Lands’ rights vs. the U.S. government’s right to seize reservation grounds.

It wasn’t until after Clark had reached his 13th birthday that he realized the collection would one day be valuable. After spending more than three decades collecting and trading comics, Clark decided to have his collection appraised. The appraising firm valued Clark’s collection at a hefty $40,000. ±

Story and photo by JO1 Bobby Jones who is attached to the Naval Air Reserve public affairs office, Norfolk.
Reservist sets example of ‘True Grit’

Aboard USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72) — “Don’t tell me you do not have time to study,” said Aviation Ordnanceman Chief Larry Witt. This 59 year-old Naval Reservist describes himself as a “goal-oriented person.” He has stood by this statement both in the Navy and the civilian world. The California native is currently a member of Naval Reserve Unit 0189 on USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72).

For Witt, it all started after joining the Navy in 1954, nine years after the end of World War II. Witt spent four years as an AO aboard Essex-class carriers. In 1958, he left active duty and joined the Naval Reserve until 1962. After getting his Bachelor’s degree in 1964, he married and moved to Squim, Wash., and started his own janitorial business.

In 1983, Witt made a bet. Witt and a former Marine friend were swapping sea stories one day when the idea hit. “I bet him whoever could get back into the military first will get a hundred dollars, and I won,” said Witt.

On April 15, 1983, after a 21 year break in service, Witt signed a two-year contract with the Naval Reserve. He was assigned to Naval Air Station Reserve Unit 4089 as a 46 year-old Airmen. “You gotta wanna,’ is my favorite expression,” said Witt. “I took my rating books everywhere. When my wife and I went to the store I would stay in the car and study.”

In September 1995, Larry Witt became a chief petty officer after only 12 years. “Don’t make excuses about your rating exams,” said Witt. “I ran a successful business, raised a family and still managed to study. ‘You gotta wanna.’”

“You gotta wanna,’ is my favorite expression” — AOC Chief Larry Witt

Story and photo by JO2 Bill Austin who is stationed at the Naval Air Reserve public affairs office at Whidbey Island, Wash.
Everyone’s a winner with “Ironkids”

Atlanta — Gold, silver and bronze medals were awarded. There was media coverage, a celebrity on hand and a determination by young competitors to succeed. It was Atlanta, but it was not the Centennial Olympiad, or the venues for the 1996 Paralympics.

It was the 12th Annual Ironkids Bread Triathlon, where every finisher was a winner.

The Ironkids Bread Triathlon, a national event sponsored by Earth Grains, is dedicated to promoting good nutrition, physical fitness and positive attitudes among children. For the second year in a row, the 1996 Triathlon was held at Naval Air Station Atlanta, Marietta, Ga.

Close to 400 boys and girls, ages 7 to 14, participated in the triathlon. To reach the nationals, they had to qualify in statewide events. One group of kids from Bermuda was able to raise $4,000 conducting a “Trash-A-Thon” to supplement a $2,000 grant from the government.

The competition included a Junior division, ages 7-10, and Senior division, ages 11-14. There was individual and relay competition in swimming, biking and running. Juniors swam 100 meters, cycled 3.1 miles and completed a half-mile run. Senior competitors swam 200 meters, cycled 6.2 miles and ran 1.2 miles.

NAS Atlanta Sailors, Marines, family members and Morale Welfare and Recreation personnel, together with Earth Grain representatives and members of API Championship Group, volunteered their services to make this event successful.

ESPN, “The Total Sports Network” was on hand to film the competition. Special guest commentator was four-time Olympic Gold Medal Swimmer, Janet Evans, who said the day was, “a special time for kids, and an excellent opportunity to develop their athletic abilities.”

A Navy volunteer, Aviation Structural Mechanic (Structures) First Class Felix Mercado, summed up the days’ events as he said, “This was for the kids, and their success is our success.”

Story by JO1(SW) Bryan Wood, photo by PH3 Steven Harbour who are assigned to Naval Air Station Atlanta.

And it’s a photo finish for most of the participants.

Boys and girls competed in the Ironkids Bread Triathlon, where the top three finishers earned medals and ribbons of achievement.

Photo by PH3 Steven Harbour
Sailor risks his life to help stranger

Prince George's County, Md. — It takes a certain degree of daring for a person to take control of a tragic situation while risking their own life.

For Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Donald Burke, assigned to the National Naval Medical Hospital, Bethesda, Md., that daring came while returning from a family trip.

After witnessing an out-of-control vehicle cross the grass median and strike a tree, Burke pulled his vehicle over and rushed to the scene of the accident.

"I noticed a lot of smoke in the cab of the truck, and then forced the passenger door open so I could assess the situation," Burke said. "The driver had massive facial bleeding, a deformed leg and was struggling to get from behind the steering wheel."

Although qualified as an Emergency Medical Technician, Burke had no real-life experiences with accident victims. With unwavering determination and calmness, he freed the victim from the debris and pulled him from the burning truck.

"The smoke in the cab of the truck was increasing, and I noticed a flame coming from the driver's side of the engine," Burke said.

With the help of another passerby, Burke dragged the victim up a hill and laid him on a blanket. "By this time, there were about three or four people around the scene," Burke said. "I again assessed the victim for injuries. He had facial trauma, tenderness in the chest and what appeared to be a broken leg."

"The fire had spread from the engine compartment into the cab, and Burke realized that everyone in close proximity of the truck was in danger, should the vehicle explode. He raced to a nearby tractor trailer, retrieved a small fire extinguisher and proceeded to the truck, which was now engulfed in flames."

"The fire extinguisher was not enough to put out the flames and I went back to the victim's side. A trauma nurse had arrived at the scene with a small box of medical supplies. She took his vital signs, while I ensured the victim's airway was clear. He had begun to bleed from his mouth and nose."

An ambulance and the fire truck soon arrived and the fire was extinguished. Burke remained on the scene to assist the paramedics until the victim was flown by helicopter to the Maryland Shock Trauma Center in Baltimore.

When asked what prompted him to act, Burke replied, "... Someone needed help ... so I helped." ✦

Story by OS3 Eric Sean Biggs is assigned to the Navy Public Affairs Center, Norfolk.
Shipmates

Disbursing Clerk 3rd Class Lavera Henderson was recently selected as Junior Sailor of the Quarter for the 3rd quarter 1996. She was also selected Junior Sailor of the Quarter, 4th quarter 1995 and Blue Jacket of the Year 1995. Henderson, assigned to Personnel Support Activity Detachment Norfolk.

Aviation Machinist Mate 2nd Class (AW) Steven McCubbin was recently accepted into the Seaman-to-Admiral program. McCubbin, assigned to VAW-113 “Black Eagles,” will report to Officer Candidate School (OCS) at NAS Pensacola. McCubbin was one of 50 Sailors accepted from more than 1,200 applicants.

Personnelman 3rd Class Eliza Corpuz was recently selected as USS Constitution’s Junior Sailor of the Quarter, 4th quarter 1996. As the division officer for the administration department, division supply officer and command watchbill coordinator, Corpuz spends many hours ensuring that duty days run smoothly for her shipmates.

LT Charles Callanan was recently awarded $1,800 from the Military Cash Awards Program for saving the Navy nearly $260,000. Callanan, the communications officer at U.S. Naval Antarctic Support Unit was tasked with demolishing an antenna array. Callanan transferred the antennas to the New Zealand Air force and saved the demolition cost.

Damage Controlman 1st Class (SW) Gregory Collins was selected as Corrections Specialist of the Quarter, 1st quarter of 1996, at Naval Brig/Correctional Custody Unit, Pensacola, Fla. The Macon, Ga., native was recognized for his leadership, managerial and counseling skills.
A Standard Missile-2 (SM-2) Block IVA leaves its canister in Vertical Launching System MK 41 aboard USS Shiloh (CG 67) during test firing of a new version of the proven Standard missile family.

The Navy successfully demonstrated its Theater Ballistic Missile Defense (TBMD) capability recently when a ballistic missile target was shot out of the sky over the White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico for the first time using the SM-2 Block IVA.

With this intercept the Navy moved into a new era where the Navy will play an increasingly vital role in the defense of forces ashore.
Name: PC2 Sonya Y. Jackson

Assigned to: Naval Mail Center, Norfolk.

Hometown: Lebanon, Ill.

Job description: “I handle incoming/outgoing mail and metered mail.”

Achievements: Received Good Conduct Medal and Letter of Commendation.

Best part of job: “Customer service. I like dealing with the customers and helping them out.”

Key to success: “Working with good people who help you along the way.”

Places visited while in the Navy: Turkey, Israel and Egypt