What does it take to be a Navy diver?

Clearing the Waters of Iraq
Teen America in Japan

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

Deep Down

To make it as a deep-sea diver, you have to have what it takes deep inside yourself.
BM2 Donald Rouse and Air Force Airman John Yorde make early morning security rounds by the radomes at the Cryptologic Operations Center, Misawa, Japan.
A shooter assigned to the V-2 Division’s waist catapult aboard USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63), signals “return of shuttle” during a no-load evolution while in the Arabian Gulf.

Shuttle Service
Photo by PH3 Todd Frantom
Speaking with Sailors
Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy
MCPON (SS/AW) Terry D. Scott

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

Q: I'm a first class petty officer, approaching the 20-year mark, and I'm confused about the High-3 or CSB/REDSOX retirement options. How can I be sure which one is right for me?

A: The only way to be sure you make the right choice for you — and this applies to any financial decision — is to do your research! I cannot over-emphasize the importance of discussing these alternatives with a financial advisor, or even just simply reading all the details of both plans on the www.stayinnavy.navy.mil. The CSB/REDSOX option offers a $30,000 “bonus” payment now, in exchange for a reduced rate of retirement pay for the rest of your life. The High-3 plan is a percent of base pay per years of service.

I recommend you visit our Web site and click on the retirement under the career tools section, to your retirement pay with both plans.

Q: What concerns me is that 48.5 percent of those enlisted Sailors who are eligible are taking the CSB/REDSOX option. The Center for Naval Analysis suggests considering this program as an early cash-out “loan” with an implicit interest rate of 10.4 percent (for an E-6). This “loan” is paid back through a cash-out “loan” with an implicit interest rate of 10.4 percent (for an E-6). This “loan” is paid back later by smaller retirement paychecks that, over time, will amount to only 60 percent of the $30,000 “bonus.” We have until you reach your CSB Election Effective Date, (the date of your 15th anniversary of active duty) to change your mind.

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

A: Typically, the Navy permits dependent family members to be away from their housing unit for no longer than 90 days. However, the local housing office may permit a live-in aid, if they are given permission to care for the children while the member is deployed. Sailors need to inform the housing office of their upcoming deployment and make plans for child care. If a member is being deployed and their dependents are guardian during deployment, this member would not draw BAH since being provided, even though they are sailors need to inform the housing. The situation, Navy housing policy, and a $30,000 “bonus” payment now, in exchange for a reduced rate of retirement pay for the rest of your life. The High-3 plan is a percent of base pay per years of service.

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Q: In a similar situation, Navy housing policy states that members are being provided, even though they are not in use. Sailors need to inform the housing office of their upcoming deployment and make plans for child care.

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U.S. Fleet Returning Home

USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72) returned home to a heroes welcome in Everett, Wash., in early May, after nearly 10 months on deployment.

Lincoln’s record-setting deployment began as a routine six-month deployment in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Southern Watch in July 2002. Upon completing her deployment in December 2002, Lincoln was called back to duty in the Arabian Gulf to support Operation Iraqi Freedom.

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

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

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

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

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

During a deployment beginning Jan. 23, Kitty Hawk and embarked Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 5, with a total complement of 5,336 crew members, received the call to transit to the 5th Fleet Area of Operations, Feb. 13.

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

CAPT Tom Parker, Kitty Hawk’s commanding officer, said he was fortunate to have led the Battle Cat and her Sailors.

“The fact that this great ship has recently completed a combat cruise, and I have had the honor of commanding America’s finest men and women in a combat zone, fills me with pride and a profound sense of gratitude that I have had this opportunity,” he said.

Also during this underway period, Commander, Naval Air Forces Pacific, recognized crew members of four departments for their outstanding performance and proficiency while performing their respective duties. Supply was awarded its 4th consecutive Blue “E,” Medical received a Blue “M,” Weapons, a Black “W,” and Aircraft Intermediate Maintenance Department (AIMD), its fifth Black “E.”

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

Commanded by ADM John D. Stufflebeam, Harry S. Truman’s Strike Group, includes USS Harry S. Truman with Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 3 and Commander, Destroyer Squadron (CDS) 22 embarked, USS See Banc (CG 65); USS Oscar Austin (DDG 79), USS Mitscher (DDG 57) and USS Donald Cook (DDG 75); USS Briscoe (DD 977) and USS Dehne (DD 489); USS Newes (FFG 53); USS John Lenthal (T-AO 169).

A few days later, USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71) returned to Norfolk after nearly a five-month deployment.

Theodore Roosevelt’s Strike Group deployed Jan. 6 and conducted a Composite Training Unit Exercise (COMPTUEX) in the Puerto Rican Operating Area until Feb. 6, before braving overseas.

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

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

Constellation and other ships in her strike group stopped in Pearl Harbor, in late May, The ships that joined the carrier in Hawaiian waters are USS Bunker Hill (CG 52), USS Valley Forge (CG 50), USS Milluss (DDG 69), USS The Sullivans (DDG 68) and USS Rainier (AOE 7).

During OIF, Constellation CSG flew more than 1,500 sorties and expended more than 1 million pounds of ordnance, including 40mm Tomahawk cruise missiles.

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

Story compiled from various Navy News Service articles

Mine Watch: The First Line of Defense

Since the Revolutionary War, naval wars have sailed in fear of an “unsavvy” weapon. As technologically advanced as the Navy is today, it still hunts the oceans and seas, lurking below the water’s surface, quietly waiting for just the right time to strike.

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

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

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

“Baton’s crew understands the threat and is ready to detect these mines through its first line of defense, the mine watch,” said Chief Operations Specialist David Brown.

“Recognized as an effective instrument of war, one that is still a very real threat to today’s Navy,” Batson’s crew understands the threat and is ready to detect these mines through its first line of defense, the mine watch.

The crew of Baton went a step further when establishing the watch – creating a mine watch chair to protect watchstanders from paraloft helped make this very important watch more effective.

Patillo concluded, “It makes me feel proud knowing that I built something that my fellow shipmates can use to help keep us safe from a threat that’s so lethal.”

The ship and embarked Marines are components of the 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marines who are deployed as a portion of the Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG) 10.

A Salute to our Unsung Heroes

As malarias, to an unsuspecting victim and possibly lead to death. One of the most powerful weapons to combat this danger is the Sailors from the 5th Fleet, who use their knowledge of entomology to keep service members healthy while in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The specialists focus on pest control, education and surveillance to accomplish their mission of ensuring troop vigor. The main weapon in their arsenal is insecticide – lethal to insects but safe for humans, when used correctly. The most effective technique is to spray uniforms and mosquito netting with permethrin. Once the service uniforms are treated with the insecticide, it binds to the fabric and remains on them. They have sprayed thousands of uniforms and netting for Marines, Sailors and Soldiers over the past several months.

“When a mosquito or tick lands on the treated uniform, it will pick up tiny particles of the insecticide and die in about 24 hours,” said LT Pete O’Bannear, an entomologist with 1st TSG.

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

Photographer’s Mate 2nd Class (SW) Robert S. Le Salle (AGF 3) 2002 Junior Sailor of the Year. Reeves, US Navy News

RADM John Kelly, commander, Naval Air Forces Pacific, receives the Navy’s “First Kiss” winner, T12 Michael Istbel, reunited with his wife, Karla, after a combat deployment. On April 1, 2003, Navy officials recognized 400 ship’s company husband and wife couples as the Navy’s “First Kiss” winners. These couples volunteered to be separated during the deployment to have their first kiss upon returning home. The "First Kiss" couples are selected by random drawing from all eligible couples who volunteered to be separated during deployment. These couples were reunited during a special ceremony held April 1, 2003 at the Naval Air Facility at Alameda, California.

U.S. 5th Fleet’s amphibious task force returns to the Arabian Gulf after a seven-month deployment to support Operation Iraqi Freedom. Marines are components of the 5th Fleet that landed in Kuwait to support Operation Iraqi Freedom. The 5th Fleet includes U.S. Navy ships and tenant commands from the U.S. Marine Corps, Army, Air Force and other coalition forces.

U.S. Navy Plane Fly By Aboard USS Bataan (LHD 5) steams through the Atlantic Ocean during a six-month deployment to support Operation Iraqi Freedom. The ship is the flagship of the Amphibious Task Force-East (ATF-E) and provides mobility for U.S. Marine Corps, Army, and Air Force forces, which have been engaged in combat operations in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Supporting Information:

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Photographer’s Mate 2nd Class (SW) Robert S. Le Salle (AGF 3) 2002 Junior Sailor of the Year. Reeves, US Navy News
is to sprinkle treated fly bait in the compound. The attracted flies feed and die in minutes. Education is the second line of defense. The preventive medicine team explain what to look for, what to avoid and how to battle common pests such as flies, ticks, mosquitoes, spiders, rats and snakes.

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

Hospital Corpsman and Class Maryjane Guest, a preventive medicine technician, has additional advice. "Don’t eat in the tent, because the food attracts rats, and the rats attract snakes." The third line of defense is ongoing surveillance. The team monitors pests by collecting insects from various locations to see if any are carrying diseases. Obenauer said servicemembers who work in a busy area should be very careful without modern preventive medicine’s attack on pests. "During the World War II, many Marines and Soldiers came down with malaria, which incapacitated one of every three Marines," he said. "We’re not on the front line fighting the bullets, but I like to think that we’re fighting insects so we can keep the forces healthy." Story by Marine Sgt. David Christian, s/n Force Service Support Group

Mentor a Sailor, Develop a Future Leader

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

"We all have an inherent responsibility to ensure the growth and development of the people who work for us," said CPO(MS/SW/AW) Phil Russell, Naval Personnel Development Command master chief. "We have never before pro-

Naples’ SAVI Program Increases Scope

Quick and effective reporting of a sexual assault crime is essential to providing immediate support for the victim and minimizing the possibility of additional incidents. Training, now offered from the Naples Sexual Assault Victim Intervention (SAVI) Coordinator Viki Shephard, provides updated guidance to command SAVI points of contact on proper procedures for reporting an incident. Shephard hosted Naples first SAVI Command Point of Contact/Victim and Witness Assistance Program (SAVI POC/VWP) training in January and is in the process of train-

"Everyone in the Navy will have a mentor and be a mentor," said Russell. "Each one of us in a leadership role, whether by experience, or position, has a responsibility and obligation to mentor the Sailors who work for us or with us, to help them be successful at what they do." More for information about mentorship, visit the Center for Naval Leadership Knowledge on Navy Knowledge Online at www.nko.navy.mil.

Story by Jt/Ed Edward Flynn, Naval Personnel Development Command Public Affairs

Ricky’s Tour

By JO2 Mike Jones

mikejones43@hotmail.com

By JO2 Mike Jones

welcometoSAR.D. Search And Rescue School

A L L  H A N D S  •  w w w . n e w s . n a v y . m i l

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Sexual Assault Victims Intervention (SAVI) opened its doors in Naples for the first time in the summer of 1995. The program’s first focus was to ensure SAVI advocates – those designated to provide assistance to victims of rape and sexual assault – received quality training. The program has progressed over the years, and SAVI POC/VWP training is the program’s latest expansion. This year’s training covers that each command in the Naples area has a trained individual who can advise their command on the proper steps to take if they have an individual who becomes the victim of a crime.

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

One of the best ways to view the process is through a letter-quieted, highly trained SAVI point of contact," she said. "I also want to make sure small commands aren’t overlooked." Story from Fleet and Family Support Center Naples

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

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

Time Capsule

Jun Ago - 1958

CF Vangard was in its infancy in 1958. Two disappointing failures, Vangour (TV 4) was not to use all three stages of the rocket and placed and 1; a Navy test satellite, in orbit. We also dug into history of the many celebrities who came aboard Navy ships to entertain our Sailors. Celebrities included Tennessee Ernie Ford, Darin Day, Alan Ladd, Theresa Brewer, Bob Hope, Jane Mansfield and William Bendix.

Jun Ago - 1976

Last week we revisited the revamping ship USS Wainwright (CG 28), ships delegations from more than 40 countries planned to sail in New York Harbor, July 4th, participate in the Fourth International Naval Review. The ceremony was the event of the year. We also covered the selection of “Mid wife,” which was filmed aboard USS Lexington (CV 2) and featured Glenn Ford as ADM Raymond Spruance and Henry Fonda as ADM Chester W. Nimitz. Robert Mitchum had a cameo spot as Admiral Halsey and the supporting cast included Charles Heston, Hal Holbrook, Robert Wagner and Cliff Robertson. “Lady Lex” played three roles - USS Hornet (CV 8), USS Yorktown (CV 5) and USS Enterprise (CV 6),

Jun Ago - 1985

VW AP) training in January and April VW AP) training in January and April VW AP) training in January and April

Mr. Gaynor went aboard USS Nimitz (CVN 68)

It’s a crew that makes teamwork a tradition. From the to the mess decks, from the engine room to the flight deck, the crew of Nimitz keeps everything working like a well-oiled machine. We also featured the story of Ship’s Senior Master and Class Tyrene L. Gaynor, the Navy’s best boxer in 1985. Gaynor was rated as one of the top boxers in the United States and trained for the 1984 Olympic Boxing Team, but was not selected. Gaynor worked even harder and went on to win the Washington, D.C., Golden Gloves.

Jun Ago - 1998

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

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

“The rapidly changing Navy of the 21st century dictates our Sailors have uniforms that are going to provide the versatility, the durability and even the interchangeability they need,” said Scott. “We need to make sure we are addressing those concerns. Our Sailors are going to be prepared for whatever lies ahead for the future. “

Scott added that there are other measures that need to be taken on base: developing a working uniform that can be used at sea or ashore and across all communities; establishing a service uniform for E-1 through E-6 that can be warn year-round, streamlining the Navy Uniform Regulations to make it more user-friendly and easy to read, and designing or redesigning uniforms to accommodate various body shapes and sizes.

Although several changes may be made upon the completion of the assessment, the more than 200 year history of the U.S. Navy will not be affected. Tradition, historical acceptance and longevity are factors. TFU will consider before making final decisions about any uniform.

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

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

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

Commander-in-Chief Arriving

President George W. Bush passes through the “side boys” after a successful trap aboard the USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72) in a S-3B Viking assigned to the Blue Wolves of Sea Control Squadron Three Five (VS-35) designated “Navy 1.” President Bush is the first sitting President to trap aboard an aircraft carrier at sea. The President is conducting a visit aboard ship to meet the crew. The visit was to show his support for service members as part of a United Services Organizations (USO) tour.

Visits Nimitz

Conan O’Brien, host of “Late Night with Conan O’Brien,” visited USS Nimitz (CVN 68) May 18 to meet the crew, sign autographs and tour the ship. The visit was to show his support for service members as part of a United Services Organizations (USO) tour.

How Secure Is Your Computer?

M any people think their password falls within the standard established by information systems technicians: do not pick a dictionary word, have at least one number, and change your password regularly. But that may turn out to be just a guess. Security experts say the real thing to do is pick something out of place, then change it on a regular basis.

“We do not use familiar things like your dog’s name, your name, your wife’s name or your social security number,” says Information Systems Technician 2nd Class (SW) Michael Burns, network system vulnerability tech (NSVT). “The best way to generate a password is to use something that you will remember. “

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

Even using a brute-force crack (one that uses totally random key strokes as passwords), with modern computers, it would take months to find out what your password is. “And you are required to change them every 90 days. But how safe is our server? “One measure we have in place to disrupt hacking is the Access Control List (ACL), which is basically a set of rules to filter out what kind of traffic we allow onto the network,” says Burns.

Different protocols use different ports. That is how information travels around the Internet. “We use different protocols to speak to different people,” said Burns. “It’s an amazing experience to be a part of the fighting force was.”

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

After his meeting, O’Brien was taken on a tour of the ship, where he met with crew members at the Pilot house, Signal Bridge, Air Operations, Carrier Air Traffic Control Center, and Primary Flight Control. He also had an opportunity to watch flight operations from “Vultures Row” above the flight deck. Later in the afternoon, he had lunch in the wardroom (officer’s gallery), talked to Nimitz crew members in the hangar bay and posed for a lot of people in the media notice us,” said Martinez. “So to have him on board showing his support, that’s amazing. Everyone who watches his show will know he’s on our board’s ship. That means everyone will hear Nimitz’s story, and that’s great.”

O’Brien’s talk with the crew in the hangar bay brought more than a few laughs from the crew, but his message was very serious. “It’s an amazing experience to meet you all,” O’Brien said. “I want to tell you that everyone at home is just thrilled at the amazing work that’s being done out here.”

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

For related news, visit the USS Nimitz (CVN 68) Navy NewsStand page at www.news.navy.mil/local/cm6/.

President George W. Bush said he felt really good to see O’Brien come out to Nimitz. “I don’t see a lot of people in the media notice us,” said Martinez. “So to have him on board showing his support, that’s amazing. Everyone who watches his show will know he’s on our board’s ship. That means everyone will hear Nimitz’s story, and that’s great.”

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Story by PH2 (AW) Tim Comerford, Naval Station Rota Public Affairs.
To make it as a **deep-sea diver** you have to have what it takes **deep** inside yourself.

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

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

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

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

Photos by PH1 Shane T. McCoy and JO1 Preston Keres
The weather might be abnormal, but the training is just business as usual at the Naval Diving and Salvage Training Center (NDSTC). The center trains divers to work around the world in any environment. Incredible opportunities await these young divers, from explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) to ships husbandry, or even the Navy’s underwater photo team.

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

Johnson, in his eighth week of training to become a second class diver, just completed his first dive with surface-supplied air. He has another three months to go before he will leave the school as a Navy diver. He just had to pass an exam to earn him a 'Mud Puppy' patch, which means getting to the school.

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

“They undergo additional medical screenings and conduct academics and physical training. They get on the dives. They aren’t just cleaning bilges and swabbing decks. I put them on the line tending hoses for us,” said Master Chief Boatswain’s Mate (DSW/SW) Kyle Gaillard, senior master diver of the training department at NDSTC. Gaillard mentored Johnson, among others, prior to their schooling. Gaillard explained that this screening
process and mentoring, both before school and after, is the most important part of becoming a Navy diver. He added that even though a Sailor leaves dive school with a piece of paper that says “diver,” the Sailor is not really a “true diver” until he or she has hit the fleet and is working “SSN”—Saturday, Sunday and Nights.

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

Sailors who attend NDSTC right after “A” school, along with some others, don’t get a chance to be Mud Puppies. For students like these, other new programs are being implemented. In the future, students may be able to complete most of their written courses before ever arriving. Computer-based courses will be a prerequisite for all basic dive courses at NDSTC. While they won’t eliminate classroom time altogether, they will cut it substantially.

All diving courses, ranging from five weeks to six months, are being updated to reflect the needs of working divers in today’s military.

“We need to focus on getting the Sailor in a rig and down doing the actual physical labor that it takes to do the job,” said Gaillard. “There are other parts to the job, of course, but there are other people who are supposed to be focusing on that. A lot of those things could be taught on the job. We felt like there were things that could come out of the course that were not needed as much now as they were in the old years of diving, so we can focus more on the working diver.”

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

While these course changes will streamline the program, they won’t...
change the description of personalities that are successful in the community. According to Gaillard, heart, determination, and maybe even a little bit of arrogance are needed to make it as a Navy diver. You have to be extremely sure of yourself.

Gaillard explained that Johnson needed to take the physical readiness test to qualify for school when they first met. After passing the test with a decent score, Johnson claimed he would have normally done much better. When Gaillard asked why, Johnson told him he had just run the test on a broken leg. “It’s because of people like Johnson that I know the Navy diving community is going to continue to prosper. He’s got heart, and he installs it everywhere he goes,” said Gaillard.

As you talk with divers about why they stay Navy, and what drew them to diving in the first place, you constantly hear the same thing—community and family. According to Gaillard, divers are told that even as a seaman, they can talk directly to their detailer. If they need a hand with placement due to family, they’ll hear, “We’ll see what we can do,” and not “Get your chief on the phone.” We have people who care about you and your family,” said Gaillard. “As long as you care about him and are willing to bend over backwards for him and his career, he’s going to stay. These Sailors know that’s the way a lot of the master divers in the fleet operate. That’s why they come to our community. That’s why they stay in our community.”

“Not everyone is cut out to do this,” said Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Mateo Benavedez. “It takes a special type of person, someone with that ‘suck it up attitude.’” Benavedez, an eight-year corpsman, just started the Marine Combatant Dive Course. In his opinion, the physical aspect of the course has not been difficult, but...
**Despite it being a short drop** to the water, students must still face the fear of stepping off the dive tower in full scuba gear for the first time. Attention to detail and technique is crucial, with every step under the watchful eye of the instructors.

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

The schedule is demanding. “You can only have one speed in this – full speed,” he said. Benavedez, always looking for his next challenge, will work alongside Marines in the field and under the water. “No single thing here is all that hard,” said EOD Instructor Boatswain’s Mate 1st Class (EOD/SW/PJ) Travis Bivens, “but on the whole it is quite difficult. When you have to complete a 1,000 yard bay swim and then take a physics and medicine test a couple of hours later, that can be a challenge.”

That challenge has proven to be too much for many students who’ve attempted to become divers over the years. Gaillard said, “We can only get as many people as apply. If we get 100 who apply and only 50 that cut the mustard, then there’s only 50 divers going out the door. I know that we need more than we have, but I can’t focus on that. If I let that be my driving force, to worry about numbers out in the fleet, then I would probably be putting the lives of my divers in the wrong hands and people would get hurt. I’m not going to do that.”

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

“I firmly believe that any man’s finest hour, the greatest fulfillment of all that he holds dear, is that moment when he has worked his heart out in a good cause and lies exhausted on the field of battle – victorious.”

McCoy and Keres are photojournalists assigned to All Hands.

**During the eighth week** of training, second class dive students will be entering one of the three dive practice tanks at the school.
President George W. Bush said at the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom that this war was not just about defeating Saddam Hussein, but about winning the hearts and minds of the people who have long been repressed. But to win the hearts and minds of the Iraqi people, humanitarian aid needs to flow into the war-torn country.

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

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

The clearing of those areas moved quickly, using a variety of methods: men, mammals and machines.
The Sailors of USS Ponce (LPD 15) and Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron (HM) 14 spent long hours getting the difficult and often dangerous job done. More than 2,000 U.S. and coalition Sailors are involved in the mine-clearing effort in the Northern Arabian Gulf.

“The team effort between HM-14 and the commodore’s staff and Ponce has been extraordinary,” said LTJG James R. Hoeft, Ponce’s navigator. “When you have three independent elements from three separate communities – air, surface and mine – bringing them all together can be somewhat challenging, but everything just clicked. It was amazing that after just a few short days, the ship and helo squadron were able to professionally do an operation that Ponce had never done previously,” Hoeft continued.

For Ponce, mine countermeasure (MCM) operations were a new thing, but they stepped right up to the challenge. “It’s Ponce’s first time doing MCM ops, said Boatswain’s Mate 2nd Class (SW) Cliff Junkins, petty officer in charge of Ponce’s well deck. “They’ve been pretty patient with us. Everyone has worked very well together to get the job done.”

Also active in the mine clearance activities are USS Ardent (MCM 12), USS Cardinal (MHC 60), USS Dauntless (MCM 13) and USS Raven (MHC 61). Because of their all-fiberglass construction, Cardinal and Raven are able to get extremely close to mines without causing a detonation. “We have virtually no magnetic signature,” said LCDR Dan Voth, Cardinal’s commanding officer, “and we’re very quiet in the water. We can go through an area with a UUV, look at the images and tell our commanders that you have a mine-like object here, a rock here, a big hole here. We can give them a very accurate picture of what the bottom looks like.

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That allows us to get very close.

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

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

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

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

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

“The dolphins use their bio-sonar to locate a mine-like object,” said Master-at-Arms 1st Class (SEAL) Rich Hansing, a member of Naval Special Clearance Team (NSCT) 1, MK-8 Marine Mammal Systems.

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

From there, the job is transferred to human divers.

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

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

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Surveys where the animals will be used. This gives us an opportunity to check out the conditions where the animals will be living and working. We can make some decisions, such as whether the animals will be living in open ocean pens, or whether we will have to take environmental systems like pools, chillers, heaters and that sort of thing with us,” Jensen continued.

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

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

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“When it comes to all the coalition forces coming together to work as one team, it was pretty easy for the MCM guys. We all kind of speak the same language, we train the same and the Australian team in particular did an
exercise with us in January of this year,” said Rogers. “Since the beginning, the idea was to leave Iraq better than we found it, and that’s what we’re trying to do.”

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

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

“It was a feeling of satisfaction, knowing that the ship had played a fundamental role in this war,” said Hoeft.

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

Houlihan is a photojournalist assigned to All Hands and Aho is a photojournalist assigned to Combat Camera Atlantic, Norfolk.
Life as a teenager is tough enough, but add to it the pressure of living overseas and dealing with a foreign culture, and things can get really challenging — Or do they?

It seems adapting to life overseas isn’t as difficult as first thought. Navy teens can still be typical teenagers and take pride in the fact they are “Navy brats.”

They’re baggy-jean-wearing, skateboard-riding, video game-playing kids. They watch MTV, pierce their ears, nose, and just about anywhere else that back in the United States, they’re teenagers. And just like their counterparts go through during their high-school years, building lasting friendships; attending sporting and social events; long study hours about cramming for final exams that will look good on that college entrance application; part of growing up. The fact that these teenagers are living overseas doesn’t take away from that teenage experience. It just means they handle things a little differently.
“There’s not as many people, so it’s easy to make friends,” Craig added. His 17-year-old sister Stephanie agrees. “Here, there’s not one person who doesn’t have a friend,” she added. “Everybody is friends with everybody. You have to have friends here because there’s not a whole lot to do.” Because they live in a community that closely resembles a small town back home, the kids have to be somewhat creative with their fun. Many of them participate in sports, which also provides them an excellent opportunity to travel. Being stationed in a remote location, they have the chance to venture out a good distance from home; the closest team in their conference is a nine-hour bus ride away. Like most student athletes, they are always finding the positive side of the situation. “I actually like the trips,” said Craig, who plays football and baseball for the Edgren “Eagles.” “It’s a good time to hang out with your friends and watch movies.”

Michael Johnson, the principal of Edgren High School, is quick to point out that the Department of Defense Dependent Schools (DODDS) try to make the environment similar to that in the United States. Instead of driving down Main Street on a Friday night blasting the latest tunes with friends, these kids stay busy wending their way through the streets of Japan, frequenting the neon-lit arcades and shops. While the kids back stateside enjoy the wide variety of fast food restaurants available to chow down in, these kids revel in filling up with sushi and ramen, or dumping yen into the street-side vending machines to curb their appetites. That’s only the beginning of the overseas teen experience.

“There are some things they will miss out on,” said Yeoman 1st Class Roman Burgess, who has the challenge of raising three teenagers while stationed overseas. “But being able to live in Misawa, Japan, and experience a foreign country in this way will hopefully give them something to hold on to for years to come.” Some people may feel sorry for kids who grew up in a foreign land, thinking they are missing out on everything the United States has to offer. If you ask the Burgess kids though, they would have it no other way. For the most part, they have the same opportunities to participate in everything stateside kids enjoy; and then some.

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

The morning routine is pretty common. Craig makes his bed as Stephanie does her hair in preparation for school. “We’re a typical family with three teenagers fighting over the bathroom,” said YN1 Roman Burgess.

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

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The kids are limited here to the jobs out of school, so it’s our job to ensure we provide enough high-quality activities to keep them busy and active out of school as well,” said Johnson. He also emphasized that unlike the school system many of us are accustomed to, there is a strong relationship between the school, the families and what can be considered the mayor of this “town,” the base commander. “Here, because we are sponsored by the military base, commands work with their people, allowing them to take the time away for school involvement,” added Johnson.

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

For a lot of folks stationed at this country base in northern Japan, having few worries for the family, both on and off base, is one of the major perks. “Being in a small community, you somewhat know everybody, and it feels relatively safe,” said Burgess. “It makes me feel good that there is a sense of control here and few troublemakers.”

With crime in Japan being extremely low, it’s not uncommon to find the kids roaming the streets in town looking for fun things to do after dark. It brings a sense of safety to the kids, who are away from their parents and growing up in the United States. Nowadays, the typical reaction of home, when a pack of teenagers is sighted under the evening streetlights is to put up the guard and expect some sort of trouble. But on the streets of Misawa, the reaction is a little different. “It’s always fun running into the Japanese people in town,” said Travis. “They always smile and act like they have seen Michael Jordan or someone.”

Despite living in Japan for more than half his life, Travis still understands what to expect when he moves to the United States. “We have a lot of freedoms here, especially now that we are older and more responsible,” he said. “If I was back in the United States though, I wouldn’t
have as much freedom from my parents, especially if we lived in a larger city.”

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

While they probably won’t bring the Japanese traditions of wearing kimonos and slippers back home with them, they will be able to share with their stateside friends the unique experiences of living and growing up in the “Land of the Rising Sun.”

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

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

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

For Strawser, the Iraqis taught him a valuable lesson. “We were there (guarding the Iraqis) so they would be less apt to try and cause harm to the medical personnel, but most of them had no desire to cause harm. They were grateful they were no longer in the situation they’d been in. These people were told we would kill them if they got caught, and here we were doing just the opposite — bringing them back to health and mending their wounds.”

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

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

Strawser and McCoy are photojournalists assigned to All Hands.
Eye on the Fleet is a monthly photo feature sponsored by the Chief of Information Navy Visual News Service. We are looking for high impact, quality photography from Sailors in the fleet to showcase the American Sailor in action.

Silver Sentries
Members of the crash and salvage crew aboard USS Bunker Hill (LHD 3) wear fire resistant proximity suits during a fire and rescue drill on the flight deck. Photo by PH2 Alicia Tasz

Night Flight
An F-14 Tomcat, assigned to Fighter Squadron (VF) 32, stands by for night flight operations on the flight deck of USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75). Photo by PH3 Danny Ewing

Traffic Control
An aircraft director sends an F/A-18C Hornet to one of USS Carl Vinson’s (CVN 70) four steam-powered catapults during evening launches. Photo by PH2 Inez Lawson

Details, Details
EM2 Nestor Novilla performs maintenance on a large electrical conductor in the motor rewind shop aboard USS Constellation (CV 64). Photo by PH3 Casey Tweedle

Ever Vigilant
AM3 Christopher Richards stands a security watch at Naval Air Station, Whidbey Island, Wash. Photo by PH1 James Schauer

To be considered, forward your high resolution (5” x 7” at 300 dpi) images with full credit and cutline information, including full name, rank and duty station. Name all identifiable people within the photo and include important information about what is happening, where the photo was taken and the date.

Commands with digital photo capability can send attached .jpg files to: navynewsphoto@hq.navy.mil

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Bringing New Life to Iraq

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

Shortly after sunrise, a displaced Iraqi family in need of assistance approached F Company Marines guarding the perimeter of the 15th MEU area. Katham, in her mid-20s, her baby was about to be delivered. The Marines radioed from their post to their operations center and a military ambulance was sent to pick up the expecting mother. She was taken to the Battalion Aid Station (BAS) where a translator assisted communications between the doctors and Katham.

“This is good stuff. We brought life into this world,” said LT Brian Humble, a medical officer for Battalion Landing Team 2/1 and one of the doctors who delivered the baby. LT Sean Stroup, the 15th MEU surgeon also assisted with the birth. This was not Stroup’s first delivery, but his first outside of the United States.

Kathan gave birth to a healthy baby girl at 8 a.m., who she named Rogenia. The doctors estimated the baby’s weight at about 6 pounds. There were no complications with the delivery.

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

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

After a short recovery period, Katham and her new baby girl were driven to the boundary of the MEU’s area where the rest of her family was waiting. She was given enough food, water and bandages for a few days, in addition to a warm blanket for the baby. The doctors said the baby was breast-feeding before leaving the BAS.

Katham and her family are from An Nasiriyah, but they were displaced because of the conflict in the region. They were living in a tent compound approximately 20 miles south of the city.

Knoll is assigned to the 15th MEU(SOC).