SSBN: 50 years of Deterrence
Robert Bowker welds the initials of Susan Ford Bales into the keel of the aircraft carrier Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) during a keel-laying and authentication ceremony at Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding, Newport News, Va.

Photo by MC2 Kevin S. O’Brien
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[12] Around the Horn
Building Hope

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

Photo by MC2 Erick S. Holmes

[18] SSBN: 50 Years of Strength Through Deterrence

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

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

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

Photo by MC2 Kevin S. O’Brien
A message from your seven year old...

A child’s logic can be tough to argue.

For information on how you can quit smoking check out [www.cdc.gov/tobacco](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco) or contact your health care provider.
The award honored businesses for maximizing opportunities for minorities in San Diego County.

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

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

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

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

“It shows that the Navy has Awareness on how to manage diversity and is sensitive to diversity,” said Hervey. “It is crucial in retaining and attracting employees.”

Hervey is a member of the Urban League, representing Navy Region Southwest, in a position he says gives him insight into current corporate thinking and best practices in diversity.

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

Hervey is also able to identify opportunities for Sailors to be involved in the communities around San Diego area bases, “so we can go beyond the fence,” he said.

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

“We don’t just talk about diversity,” Hervey said. “We embrace it.”

The Navy continues to attract, develop, mentor and retain a top diverse talent to attract, develop, mentor and retain a top diverse talent to maximize all hands and to support the Navy’s forward deployment of Sailors.

The Navy designated a top 50 company in the urban League Region Southwest, San Diego. Rear Adm. Patrick McCarthy (center left), and Capt. Ken Barrett, Chief of Naval Personnel Diversity Directorate, accept a President’s Award for Diversity from San Diego’s Urban League leadership.

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

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

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

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

Sailors with 90 days of active-duty service after September 11, 2001, have earned education benefits under the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008, with no buy-in costs. This benefit can now be transferred to family members shown in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System.

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

“Normally an enlisted member needs to check with their career counselor because there will be an obligation required,” said Wardlaw. “Sailors will need to obtain the obligation through either re-enlistment or enlistment.

“Officers can sign a Page 13, and they need to see their administrative officer to do that.”

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

Since July 2009, 12,000 Sailors have taken advantage of this relatively new education benefit option. This is below the estimated 15,000 the Navy GI Bill office expected.

“I have a nineteen-year-old currently attending Mississippi State University,” said Valle Gallagher, a Navy Reserve.

“It’s an out-of-state college, and it’s expensive to pay that bill as a single parent on one income. With tuition, books and housing, I’m saving nearly $12,000 annually. This money is going to help me quite a bit.”

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

Story by MC3 (SW/AW) LeLaune Howard, Navy Personnel Command Millington, Tenn.
Detailers to Field Applications for Break from Active Duty

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

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

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

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

In addition to rolling applications, other changes include:

- Removing the restriction on retirement-eligible Sailors;
- Allowing E-1 to E-3 Sailors to apply for the program, with participation beginning at the end of their first term of service;
- Clarifying a requirement that Sailors in a high-year tenure status be able to serve two months on active duty for every month in the program.

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

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

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

NPS Launches New Online Human Systems Integration Certificate Program

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

The four courses in the one-year, all-online interdisciplinary program will be offered over the Internet and are open to federal government personnel for free.

Continued on page 11
program are designed to educate and train HSI practitioners in the state-of-the-art policies and processes needed to conduct HSI in DoD and other federal agencies. The course begins each summer quarter and is designed to be applicable toward a resident HSI master’s degree or a resident master’s degree in systems engineering, as the elective track. Classes are asynchronous, and instructors are regularly available by e-mail.

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

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

“As a result, HSI has become a vital aspect in the acquisition of DoD and other federal systems,” said Shattuck. “And though it’s now mandated by many organizations as part of their acquisition process, there are few practitioners who have the actual knowledge, skills and abilities to perform HSI. That’s why we created this new distance learning program—to equip a new cadre of HSI practitioners with what they need to ensure their agencies’ systems are designed, developed and deployed with appropriate consideration for human operators, maintainers and supervisors, making explicit the lifecycle tradeoffs across all HSI domains—manpower, personnel, training and human factors engineering—to optimize total system performance within cost constraints.”

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

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

Story courtesy of Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, Calif.

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Directions on how to properly submit photos can be found at www.navy.mil/photo_submit.html

Mail your submissions to: Navy Visual News Service 1200 Navy Pentagon, Room 4B514 Washington, D.C. 20350-1200

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Comoros

On the tiny island of Comoros, NMCB 11 assisted another community in their educational pursuits, by providing just the second primary school to the residents of Moroni, Comoros. Working from sunup to sundown, in heat and rain seven days a week, the crew members of NMCB 11 say they keep motivated because their hard work will benefit the Comorans.

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

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

Ethiopia

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

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

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

“We found a technique for laying tile that works,” explained BU3 John Vetter, a crew member. “According to Construction Battalion Construction Management, the computer program we use to track our project’s progress and calculate man-hours, we did 14 days of work in three days,” Vetter said.

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

“Once we get moving, it’s actually hard to stop,” said Scott. “Most of the troops are green,” said BU1(SCW) Jeffery Dwyer, project mission commander. “But they stay motivated and very resourceful for the task at hand.”

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

Uganda

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

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

The crew of Seabees built the Aromo low-water crossing bridge over a small river, replacing a lighter bridge that washed out during the last seasonal high floods and heavy rainfall. The
bridge once again connected the village of Aromo with the road leading to the city of Lira and other local areas, such as the public school.

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

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

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

“By living in the vicinity of local Ugandans,” said Pertersen, “the Seabees are able to interact on a daily basis with Ugandan civilians and build goodwill between our two countries. The efforts of the Seabees of NMCB 11 outside Lira will provide benefits for both the people of Uganda and the United States for years to come.”

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

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

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

“Handing out our extra water bottles and throwing the football with the kids is by far the best part of the day,” said Johnston. “No matter how exhausted you are, those kids can always bring a smile to your face.”

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

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

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

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

Holmes is assigned to American Forces Network South and Lingo is assigned to NMCB 11, Gulfport, Miss.
Fleet ballistic missile submarines (SSBN) have been patrolling the world’s oceans for 50 years acting as a deterrent force to countries that could use nuclear weapons of mass destruction. The size and capabilities of the ballistic missile submarine have changed through the years, but the Sailors who call the 560-foot submarine “home” have stayed as vigilant and ready as ever to prevent war.

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

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

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

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

The SSBN mission precedes Missile Technician 3rd Class (SS) David Bunney by 27 years, but he knows that it remains as important as ever.

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

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

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

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

“Our ballistic missile submarine force is an extremely important part of our national defense. It was, and remains today the most survivable part of our nuclear defenses,” said Rear Adm. Frank Caldwell III, Commander, Submarine Group 9.

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

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

**SSBN / US Timeline**

- **1959** - USS George Washington (SSBN 598) commissioned
- **1964** - First deployment of Polaris A-3 missile on USS Daniel Webster (SSBN 628)
- **1970** - USS James Madison (SSBN-627) conducts first submerged launching of a Poseidon nuclear missile off Cape Kennedy
- **1975** - Contract to begin construction of first Trident is awarded to General Dynamics
- **1976** - President Gerald Ford removes last troops from Saigon, Vietnam, ending 14-year long conflict
- **1976** - Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Senator Robert F. Kennedy are assassinated
- **1971** - 26th Amendment to the Constitution granting the right to vote at age 18 ratified
- **1968** - Alaska and Hawaii join the United States as the 49th and 50th states
- **1962** - Roger Staubach is named starting quarter-back for Navy
- **1959** - USS George Washington (SSBN 598) was the Navy’s first nuclear-powered fleet ballistic missile submarine, and was originally scheduled to become USS Scorpion (SSN 589). During her construction she was lengthened by the insertion of a 130-foot missile section and was finished as a fleet ballistic missile submarine. She was commissioned Dec. 30, 1959.

**SSBN History**

- **US History**
Description
Since the 1960s, strategic deterrence has been the SSBN’s sole mission, providing the United States with its most survivable and enduring nuclear strike capability.

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

Ohio-class SSBNs have the capability to carry up to 24 submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) with multiple independently-targeted warheads. The SSBN’s primary weapon, the Trident missile, was built in two versions. The first generation missile, Trident C-4, has been phased out of service and replaced by the larger, longer-range, and more precise Trident II D-5. The first eight submarines (SSBN 726 to 733) were initially built to only carry the C-4 missile. The first four Ohio-class (SSBN 726 through SSBN 729) ended their strategic deterrent mission in the early 2000s when they began the conversion process into guided-missile submarines, or SSGNs. SSBN 730 through 733 have been retrofitted to carry the D-5 missile. SSBN 734 to 737 were designed from the beginning to carry the D-5 missile and continue to execute their primary mission of strategic deterrence.

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

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

General Characteristics, Ohio Class
Builder: General Dynamics Electric Boat Division.
Date Deployed: Nov. 11, 1981 (USS Ohio)
Propulsion: One nuclear reactor, one shaft.
Length: 560 feet (170.69 meters).
Beam: 42 feet (12.8 meters).
Displacement: 16,764 tons (17,033.03 metric tons) surfaced; 18,750 tons (19,000.1 metric tons) submerged.
Speed: 20+ knots (23+ miles per hour, 36.8+ kph).
Crew: 15 Officers, 140 Enlisted.
Armament: 24 tubes for Trident II submarine-launched ballistic missiles, MK48 torpedoes, four torpedo tubes.

USS Submarine Group 9, Bangor, Wash.
COMSUBRON 17
USS Henry M. Jackson (SSBN 730)
USS Alabama (SSBN 731)
USS Kentucky (SSBN 732)
USS Nebraska (SSBN 733)

USS Submarine Group 10, Kings Bay, Ga.
COMSUBRON 19
USS Maine (SSBN 741)
USS Louisiana (SSBN 743)
USS Nevada (SSBN 733)
USS Pennsylvania (SSBN 735)

Submarine Group 10, Kings Bay, Ga.
COMSUBRON 14
USS Alaska (SSBN 732)
USS Tennessee (SSBN 734)
USS West Virginia (SSBN 736)

Submarine Group 20
COMSUBRON 20
USS Maryland (SSBN 738)
USS Rhode Island (SSBN 740)
USS Wyoming (SSBN 742)
of protection to forward-deployed forces and friends and allies, while contributing to the larger architecture planned for defense of the United States.” Ballistic missile submarines deter through credibility and reliability. “A big part of deterrence is the fact that we say we can do something, and we demonstrate we can do it. Our adversaries know that if they choose to be aggressive then the president has his options,” said Ratte. “You can argue that as long as there are nuclear weapons out there then we need to have a capability to defend against them.”

**Life in a Boomer**

With great power comes great responsibility, and the men entrusted to carry out the mission of ballistic missile submarines are all volunteers, and almost half are between the ages of 19 and 25 years old. These Sailors volunteer knowing that communication while on patrol is hit and miss, and the only port call will be when they walk across the brow in their homeport after completing up to a 90-day mission. “I can say without exception, that the Sailors who serve aboard USS Nebraska’s (SSBN 739) Chief of the Boat, MCM(T) Randall Pruitt knows the service he and his shipmates volunteered for is not surrounded with fanfare and publicity. Submarines are the “silent service.”

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

Having two crews is also good for creating strong bonds between crews and families. When one crew goes to sea they can count on the off crew to help if any issues come up back home as MT3(SS) Zachary Agnew has seen. “If somebody’s family needs help then we are there to help because we would want the same for our families when we are out to sea,” said Agnew. “I think this is one of the reasons why the submarine community is so tight, we all have to depend on one another at home and at sea. The camaraderie and the closeness you have is like no other because we need each other to make it back home.”

**Drill, Drill, Drill**

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

Since training is considered the bedrock of the submarine community – both in port and at sea – the need for a good mentorship program is a must. The submarine community has a different name for this; the "Sea Pup and Sea Dad" program. “Mentorship is a way of life for us, and it’s the way we do business because it is how we properly train those who will be relieving us,” said CS1(SS) Jonathan Miller. “Your Sea Dad is someone you can go to when you need help with qualifying, or if you are having a difficult time and need advice. I know that I could not have been any prouder when my Sea Pups were pinned with their dolphins because they worked hard for it, I was a small part of helping them get there, and they are now part of a fraternity going back to the beginning of the submarine service.”

Finding time to study while underway can be difficult. The work day is based on 18 hours instead of 24 hours giving the men six hours of watch and six hours training, six hours sleeping, and six hours spent working out, relaxing or sleeping. While one crew goes to sea in support of the deterrent mission, the off crew remains ashore. This is not free time for these men. Days are filled with training, training and more training to stay proficient in all areas so the crew remains mission ready when it’s their turn to take the boat to sea.
life really only gets mundane if you are not actively working to better yourself and the boat,” said Electronics Technician 2nd Class (SS) Bevan Aque Paraz. “You get busy on your 12 hours off with maintenance, drills, and studying so your sleep can sometimes feel like a nap.”

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Albrecht is assigned to Submarine Group 9, Silverdale, Wash.
Ray Mabus took the oath as the 75th United States Secretary of the Navy, May 19, 2009, a presidential appointment he doesn’t take lightly, and a job that consists of so much more than just being in a Pentagon office. In fact, during his first three months in office, Mabus travelled to 13 states and 13 countries talking to Sailors, Marines, and senior military and government leadership. His No. 1 priority is people and making sure that the Navy has everything it needs to continue to be the best Navy and Marine Corps in the world.
Sailors and Marines out in the fleet, aboard ships, submarines, attached to air squadrons, on the ground in Central Command or the Horn of Africa may not know or understand the senior Navy leadership above their immediate chain of command.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

His father’s service also gave him a strong moral foundation, so after he graduated from University of Mississippi, or as he lovingly calls it “Ole Miss,” he had been all through the Middle East, across the Trans-Siberian railroad and through Asia and Central America.

“I’m one of the luckiest people alive. I’ve got a terrific job, and I’ve got a wonderful family. I’ve gotten to serve in a lot of different capacities during the course of my career, and I hope I’m approachable... I’m working hard to make sure Sailors, Marines and their families are taken care of.”
graduated college he became a junior officer on a surface ship. "I thought it was important to serve and to give something back. I was attracted to the Navy because of its history, its traditions and what it does for this country," he said. He served aboard the cruiser USS Little Rock (CLG 4) in the Mediterranean. "Today, when he travels around the fleet to talk to Sailors, he likes to say how different the Navy of today is, than when he served in the early '70s. "I have been asked what the difference is between when I served four decades ago and today. And the difference is not that the equipment has gotten better, although it certainly has. And the difference is not that technology has advanced, although it has. "The difference is that we have more skilled, more dedicated, more talented and a more educated group of people who are Marines and Sailors," Mabus said. "Even though I served with a lot of people who were dedicated, skilled, very patriotic Americans – we can’t touch you in terms of skill level, in terms of devotion level, in terms of commitment level, in terms of just operational tempo – in terms of how often you are called on to deploy, in terms of how much your families sacrifice." His time in the Navy was the starting point for a very successful career in service. He went on to graduate from Johns Hopkins University, and then used the Montgomery GI Bill to help pay his way through Harvard Law School. This focus on education and service led him to be elected as the youngest governor of Mississippi in 100 years, at the time of his election. While serving as governor he was named one of "Fortune" magazine’s top 10 education governors for leading a comprehensive education reform called Better Education for Success Tomorrow. Quality of life issues for Sailors and Marines such as the Post 9/11 GI Bill are important to the secretary since he used a GI Bill program to help propel his career. "After the Navy, I got the GI Bill. It helped me go to Harvard Law School. I think if my memory is correct, I got $175 a month, which paid for all my living expenses. My dad picked up my tuition, but it allowed me to have a place to live, all the expenses that involve being away in school," he said. "That’s one of the reasons I think the GI Bill is so important and the flexibility that our new GI Bill gives – either the service member can use it or they can pass it along to one of their family members. I just think it’s one of the best things we do." Mabus later went on to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, along with several other jobs as a senior executive in both the civilian and government sectors. His time growing up in a Navy family and becoming a Sailor himself has helped him lead today’s Navy. He said that he can relate to Sailors and their families who are separated, especially during the holidays. "I’ve travelled a lot for work and have most of my career. And I know just in the short times – in two weeks or three weeks, I know how difficult that separation is," said Mabus. "And those trips pale in comparison to being deployed – to going away on a six-month cruise, to being in theater as a Sailor or Sailor for seven months – and the effects the families who are left behind, because those who stay at home also serve." He stressed that quality-of-life issues are important to him and he keeps those at the front of his mind as he looks at the policies and procedures that keep the Navy running. "You need to make sure that things like child care are taken care of, education is taken care of, but also that [the family at home] gets enough information so they know what their [Sailor or Marine] is doing, they understand the importance of it, and that America understands the importance of what that [Sailor or Marine] is doing," he said. Mabus understands the importance of his job, but more importantly he understands the importance of each and every Sailor, Marine, Navy civilian and family member who make up the entire Navy family. He said he cannot imagine a better job than serving as Secretary of the Navy. "My Navy roommate who is a judge in Indiana now, sent me a letter when I got nominated for this job," said Mabus. "And he said, ‘Do you remember all those nights on the bridge when we were talking [at] two or three in the morning about how this whole Navy thing could be run better? OK, here’s your chance. Run it better.’" Mabus said he can run it better, but only by getting out into the fleet, on the ground or at sea where Sailors and Marines are doing the nation’s work. He said that he learns better by seeing firsthand, and by hearing firsthand from Sailors how they think he can make the Navy better. That’s why he travelled to 13 states and 13 countries in the first three months in office, because he is still striving to serve in the best way he can. "I’m one of the luckiest people alive. I’ve got a terrific job, and I’ve got a wonderful family. I’ve got to serve in a lot of different capacities during the course of my career, and I hope I’m approachable. I hope I’m not remote, and that I’m working hard to make sure Sailors, Marines and their families are taken care of so we have the best Navy and Marine Corps in the world," Mabus said. And as he works at the Pentagon, meeting with Navy and DoD leadership, with Congress and even with the President, he hopes that Sailors, Marines, Navy civilians and their families around the globe know he is working for them. Not for himself, but for the United States of America, for the United States Navy and for you.

Blowers is assigned to the Office of the Secretary of the Navy. A L L  H A N D S  •  w w w .  n a v y . m i l

Blowers visits with wounded service members during a tour of the Comprehensive Combat and Complex Casualty Care Unit at Naval Medical Hospital Balboa in San Diego California. Right: SECNAV Ray Mabus, poses for a photo with Sailors during an all-hands call following a tour of the amphibious command ship USS Blue Ridge (LCC 19). Blue Ridge, embarked U.S. 7th Fleet staff and Marines from Fleet Anti-terrorism Security Team Pacific hosted Mabus’ first official visit to the Republic of Korea.
A Navy officer picked up as a boy off the coast of Vietnam by a Navy ship recently returned to Vietnam in command of one.

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

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

Nearly 35 years ago, Le left aboard a U.S. Navy warship for a scheduled port visit. As Le grew older he heard the call of the new beginning,” he said. “My parents sponsored us, my Dad was able to forge a new beginning,” he said. “My parents sponsored us, my Dad was able to forge a new beginning.”

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

“My father was a commander in the South Vietnamese Navy and was serving as the deputy commanding officer of Nha Be Naval Support Base when we left Vietnam,” he said. “The evening of the April 29, 1975, my commanding officer left the country with his family without telling my dad, and when his officers told him about that he assumed command,” said Le. “The next day, only after realizing Saigon had fallen, my dad told his remaining men to go home to their families and to make sure to take care of them,” he continued. “My dad navigated a fishing trawler with 400 passengers out to sea, where we were picked up by USS Barbour County (LST 1195) on May 2, 1975.”

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

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

“Growing up, my father never pushed me to join the Navy or anything like that,” Le said. “He said do what you want to do, but whatever you do, do your best at it. So when I did decide to go to the Naval Academy, he was proud of me for that.”

The crew that Le leads is one of only a few in the Navy who have had the opportunity to visit the Asia-Pacific nation since the end hostilities in 1975. “I never thought I’d have a chance to visit Vietnam,” said Logistics Specialist Seaman Michael McLean, who hails from Gahanna, Ohio. “All that history that happened in Vietnam, and now I get to see it first hand,” he said.

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

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The team tested an F-404 F/A-18 engine to determine if it could run on a jet fuel (JP-5) derived from a renewable source, said Tony Cifone, director for the Propulsion & Power directorate for the Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division, Patuxent River, Md. “This is the first step on the road to the ‘Green Hornet.’”

The “Green Hornet” encompasses more than just a new source for jet fuel. It will eventually include upgrades and new technology to create a more fuel efficient F/A-18 Super Hornet. More tests will occur in the December to January timeframe on the F-414, the engine for the super Hornet. Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus pointed out during the Navy’s Energy Forum held last week, that the “Green Hornet” is an important element in accomplishing his five Green Goals, which center around reducing the use of petroleum derived fuels and increasing the use of energy from renewable sources. The intent is to have the alternative fuels in operational use in the Hornet within three years of certification.

This first test on the F/A-18 Hornet engine proved that a renewable source of JP-5 can be used as a “drop-in” replacement for the current petroleum-based jet fuel. “The engine reacted the way we had expected,” said NAVAIR’s Rich Kamin, who is the Navy’s Fuel Team Lead. “It did not know the difference.” Likewise, the operators in the fleet will not know the difference, Kamin said as he emphasized the importance of the “drop-in” aspect of an alternative fuel.

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

“Aircraft, since their inception, have been developed around petroleum based fuels. Although renewable fuels currently being tested have many similar properties to petroleum based fuels, they are not 100 percent the same. Blending is the near term solution to allow use of these fuels until on-going research provides a complete solution.” The tests the fuel teams conduct to ultimately certify alternative fuels are the same for all fuels. The tests encompass standard chemistry, component and engine testing. The certification process is the same regardless of the source of the fuel. One of the unknown aspects of using a fuel derived from a non-petroleum source is how it would affect seals in the various systems. Standard petroleum-based jet fuel contains aromatics, a class of ring-shaped hydrocarbon molecules that includes benzene and related solvents. Aromatics soak into the seals and make them swell, and ensures a tight fit against the metal. “Self-sealing fuel bladders, for example,” said Kamin said, “need aromatics to work properly.” The fuel used in the recent run of tests was created from the camelina plant, which is in the same family of plants as the mustard seed and rapeseed. It needs little water or nitrogen to flourish and can be grown on marginal agricultural soil. An important aspect of using camelina as a renewable source for fuel is that it does not compete with food crops.

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

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

**Deployed Maritime Civil Affairs Team uses Facebook to Further Mission**

The Navy’s Maritime Civil Affairs Team (MCAT) 104 is using Facebook while deployed to help tell the story of what they are doing in the Horn of Africa to improve relationships with nations vital to U.S. interests.

“Our MCAT’s in the field serve as the liaison between the operational commander, U.S. country team, host nation military and civilian entities and other key players to enhance the collaboration of defense, diplomacy and development,” said Capt. Claudia Risner, commanding officer, Maritime Civil Affairs and Security Training Command. “Their focus is on the civilian populace and how to align the efforts of all these different groups to meet the needs of the local population. That’s ultimately the key audience for any military or diplomatic civil affairs effort.”

MCAT 104 is in the Horn of Africa to support the Operation Enduring Freedom missions of the Combined Joint Task Force.

“Our role is to support the commander through an understanding of the complex socio-cultural [and] civil-military relationships in the countries we’re assigned,” said Lt. Lauren Denyer, MCAT 104 team leader.

MCAT 104’s Facebook page has been an important tool in maintaining these relationships.

“We’ve worked in Djibouti, Rwanda and Uganda for shorter periods of time,” said Senior Chief Mass Communication Specialist Jon Mullan. “That means we’ve had to maximize the relationships we’ve started building, and Facebook is one way we’ve done that.”

The MCAT 104 Facebook page helps the team keep families and friends updated on what we’re doing,” said McMillan, but, since its inception, it has grown into something more. “Maintaining our Facebook page is an important part of our mission. It adds a level of transparency to what we are doing and that makes our job easier.”

Internet connectivity can be a challenge at times, but for the most part the keeping the page updated is relatively quick and easy, said Denyer.

“The most time-consuming aspect is selecting and posting our photo albums,” said McMillan. “But the feedback we’ve been getting on our albums makes every hour spent on it well worth the effort.”

“It’s critical for our Sailors to leverage all the available communication tools,” said Risner. “They’re on the front lines of American engagement, and the capability provided by social media gives them an excellent means of making that diplomacy effective.”

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

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

**USN Anzio Seizes Four Tons of Narcotics**

USN Anzio (CG 68), operating as part of the Combined Maritime Force, a U.S.-led coalition supporting maritime security operations in the region, recently seized approximately four tons of hashish found aboard a skiff in the Gulf of Aden, with an estimated street value of $28 million. The skiff was located approximately 170 miles southwest of Salalah, Oman where it was spotted traveling at a high speed by Anzio’s crew.

Following a brief chase, the skiff was boarded by Anzio’s visit, board, search and seizure (VBSS) team, including officers from the U.S. Coast Guard and U.S. Navy. The drugs seized by naval forces could have helped to fund the insurgency fighting coalition forces in Afghanistan as well as contribute to instability in the region.

“T he seizure of these drugs takes money out of the hands of those financing terrorists in the region,” said Rear Adm. Scott E. Sanders, commander, Combined Task Force (CTF) 151, embarked aboard Anzio. “Yesterday these sailors were hunting pirates, today they have sent a message to all would be smugglers that we won’t tolerate pirates or drug traffickers in these waters.”

Coalition Sailors discovered the drugs in the dhow along the ‘Hashi Highway.’ The drugs were thrown overboard and destroyed. This is the first seizure of narcotics that Anzio has conducted.

“At first we had no idea what the skiff was doing out here in these waters, we were wary that they could have been pirates and Capt. Frank J. Olmo. "My VBSS teams are trained to handle these situations safely and efficiently." Naval Forces assigned to the Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) have seized more than 22 tons of narcotics during 2009, highlighting the continual presence in the region and the commitment to creating and maintaining a lawful maritime order. In 2008, CMF forces seized more than 53 tons of narcotics. Anzio is the flagship for CTF 151 and has been operating in the region for several months. CTF 151 is a multinational task force established in January 2009 by the CMF headquartered in Manama, Bahrain. They conduct counter piracy operations under a mission-based mandate to actively deter, disrupt and suppress piracy in order to protect global maritime security, and secure freedom of navigation for the benefit of all nations.

**Story by Lt. Iain Jones, Royal Navy, CTF 151, USS Anzio (CG 68).**
One would not normally have time outside of being a husband and father of three and working the night shift as a master at arms stationed in Yokosuka, Japan. Nevertheless, Master-at-Arms 2nd Class Albert Lee King Jr. finds time to be productive in his career, family and inside the boxing ring as an amateur fighter.

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

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

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

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

“I didn’t allow the early stoppages to discourage me from getting in the ring,” said King. “I just got back in the gym training harder and harder.”

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

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

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

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

Floyd Mayweather, Winky Wright and Chad Dawson are the three fighters King enjoys watching the most for various reasons.

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

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

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

Hutto and Renfroe are assigned to Defense Media Activity-Anacostia, Washington, D.C.
Fine was born in 1920 and was a hospital corpsman for 31 years. He is the last living Medal of Honor recipient from the Pearl Harbor attack. In 1941, he was a hospital corpsman at the Pearl Harbor Army Airfield. He was one of the last survivors of the attack.

In the early morning of December 7, 1941, Fine was awakened by the sound of low-flying airplanes. "Any airport was supposed to have rigid rules and regulations about how the planes are supposed to come in," he remembered. "We heard planes flying around, but they weren't flying the station pattern."

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

Fine attached a 50-caliber machine gun to a moveable platform normally used to train gunners. He pushed the platform to an area in which he could clearly see the Japanese planes; the trouble is that the enemy pilots had a clear view of him as well.

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

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

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

"I joined the Navy only two weeks out of high school on June 22, 1938," Madsen said with affable manner, distinct South Boston accent and an honest, constant smile. "At that moment, I did not know what I was doing with my life. I figured if I joined the Navy I could get college money and get a better start in life."

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

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

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

"That June, I started my actual training at Naval Base Ventura County, Calif., where they issued me my equipment, my gas mask and CBR gear, and provided me my desert-issued camouflage utility uniforms," Madsen said. "I got trained on my primary job for the IA: Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TCCC) – to provide emergency response care in a combat environment and deal with complex medical needs. Once we were done, they sent us to Camp Pendleton. The Marines taught me combat training, and I developed my physical readiness."

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

"I was a hospital corpsman 3rd class Francis Madden, a native of Brockton, Mass., is a clear example of the rise of the 21st century Sailors. Assigned to the Branch Medical Clinic, Washington Navy Yard, Madden has barely finished one four-year service contract and has completed one assignment as an individual augmentee (IA)."

"I primarily gave dental care, but also dental care -- you know, it was a good thing -- Yeah, we worked lot of hours, but that's good! The main focus of the mission was to provide medical care to our troops and get them on their way. We were the last stop before going into Iraq."

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

IA 360°

Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Francis Madden

Story by MC2 (SCW) Brian Coverley, photo by MC2 Shawn Graham

Coverley is assigned to Defense Medicine Activity-Anacostia, Washington D.C., Graham is assigned to Naval Air Station, JRB New Orleans
WHEN THE WORLD CALLS ON AMERICA, AMERICA CALLS ON US.