

Protecting the
Panama Canal



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ALL HANDS

MAGAZINE OF THE

DECEMBER 2003

*“One Shipyard”
Building the*

Navy





28 There's No Place Like Home

December

[Features]

[On the Front Cover]

Looking more like an astronaut than a shipyard worker, **Blaster-Painter Wayne Johnson** sandblasts submarine parts for the Navy before they are painted. "Sandblasting is the best way to prepare metal for painting," said Johnson. Less tedious and labor intensive than sanding and nail gun paint removal, the sandblaster is better for the environment because **Johnson** can recycle the steel grit he uses.

Photo by JO1(SCW/SS) James Pinsky

[Next Month]

The annual *Owners' and Operators' Manual* will be arriving in the fleet in January. Look for this year's edition that will include a 2004 pull-out wall calendar featuring some of the best photos of 2003.

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Photo by JO1(SCW/SS) James Pinsky

When the Navy decided to undertake the largest extended selected restricted availability (ESRA) ever with *USS John F. Kennedy (CV 67)*, they kept her moored in her homeport of Mayport, Fla., and brought the shipyard to them.

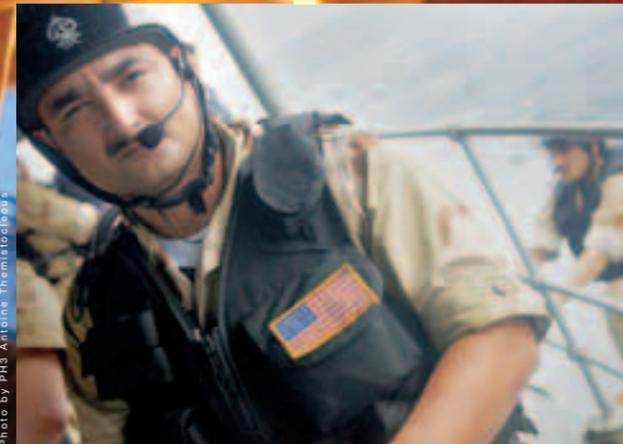


Photo by PH3 Antoine Thiamistolebe

The Cradle of 20 American Shipbuilding

For tourists, the popular seacoast town offers fine seafood and a rich colonial heritage: but for Sailors, Portsmouth, N.H., is far more than just a day trip from Boston – it's the very cradle of naval shipbuilding, boasting a time-tested reputation as one of the finest shipyards in American history.

Photo by JO1 (SCW/SS) James Pinsky



Photo by JO2 Charles L. Ludwig

34 Surprising the Competition

By his own admission, one doesn't think of **Religious Program Specialist 2nd Class (Fleet Marine Force) Nelson Lebron** as a kickboxer when meeting him for the first time. But as the bell rings, and the diminutive boxer connects with his opponent, it only takes two kicks to the stomach, a crushing right cross to the chin and a mere 14 seconds to bring down a man who is a foot taller than **Lebron**.

Missouri Memory

Photo by PH1 William Goodwin

Jerry Weiss, a former Engineman 2nd Class, prepares to talk to reporters aboard his former ship, **USS Missouri (BB 63)**, shortly after the Anniversary of the End of World War II ceremony. Weiss served aboard the battleship from 1948 to 1951 and was one of more than 100 former **Missouri** crew members who were present at the ceremony hosted by the **Missouri** Memorial Association in Pearl Harbor.



Super Swarm

Photo by PH2 Christopher L. Jordan

F/A-18E Super Hornets assigned to the "Black Aces" of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 41 fly over the Western Pacific Ocean in a stack formation. The *Nimitz* Carrier Strike Group and Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 11 recently returned from an extended deployment.

Speaking with Sailors

Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy
MCPON (SS/AW) Terry D. Scott

The following questions are from a recent All Hands Call in Norfolk

Q: When Hurricane Isabel hit Norfolk recently, my apartment sustained some damage and I lost some of my personal property. Can the Navy reimburse me?

A: I'm glad you asked about this, because this is a topic that is so very important for Sailors to understand. In light of the recent events in the Norfolk area; and other incidents during the past couple of months, such as fires, break-ins, etc., around the Navy, I asked about the number of Sailors who had renters' insurance. I was surprised to learn how few Sailors have this coverage. It's estimated that less than 10 percent of Sailors and their families have any type of renters' insurance.

Many of those who approached Navy and Marine Corps Relief for assistance did not have renters' insurance, and some lost everything they owned. One Sailor and his family lost everything when the home they were renting was

destroyed by the hurricane. He, unfortunately, did not have renters' insurance.

My fear is that some Sailors may have the misconception that the Navy will compensate you for loss of your personal property due to a natural disaster. The fact is, the cost of replacing or repairing your personal property is solely your responsibility. Whether you live in government housing or rent out

on the local economy, you should insure your household property just as you would any other valuable asset – just as you do your car.

Of six fires in the past two years, in one particular area, not one of the residents were covered. And of 300 residents affected by a housing flood in 1999, only two families had coverage. When Sailors and their families rent government

quarters and move in, they are briefed and encouraged to obtain renters' insurance. And I encourage Sailors who rent out on the economy to also take the proper steps to secure their personal property. This coverage is readily available and generally very affordable.

I really hate to see Sailors lose anything when the fix is so easy and inexpensive. Talk to your insurance provider about the right coverage for you and your family. ☞

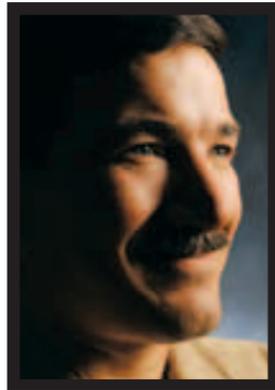


Photo by JO1 Preston Keras

Speaking with Sailors is a monthly column initiated by the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy as a way of reaching out to the men and women of the fleet, whether they are stationed just down the road or halfway around the world.

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All HANDS

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U.S. Navy Band Holiday Concert Broadcast 2003



Photo by MU1 Steve Hassay

Join your shipmates for the U.S. Navy Band's "Happy Holidays" concert, broadcast from DAR Constitution Hall in Washington, D.C.

This is the eighth broadcast by the Naval Media Center of this annual event.

Tune in for 90 minutes of outstanding family entertainment as **CAPT Ralph M. Gambone** conducts the U.S. Navy Band and specialty groups in a joyous celebration of music from this, the most wonderful time of the year!

Highlights include "Eight Days of Hanukkah," "O Holy Night," "Jingle Bell Rock" and "Sleigh Ride," calypso, country and more!

A new finale is sure to raise your spirits and rekindle your hopes with the warmth and majesty of the season.

In CONUS, cable systems and over-the-air television stations that intend to air the program will be listed on the Navy Band's Web Site at www.navyband.navy.mil.

The Armed Force Network (AFN) will carry the concert on Dec. 25, 2003, as follows:

- AFN-Atlantic – 7 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. (Central European Time)
- AFN-Pacific – 8 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. (Japan Time)

The program will also appear on Direct to Sailor (DTS) television on Dec. 25, 2003, as follows:

- DTS-Atlantic – 7 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. (Central European Time)
- DTS-Pacific – 8 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. (Japan Time)

For more information, check your local listings for times, or go to:
AFN Web Site – www.myafn.net • U.S. Navy Band Web Site – www.navyband.navy.mil
Naval Media Center Web Site – www.mediacen.navy.mil

If you're in the area, plan to attend the concert at DAR Constitution Hall in Washington, D.C., on Saturday, Dec. 20, 2003, at 7:30 p.m., or Sunday, Dec. 21, 2003, at 3 p.m.

For information on how to obtain FREE tickets, log onto the Navy Band's web site at www.navyband.navy.mil

Commander, Navy Installations Stands Up

'Alignment,' the fifth of the Chief of Naval Operations' (CNO) "Top Five," a series of priorities established to help the Navy focus on issues most critical to sustained success, was recently addressed with the establishment of Commander, Navy Installations (CNI) under the command of RADM Christopher Weaver.

Headquartered in Washington, D.C., CNI began operations Oct. 1. With CNI, Navywide alignment was set into place when installation management claimants, including Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Europe (COMUSNAVEUR), transferred their administrative installation support responsibilities to this single installation management claimant (IMC).

Since 1997, the Navy has addressed improved shore installation effectiveness by reducing and regionalizing the number of installation claimants. "We've got five years of experience thus far in a partial consolidation of our installations. Now we're going to a full consolidation under one command," said **Weaver**, during a recent tour of Navy Region Europe commands.

"CNI is a piece of transformation at a time when we are expected to transform — and we are expected to transform partly as a result of the war and partly because it's the right thing to be doing today," **Weaver** said.

"We can leverage business procedures and business

processes to create resources, to generate resources and to recapitalize the Navy. We also need to take advantage of our experience in centralization and consolidation of support services that we've been going through."

"All of our Navy installations are important, but I would tell you that the ones that carry a tremendous amount of the burden are the ones that are overseas."

In most cases, the impact of CNI will be transparent at the base level. CNI will improve fleet readiness by providing unified and consistent procedures, standards of service, practices and funding, to manage and oversee shore installation support to the fleet.

For more information on CNI, visit www.cni.navy.mil/.

For related news, visit the CNRE Navy NewsStand page at www.news.navy.mil/local/cnre. 

Story by JO1 Eileen Kelly Fors, who is assigned to the public affairs office, Commander Navy Region Europe



Photo by PHO Johnny Bivens

RADM Christopher E. Weaver, the 83rd Commandant of Naval District Washington (NDW) makes his remarks during NDW's Change of Command Ceremony. **RADM Jan C. Guadio** (center) incoming Commandant of NDW and **ADM Vern Clark**, Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) listen to his remarks. **Rear Adm. Weaver** will step down and take charge as Commander, Navy Installations (CNI). The Navy Installations Command will be a key element of the Navy's Sea Enterprise pillar of the SeaPower 21 Vision. The CNI will report to the CNO as he exercises administrative control over the Navy's 16 shore regions.

New Chief Petty Officers Gain Leadership Training Edge

A new method of delivering leadership training to chief petty officers (CPO) is now part of the continual growth and development of

Sailors. In conjunction with Navy Knowledge Online (NKO), computer-based leadership training is now delivered to every newly selected chief petty officer through a partnership with an online business skills training provider.

The CPO Selectee E-Learning program consists of three Web-based courses offered by the Ninth House Network.

Situational Leadership II, Resolving Interpersonal Issues and Managing Change provide approximately 10 total contact hours of training.

The Ninth House CPO E-Learning course is a pilot program and currently only available to new chief petty officers.

Nearly 90 percent of the total 5,418 active-duty, Reserve and TAR [Training and Administration of the Naval Reserve] chief selectees have enrolled in the program. Many of the chiefs are completing more than just the required three courses, and since it is a yearlong program; the number of chiefs completing the training is still increasing daily. Chiefs without Internet access because of a deployment were given 60 days to complete the training upon return.

According to **Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (SS/AW) Terry Scott (MCPON)**, the Navy anticipates a great return on this investment. "This is the beginning of our investment in our future leaders. First and foremost, it provides knowledge and sharpens the skills that will serve these chiefs well into their future as deckplate leaders. Secondly, it exposes them to a new way of learning, and provides insight to the effectiveness and application of distance learning.

"This method of transferring knowledge to our Sailors will become more and more common as we continue our revolution in training," he said. "And it's essential that the chief petty officers who are taking us into the future, become familiar with it."

The courses were delivered to the chief selects through a combination of both the Internet and NetCD® packets. NKO provided the portal for the chiefs to

access and log in for the training. The CD-ROM packets contained the course's multimedia files, which helped those with bandwidth limitations by avoiding the need to download the files.

This training offered the added benefit of introducing many of the chief selects to NKO. Once they established their NKO account and logged on, the chief's NKO profile also served to log them into the Ninth House Network's training server, eliminating the need for a separate Ninth House Network login process.

"Setting up the training this way enabled us to provide the chiefs with a 'one login solution' and seamless NKO integration with the training," according to **Senior Chief Electronic Technician (AW/NAC) Steven L. Pierce**, the program's technical manager. "We were able to track every student's progress through a database which fused data from the individual chiefs, NKO and the Ninth House Network."

This database was used to generate reports for MCPON and the entire Senior Enlisted Advisory Panel, consisting of all Fleet, Force and Chief of Naval Operations-Directed Command Master Chiefs. These reports detailed the progress of every panel member's claimancy, commands and individual chiefs. By assigning every chief to a member of the Senior Enlisted Panel and providing them with timely management data, the panel members could track the participation of each chief in their claimancy.

Another key to this year's CPO E-Learning Program's success was improving on the lessons learned from last year's pilot program.

"Last year, we wanted to launch a Web-based leadership training program that would introduce the FY03 chief selects

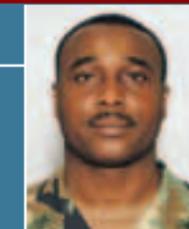
to the concept of e-learning," **Scott** said. "It was the first step in identifying the challenges of delivering web-based training on a Navywide scale. We learned several lessons from last year's effort, and those lessons were put to good use this year. The two largest challenges were distributing the course CDs throughout the entire Navy, and providing data to the Senior Enlisted Panel so they could manage the program within their area."

Many of the chiefs completing this course found it gave them a different perspective on leadership. "This training was beneficial to me by showing the different types of leadership styles and the different times and situations to use each," said **Chief Information Systems Technician (AW/SW) Angela Mitchell**, aboard **USS George Washington (CVN 73)**. "It provides an entertaining approach that keeps your attention and interest, while making you focus on the impact of decisions you make."

The tremendous success of this program, with an estimated 11,500 total courses completed, is due in large part to the dedication of the senior enlisted leaders who deployed this training.

"The chief petty officer community as a whole took

Shipmates



Master-at-Arms 1st Class Terry Currelley was selected as Naval Air Station Pensacola's Senior Sailor of the Quarter for the 2nd Quarter 2003. **Currelley** is the security leading petty officer and liaison between civil authorities and military personnel. His other duties include crime prevention coordinator and departmental career counselor.

ownership of this venture and was committed to its success," said MCPON. "This could never have been such a huge success without their leadership and dedication." 

Story courtesy of the public affairs staff of the Master Chief Petty Officer of The Navy

Fleet Week, San Diego

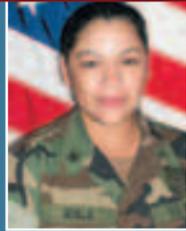
An estimated 100,000 people were treated to a show of the Navy's mightiest ships and aircraft, as they gathered together this fall along the waters of San Diego Bay to watch the 2003 Navy Sea/Air Parade.

Both San Diego residents and patriots from near and far lined the rocky shores of Harbor and Shelter Island to watch the event, which is considered to be the kickoff to this year's Fleet Week.

Now in its seventh year, Fleet Week is a tribute to the more than 300,000 military personnel and their families who make this town in Southern California the largest concentration of Navy and Marine forces in the world. Presented by the Port of San Diego, the *San Diego Union Tribune* and other local organizations, Fleet Week is a celebration

Around the Fleet

Shipmates



Master-at-Arms 3rd Class Christy Ayala was recently selected as Naval Station Ingleside's Junior Sailor of the Quarter. She was cited for professional achievement in performance of her duties while assigned as a patrolman. Ayala, "has always ensured that all infractions identified during her shift were expeditiously and accurately processed in accordance with security department procedures."

of the city's military community. Retired **Master Chief Boatswain's Mate Richard McMahon Sr.** came to see what has changed since his retirement after 32 years of naval service.

"These classes of ships going by now are new compared to the ones I was on," said McMahon, who sailed on the cruiser **USS Providence (GLG 6)**, the destroyer **USS Borie (DD 704)** and the oiler **USS Waccamaw (AO 109)**.

"Watching these ships parade by brings back many memories for me," said McMahon, as he and his wife of 46 years watched the carrier **USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74)** dominate the waterways

along its watery parade route. "We came out to enjoy the show and to support the Navy," he said.

The McMahons were not alone, as they shared the shores of scenic downtown San Diego with thousands of interested onlookers who came to watch the military vessels and aircraft.

In contrast to the McMahons, who are return participants of this major military event, is 12-year-old Aaron Windmiller of San Diego, who, with his parents and grandparents, watched the event for the first time.

"I think the Navy should keep this up," he said, as he stared skyward while paratroopers jumped



Photo by ATAN Sandra Gomes

USS Mobile Bay (CG 53) arrives in San Francisco for the Parade of Ships during San Francisco Fleet Week. This marks the 22nd year of Navy participation. The celebration, held on Fisherman's Wharf, featured 2,500 Sailors, Navy Blue Angels and U.S. Navy ships; **USS Cleveland (LPD 7)**, **USS Hopper (DDG 70)**, **USS Thach (FFG 43)**, **USS Shiloh (CG 67)**, **USS Mobile Bay (CG 53)**.

from a helicopter to perform a simulated rescue mission. "I think it would be cool to jump from a helicopter or airplane," he said, adding that he is definitely coming back again next year.

Among the many displays of military power was Lockheed Martin's advanced hullform ship,

Sea Slice, designated a High Speed Vessel. The advanced research vessel showed off its flexibility and high maneuverability as it smoothly sliced over the water's surface.

Crowds were also treated to the submarine, **USS Salt Lake City (SSN 716)**, watching in awe

as this mysterious vessel cruised by, 75 percent submerged.

Onlooker Don Davis of Scottsdale, Ariz., said, "The Navy's submarines fascinate me. I am amazed and puzzled by the idea of living underwater on one. I don't know how they do it." ❧

Story by JO2 Allison Pittam, is assigned to Naval Media Center Fleet Support Detachment, San Diego

Serving in Iraq Prevents Sailors from Donating Blood for One Year

Sailors and Marines who served in Iraq will not be able to give blood for one year after leaving that country. The restriction was put in place by the Armed Services Blood Program (ASBP) to safeguard the military's blood supply after several service members in Iraq were diagnosed with **leishmaniasis**. **Leishmaniasis** is a parasitic disease spread by the bite of infected sand flies.

ASBP manages the blood program for DOD and provides blood products to support worldwide military operations. The restriction applies to the entire country of Iraq and to all who travel there.

"There has always been country and travel restrictions that ban certain groups of people from giving blood. Different countries have different risks for diseases. Most people are familiar with the Food and Drug Administration's restrictions for people who travel to the U.K. and were potentially exposed to Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease, also known as Mad Cow disease.

There are similar restrictions for Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome-affected areas and

malaria-affected areas. The **leishmaniasis** ban is for a specific geographic area and affects all military personnel who have traveled to Iraq," said **CDR Michael Libby**, director of the Navy Blood Program.

"The impact on Naval Medicine's blood supply is difficult to project at this time. We do know that 20 percent of the military donate blood so the loss of donors could be significant," added **Libby**.

"The impact is nothing we can't overcome," he added. "We have donor centers located near recruit training centers and military schools that allow us to call on donors who are not part of the population at risk and who haven't traveled abroad yet."

Naval Medicine's blood donation sites, which are part of the AFBP are the National Naval Medical Center, Bethesda, Md.; Naval Hospital Camp Lejeune, N.C.; Naval Hospital Great Lakes, Ill.; Naval Medical Center, Portsmouth, Va.; Naval Medical Center San Diego; and the U.S. Naval Hospital, Okinawa, Japan.

"This new restriction is intended to guarantee that the military's blood products are safe. The restriction also protects the health of the donors and the patients who receive life-saving transfusion," said **Libby**. "This is a time for new donors to volunteer and for current donors to consider donating more often. Their efforts will go a long way to counter any potential shortages."

For related news, visit the Navy Medicine Navy NewsStand page at www.news.navy.mil/local/mednews. ❧

Story courtesy of the public affairs office, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery

Time Capsule

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



1969 – 34 Years Ago

SN Ben Mullins is featured on the cover, placing a line around a bollard as a ship enters port at Newport Naval Base, R.I. We also highlighted Naval Parachute Course I instructors and students at the Naval Air Technical Training Center, Lakehurst, N.J. Navy personnel, such as SEALs, underwater demolition teams and para-rescue teams, participate in the two-week course. We profiled **CDR C.J. Wages Jr.**, commander of the U.S. Navy Rung Sat River patrol groups, on his second tour in Vietnam.



1976 – 27 Years Ago

The cover of this issue shows two ships decorated with Christmas lights in Norfolk. We also featured the Naval Arctic Research Laboratory, located in Barrow, Alaska – 30 miles inside the Arctic Circle. This facility housed research scientists in a variety of fields, from oceanography to veterinary medicine. We also took an in-depth look at the U.S. Naval Observatory in "The Nation's Timekeepers." Touted as the oldest scientific organization in the Navy, the work conducted here by the "clockwatchers" is essential to U.S. defense efforts and fleet operations.



1985 – 18 Years Ago

The cover of this issue features some of the familiar scenes of Hawaii. We take a look at the sea and shore billets available, along with the quality of life offered to Sailors who serve in "paradise." In "Chuting Stars," we highlight Naval Special Warfare Group 2's parachute demonstration team. The 12-member team makes 4,200 jumps each show year. In addition to supporting recruiting efforts by performing at air shows, the parachute demonstration team also supports SEAL parachuting operations.

Ricky's Tour

By JO2 Mike Jones

www.rickystour.com



Story and photos by JO1(SW) M.J. Darby,
photos by PH3 Antoine Themistocleous

Protecting the Waters of the Panama Canal

AS SHOPPERS, WE COME TO EXPECT THAT THE ITEMS we've grown accustomed to will always be sitting on the shelves just waiting for purchase at our leisure. But, what if one day they weren't? Suppose, after saving for months, that high-definition, plasma TV you'd been eyeing was no longer available. Or, perhaps you finally decided to trade in the old car for a new convertible, only to discover that the price of practically everything – including your new dream car – had tripled overnight.

It's an unsettling thought, but not an entirely implausible one if commercial shipping through the Panama Canal were to be disrupted due to terrorist activity.

From petroleum to coffee, a staggering percentage of goods Americans consume on a daily basis is brought to neighborhood stores from shipments passing through this canal.



▲ A member of Naval Special Warfare Unit (NSWU) 4 holds *Balsa's* crew "captive" as part of the exercise.

Photo by PH3 Antoine Themistocleous

Protecting the Waters of the Panama Canal

► **A member of the Chilean Special Forces** keeps an eye on the bridge aboard *Balsa*, as the Chilean VBSS team prepares to take over the ship.

▼ **According to the Panama Canal's** Fiscal Year Traffic Report, approximately 2 million tons of cargo passed through the channel, generating close to \$590 million in tolls during 2002 alone.

Photos by PH3 Antoine Themistocleous



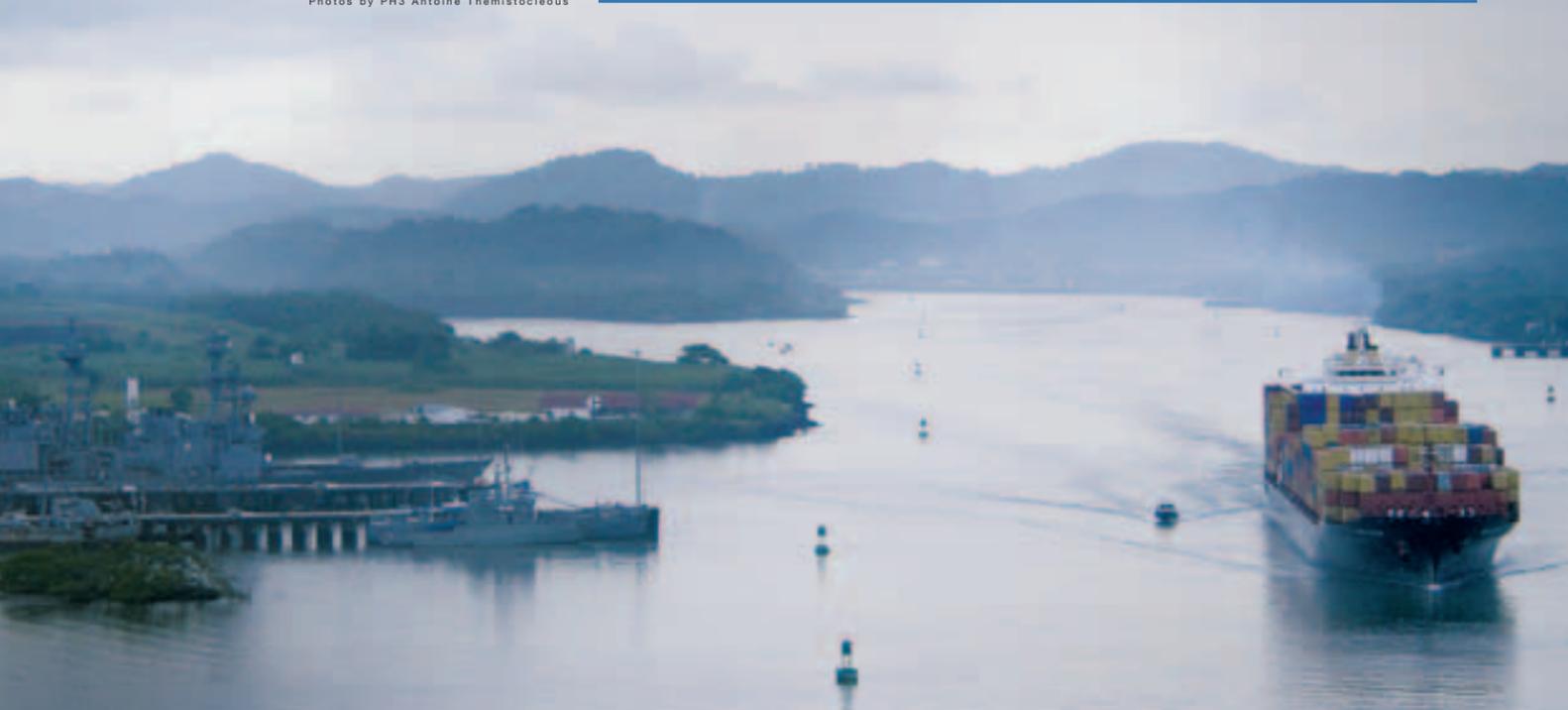
passage through and neutrality of the canal, combined the technology, skills and efforts of several nations, including the United States, Chile and Panama.

"Everyone has the same goal here: defense of the canal and the ships that transit it," said LT Glen Quast, USS *McInerney's* (FFG 8) operations officer. "The Panamanians have the ability to defend the actual canal terrestrially, and no one is challenging that," he continued. "The purpose of this exercise is to add an additional layer of maritime defense to existing security. That way, if there were to be a threat from the sea, we're ready to offer assistance."

Photo by PH3 Antoine Themistocleous



▼ **A VBSS team** from USS *McInerney* (FFG 8) leaves *Balsa* (MV 72) on a RHIB, as the safety observers make sure they depart safely.



And, the waterway's importance goes far beyond its commercial value. The Panama Canal also has tremendous strategic importance to the U.S. Navy. Without this shortcut between the Americas, naval vessels transiting from the Atlantic to Pacific Ocean would add an additional 8,000 miles to the journey, skirting the South American continent.

To Panamanians, this canal represents thousands of jobs and millions of dollars in revenue from tourism as well as the tolls collected from passing vessels. In 2002

alone, according to the Panama Canal's Fiscal Year Traffic report, approximately 2 million tons of cargo passed through the channel generating close to \$590 million in tolls. Additionally, the canal's hydroelectric facilities provide an alternate source of energy to the region. Even the fact that Panama's economy is one of Latin America's most stable, is an obvious testimony of the waterway's importance.

Taking these aspects into consideration, it's easy to see why protecting the aquatic avenue has become paramount to the

countries using it.

Physical security of the channel as it flows through the countryside has been the sole responsibility of Panama, since noon on Dec. 31, 1999, when the United States relinquished control of the canal to the Panamanian government and removed military forces from the area. However, threats originating from the international waters approaching the canal had been largely unaddressed. That is until *Panamax*.

Panamax 2003, the first-ever multinational exercise designed to ensure safe



Photo by PH3 Antoine Themistocleous

▲ **Members of SEAL Team 4**, Little Creek, Va., quickly conduct a search throughout the passage ways of *Balsa* (MV 72).

Of course, the planning and execution of such a large-scale operation was no simple matter. First, and foremost, was the monumental task of establishing communications between the navies.

"The CAT (Communications Assistance Teams) had to work hard to overcome the language and technology barriers," said Chief Operations Specialist (SW/AW) James Daniels, part of the Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 6 team embarked aboard USS *Stump* (DD 978) for *Panamax*. "Without the ability to communicate effectively with the other ships, this exercise had no chance of succeeding."

Although conducted in the waters of the Eastern Pacific in late July, volunteers from key ratings were selected months earlier for the CATs and deployed aboard the Chilean, Peruvian, Ecuadorian and Panamanian ships with the mission of installing the tactical communication systems, LINK 11 and Battle-Force E-Mail. Once in place, CAT members had the added responsibility of training the international crews on the operation of these systems.

According to CAT member, Information Systems Technician 3rd Class Antonio Arevalo, TAD aboard *Zenteno* (PFG 8), the biggest struggle came from differences in the Chilean ship's configuration. "Placing the cables and antennae



▼ A Panamanian vendor works at the outdoor market in Panama City. Panama has one of the best economies in Central America, due to user fees from the Panama Canal and the tourists the canal attracts.

was tricky, because this ship wasn't designed for this sort of installation," said Arevalo, "but we knew that we had to figure out any problems because these systems were the only means of sending secure information exchanges between the ships."

Fellow CAT member OS2 Jaret Barber had to overcome difficulties as well. "At first, the language difference was a real problem. The CAT groups for each ship had at least one Sailor with them who spoke Spanish to act as a translator, but there were times when the interpreter wasn't around. So, we communicated with each other by pointing and hand signals," said Barber. "But, I enjoyed my time aboard. *Zenteno's* crew was awesome. I missed my family while I was away, but I also made some friends here that I hope to keep in touch with."

Despite their trials and tribulations, each installation team completed their mission and *Panamax* 2003 was underway.

Now able to securely exchange intelligence reports, the participating ships were able to distinguish one another on radar as well as track the progress of other vessels in the surrounding waters. The objective of these exchanges was to identify any potential threats before they develop.

"Through tracking systems we can follow the paths of different ships in the area. If a ship has been designated as a cargo transport, then we can expect it to behave in a certain manner," said Quast. "For instance, the captain of any merchant ship will travel from point A to point B in the shortest possible course to cut down on fuel expenditures and to deliver their cargo as quickly as possible. That's how they make their money. What we're looking for is unexplainable detours or stops that might denote suspicious activity."

Of course, all the technology, teamwork

Photo by PH3 Antoine Themistocleous

Photo by J01(SW) Monica Darty

Protecting the Waters of the Panama Canal



◀ A Navy SEAL sniper covers the rest of SEAL Team 4, Little Creek, Va., from an SH-60 helicopter as they board *Balsa* (MV 72).

Photo by PH3 Antoine Themistocleous

and planning put into *Panamax* would have been pointless without an actual target to track and apprehend. For this exercise, the commercial cargo vessel, *Balsa* (MV 72), and its 18-man crew were contracted to play the role of suspects.

Using reports gathered from ships and patrolling P-3 aircraft, the Combat Information Center (CIC) aboard control ship, *Stump*, identified *Balsa* to be demonstrating suspicious behavior. The order was then issued for the search and seizure teams to detain and board the vessel.

As the most potentially dangerous and hands-on phase of the exercise, the detention of the *Balsa* was an exhausting experience for everyone involved – particularly the container ship's crew. "It was exciting the first time they took control of the ship," said *Chef's Assistant Arnel Tarriela* as he attempted to clean the galley between boardings. "Now, I'm just trying

Photo by PH3 Antoine Themistocleous



▲ Rubber paintball bullets were used by the SEALs during their search and seizure. These bullets may sting on impact, but there's no permanent injury. Everyone on the ship wore protective safety glasses during the exercise.





◀ **OS2 Jaret Barber** (center), who doesn't speak Spanish, was aboard the Chilean naval vessel *Zenteno* (PFG 8) as part of a Communication Assistance Team. He said that the language difference was a problem at first, "So, we communicated with each other by pointing and hand signals."

▼ **American influence** is easily spotted on Panama's streets due to the long occupancy of the Panama Canal by the United States. The Panama Canal was relinquished to the Panamanian government Dec. 31, 1999.

Photo by PH3 Antoine Themistocleous

Protecting the Waters of the Panama Canal

to get my work done."

During a 24-hour period, the ship was detained and searched nine times by Visit, Boarding, Search and Seizure (VBSS) teams from each of the participating ships. With each group's boarding, the *Balsa's* crew was herded to the boat deck and the entire vessel searched for suspicious materials. Only the bridge crew and engineers

were allowed to remain at workstations with a guard positioned to monitor their activity. Although a long and taxing day for the players, the experience of searching an actual cargo ship proved to be quite useful to the VBSS teams.

"It was good to be able to see what we might encounter if actually called to board a suspicious commercial ship," said

Electronics Technician 2nd Class (SW) Chris Cochran, a *Stump* VBSS team member. "I think it was definitely valuable training for all of us."

The Chilean VBSS team concluded the search and seizure phase of *Panamax* the following morning by delivering *Balsa* to waiting Panamanian authorities (after which, the ship and its exhausted crew concluded their role as suspected terrorists and continued their transit to Houston.)

As with any exercise being conducted for the first time, there were a number of hurdles to overcome, but everyone involved with *Panamax* agreed upon its importance. "Overall, the exercise was extremely successful," said **DESRON Operations Officer LCDR Rich McDaniels**. "We met our objectives, and there was excellent inter-operability between the participating nations."

With the economic stakes surrounding this waterway ever increasing, Sailors can count on similar exercises in the future to support the canal and, subsequently, the laws of supply and demand.

Perhaps security of the Panama Canal isn't the first thought on your mind as you try on those new running shoes. But, it's developing security measures such as *Panamax* that ensure operations through the canal flow smoothly and guarantee that those products will be within reach – both physically and financially – when you want them. Without them, you could easily be looking at a store full of empty shelves. ☞

Darby is a photojournalist and Themistocleous is a photographer assigned to All Hands

Photo by PH3 Antoine Themistocleous



Portsmouth Naval Shipyard: The Cradle of American Shipbuilding



“Without a decisive naval force we can do nothing definitive, and with it, everything honorable and glorious.”

— President George Washington to Marquis de Lafayette Nov. 15, 1781

Along the jagged, rocky coast of the North Atlantic, and cloaked by fog as hearty as New England’s best clam chowder, sits the bustling town of Portsmouth, N.H.

For tourists, the popular seacoast town offers fine seafood and a rich colonial America heritage; but for Sailors, Portsmouth is far more than a day trip from Boston – it boasts a time-tested reputation as one of the finest shipyards in American history.

▲ **Freedom**, and everything it took to win it, is never forgotten by New Englanders, who pass along their patriotism like an heirloom — from generation to generation.

▲ **“Generations of shipyard workers** make up Portsmouth’s population, so there’s a great relationship between the Navy and Portsmouth,” said **Ann Shaw**, president of the Portsmouth Navy League.

Portsmouth Naval Shipyard: The Cradle of American Shipbuilding

Portsmouth Naval Shipyard (PNSY) was established in 1800 and is the oldest operational naval shipyard in America. Technically though, the shipyard – named for its parent city just across the Piscataqua River – isn't geographically located in Portsmouth or even New Hampshire at all, but in **Kittery, Maine**. Geography aside, PNSY is home to some of the most sought-after workers in the country – New England shipyarders.

“Any employer worth their salt wants a New Englander to work for them,” said **Mark Margolis**, apprenticeship-training assistant for PNSY. “New Englanders have a reputation for being the hardest-working, most educated, most skilled workers in the country, and the shipyard certainly reflects that opinion.”

PNSY is one of four public shipyards under the charge of Naval Sea Systems Command in Washington, D.C. Along with two nuclear-capable private industry facilities, the yards represent a active teaming of national ship repair resources that are maintaining the Navy's culture of readiness as “One Shipyard for the Nation.”

“We came to Portsmouth to learn how they repaired their 500 Kilowatt generators because [PNSY] is considered the industry leader,” said Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard



▲ **In 1964 Portsmouth Naval Shipyard (PNSY)** was the least efficient shipyard in the country. But by the early 1970s shipyard commander, **CAPT Elmer T. Westfall**, turned PNSY around with then-revolutionary industrial management until it regained its reputation as the leader in submarine repair.

▶ **Apprentice Paul Dachon** and Test Director **Anthony Dell**, a 16-year PNSY veteran assigned to Code 920 Structural, perform a soap bubble test on a main ballast tank vent. Like many shipyard workers, Dell thinks his work goes far beyond just being a job - it's his “patriotic duty to build submarines as well as possible because they are the tools America uses to keep us free.”



▲ An exact replica of the sloop *Providence* made a port visit to Portsmouth on her way to Cape Cod, Mass. *Providence* was the first ship commanded by **John Paul Jones**.

Portsmouth Naval Shipyard: The Cradle of American Shipbuilding

Apprentice, Brede Cambra.

“When it came time for USS *Annapolis* (SSN 760) to do her shipyard availability,” said *Annapolis*’s Commanding Officer LCDR Scott Blake, “it was an easy choice to request Portsmouth, because it was close to home for my Groton homeported Sailors. The shipyard does the best work, and my Sailors stay here would be a good experience.”

Being the best is an honor that was bestowed upon Portsmouth during America’s youth, when the only steel on Navy ships was found in the nerves of their captains like John Paul Jones, the father of the American Navy.

Jones, a man known for his attention to detail in shipbuilding praised the craftsmanship of the Portsmouth workers when they built the man-of-war, *America*, in 1782.



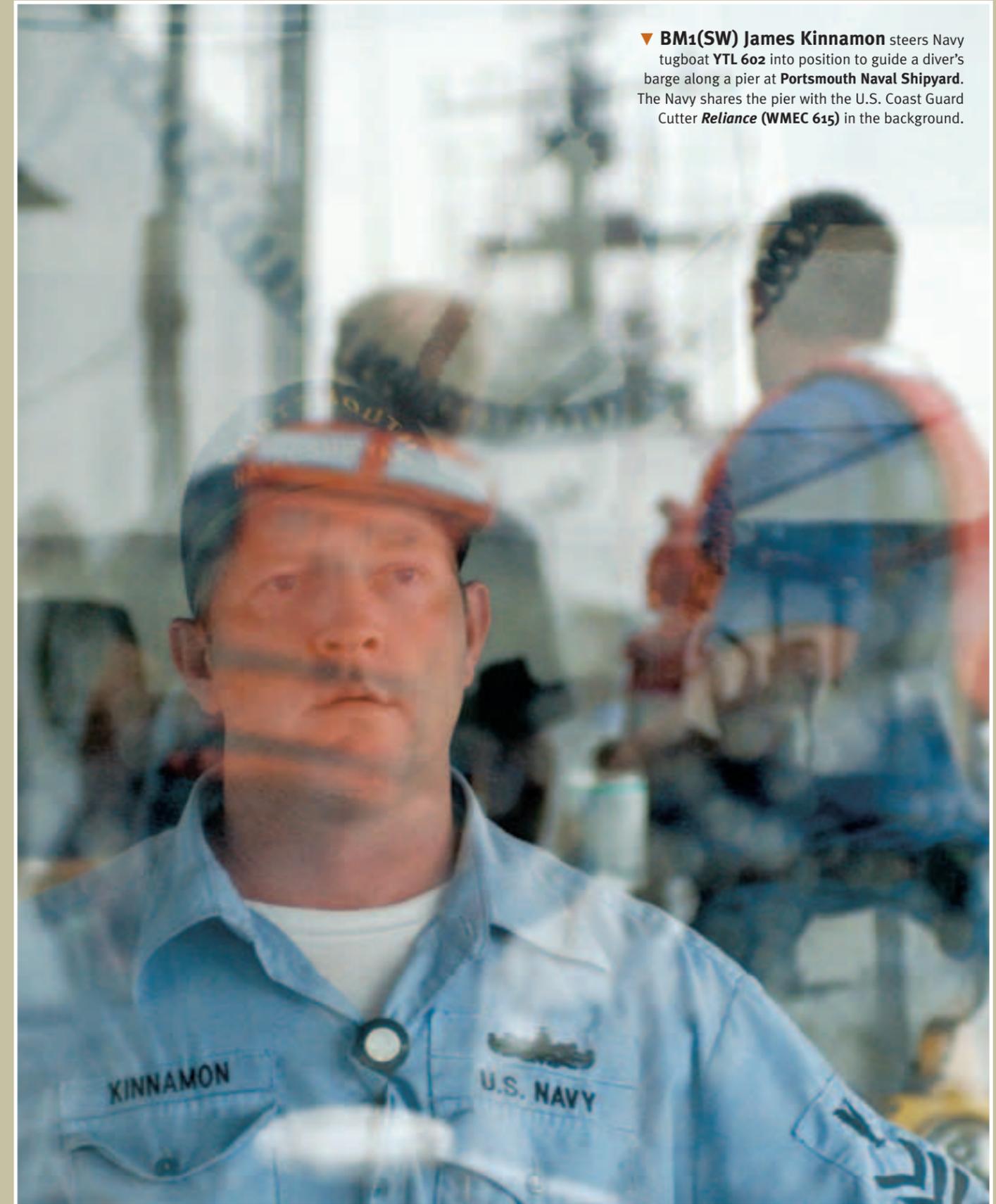
▲ Portsmouth is a well aware of its role in educating Americans about its rich revolutionary history, and has done much to capitalize on tourism while maintaining a small town charm.

◀ New Englanders, like 26-year shipyard veteran Dick Ruel, are patriotic. From hanging colonial flags from their porches, to treating visiting Sailors with unequalled respect, the American spirit lives well here.

“I have had her bottom opened up in several places and find it perfectly sound, the timber seasoned, and the work everywhere a masterpiece,” Jones said regarding the quality of work produced by the shipyard workers. At that time, *America* was under construction at Hackett’s Boatyard on Rising Castle Island along the Piscataqua River.

Jones loved more than just the craftsmanship – he loved the town because Sailors were always welcome.

▼ BM1(SW) James Kinnamon steers Navy tugboat YTL 602 into position to guide a diver’s barge along a pier at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard. The Navy shares the pier with the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter *Reliance* (WMEC 615) in the background.



Portsmouth Naval Shipyard: The Cradle of American Shipbuilding

“I reached Portsmouth just when they began to light the candles after tea, and the dancing did not stop until after two in the morning,” **Jones** wrote in his journal.

Portsmouth’s affinity for Sailors and all things from the seas is no accident.

“Since we’re the only city on the water, it makes sense to be friends with the people who call the seas their home,” said **Eileen Foley**, former mayor of Portsmouth and a Portsmouth Naval Shipyard worker.

But the relationship between the Navy and Portsmouth runs much deeper than sharing good times and exchanging warm smiles. They understand each other’s contribution to the fight to earn and keep our freedom.

“There’s no doubt that shipyard workers here are patriotic,” said **Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Lonnie Peterson**,

a pharmacist’s assistant at the PNSY clinic that treats Sailors, retirees and shipyard workers alike. “We Sailors are still fighting the fight they started for freedom more than 200 years ago.”

“We know that the work we do here in the shipyard translates into Sailors being able to keep us free,” said **Tim Drake**, 16 year PNSY veteran and test director for code 920 structural. “We make sure every seam is welded, every wire connected and every ship that visits us is better able to fight, because we know what we do is more than just a job – it’s our patriotic duty.”

Sailors who are fortunate enough to pay a visit to the “cradle of American shipbuilding” during their tour in the Navy, quickly find out that it may very well be one of the best-kept secrets in the Navy. This is not because of the great seafood,



▲ **Because PNSY is so small**, it doesn’t warrant a full-time pharmacist, so prescriptions are filled through video teleconferencing (VTC) with **Newport Naval Medical Center**, Newport, R.I. Here, **Pharmacy Technician HM3 Curtis Dixon**, conducts a VTC with **Navy Pharmacist, LT Eric Sutherland**.



unlimited wilderness or even the knowledge any Sailor can receive from shipyard workers with generations of experience; no, Sailors beg to stay in Portsmouth because they’re treated like everyday heroes.

“I cannot tell you how good it feels to march in a parade and hear the crowd clap only when you walk by,” said **Peterson**. “The first time it happened to me, I thought they were clapping for someone else, but the crowd stopped when we were gone, and they do it every parade I’ve been in.”

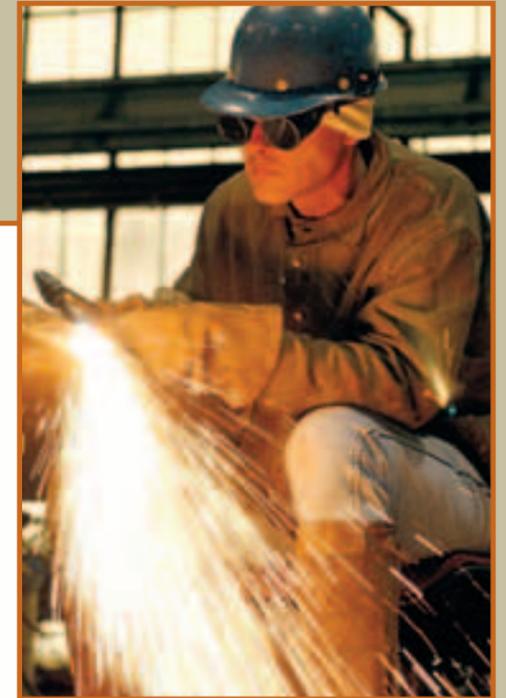
Peterson’s experiences with Portsmouth hospitality even occurred when patriotism wasn’t the theme of the day.

“What Sailor doesn’t dread trying to buy a car?” said **Peterson**. “Once that salesman finds out you’re military, it seems like everywhere I’ve been, he tries to jack the price up, but not here in Portsmouth,” he said. “When the salesman found out I was military, he started knocking the price down.”

According to **Peterson**, the smile you find welded to the faces of most Sailors

walking around PNSY is because of an attitude that New Englanders seem to have about the military in general.

“People here always want me to be happy, safe and feel important,” said **Peterson**. “Maybe it’s because the Navy brings a lot of work here for the shipyard, but I think it’s much deeper than that. I think the people here love America like no one else can and anyone who helps keep their country free is a hero and gets treated accordingly.”



▲ **New Englanders have earned** the reputation as some of the hardest working, most educated laborers in the industrial workforce. It’s a reputation earned through remarks like those from John Paul Jones about Portsmouth’s shipbuilding skills on the ship **America**, “I have had her bottom opened up in several places and found it perfectly sound, the timber seasoned and the work everywhere a masterpiece.”

◀ **Moe’s, a popular sandwich shop** near the shipyard, hosts the annual “Moe’s on the Mall” and feeds the entire shipyard, including any visiting submarines and their crews, during the event. On a more historic note, Building 86, also known as the Supply Building, was offered by then-President Theodore Roosevelt as the site for the Treaty of Portsmouth, signed by Japan and Russia ending the Russo-Japanese War, Sept. 5, 1905.

Patriotism is a word often used these days, but for the Portsmouth shipyard workers, it’s much more than just a word, or even a flag-waving battle cry. It’s their blood, sweat and tears which is poured into every ship that docks at her historic piers, so that the Sailors who man the ships lose nothing but time in their fight for freedom. ✚

Pinsky is a photojournalist assigned to All Hands

THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME

▲ Long after the majority of the crew and all of the first shift shipyard workers have gone, duty section personnel continue to work to get *Kennedy* back to an operational status. Even standing duty, according to some Sailors, is better when it's in your homeport. According to CDR Scott Rettie, ESRA coordinator, "Keeping Sailors focused in a shipyard environment is tough, but having a shipyard in your own backyard makes going to work a lot easier. You look over the flight deck, and you see the surf and your homes. Sailors wouldn't be able to do that if they were moored in the Elizabeth River. That's very motivating."

It was true when you were nine years old, nervously spending your first night away from home at your best friend's house, and it's true now as Sailors—coming home and being home warms our hearts like nothing else can.

Being home makes Sailors happy, and happy Sailors are better, safer, more productive workers. So, when the Navy decided to undertake the largest extended selected restricted availability (ESRA) ever with USS *John F. Kennedy* (CV 67), they kept her moored in her homeport of Mayport, Fla., and brought the shipyard to them.

THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME

◀ Watchstanding and casualty drills

continued to be part of the daily routine for *JFK's* crew members. Here, Duty Section 2 musters on station well before sunrise, just as shipyard workers make their way to the flight deck for another day of work.

Thomas, Combat Systems 9, whose wife, Johnetta, gave birth to their first child, 5 lb. 10 oz. Taylor Arianna Thomas, at Naval Air Station Jacksonville Hospital Aug. 9. Thomas was able to be at the birth of his first child and spend a week with his new family, thanks to *Kennedy* being minutes away in Mayport.

"Having **Derrick** here for the birth would have been impossible," said Johnetta, "because the baby came three weeks early. I was glad he was here, not just because he got to see the birth of our baby, but because he is home every night to help me even after his leave ends."

"If 'JFK' had to go to Norfolk, the only time I would have had with my new family would have been the baby leave the ship gave me," said **Thomas**.

Being home for the birth of your child is something you can't put a price on, but money was a contributing factor as to why the Navy sent the shipyard to Mayport.

"More than \$300 million has been devoted to the repair, modernization and maintenance of *Kennedy*," said **Rettie**. "In addition to the money being spent on the ship itself, hundreds of millions of dollars are being spent in Jacksonville's local economy, because the Navy decided to revitalize JFK in her homeport instead of Norfolk," he added.

Rettie went on to explain just how the economic impact of doing an ESRA on a scale like the *Kennedy's* works.

"Sailors are home to spend money; local shipyard and ship-repair industries are spending money, and DON shipyard workers from Norfolk; Puget Sound, Wash.; and Pearl Harbor packed their bags and are living off the local economy,"

stay there. By being home," he added, "the Sailors avoid the physiological impact of not having to transit to a shipyard."

"Leaving for a shipyard is just as traumatic as leaving for a deployment, because the Sailors aren't home – regardless of whether or not they are at sea," said **Mary Abbott**, Morale Welfare and Recreation (MWR) coordinator for *Kennedy*.

Abbott's point is well taken especially for one *Kennedy* Sailor, **Electronics Technician 3rd Class (SW) Derrick**

"This is absolutely the best way to do an availability for the crew," said **ESRA Coordinator CDR Scott Rettie**. "These Sailors were already gone for more than 10 months because of post 9-11 operational commitments. Adding another nine months of shipyard time in Norfolk was something we wanted to avoid if at all possible." It's best for the crew, according to **Rettie**, because, "they are home with their families. Florida is a great place to live, and once people get stationed there they want to



▲ Duty sections trained daily

for the ship's final light off assessment (LOA) by conducting casualty drills throughout the ship. Here, **AS3 Mark Zebal**, AIMD IM4, takes a break while wearing his firefighting ensemble (FFE) and Scott AirPak SCBA.

said **Rettie**. "They're eating at restaurants, buying gas, clothes, even vehicles while they're here."

For *Kennedy* Sailors to stay home, it meant that the shipyard workers, at least some of them, had to deploy to Mayport.

In fact, according to **Rettie**, of the 2,500 shipyard workers employed on *Kennedy*, about one-third were imported from naval shipyards throughout the country.

For some shipyard workers, like **Price**

► More than 2,500 shipyard workers

were brought in to help *USS John F. Kennedy (CV 67)* complete the largest ESRA ever outside of a naval shipyard. They represent public and private yard resources from four states, teamed as part of "One Shipyard for the Nation."



Vickers Jr., a sandblaster from Mobile, Ala., that meant a short stay in a local hotel. For others, like Puget Sound Naval Shipyard electrician **Ron Bleily**, it meant packing up his entire life, including his family, wife **Missy** and 5-year-old daughter **Madison**, and taking them with him from Washington State to Jacksonville.

For the Bleilys, housing is not a problem as the Navy pays for them to live in a contracted, fully furnished apartment throughout the duration of the

▲ **Missy Bleily, wife of shipyard worker, Ron Bleily**, helps their five year-old daughter, **Madison**, learn the letters of the alphabet. The Bleily's home school **Madison** because of the hectic schedule required of traveling shipyard workers.

nine-month ESRA. They brought what-ever belongings they could pack in their station wagon. Then the Bleilys decided to home school **Madison**, so this move, and future moves, would have a minimum impact on the quality of her education.



THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME



◀ **More than 2,500 shipyard workers and Kennedy crew** keep the C-2 Pier parking lot full. In a cooperative effort between the carrier, Naval Station Mayport, the state of Florida and local officials, steps were taken to ease the massive amount of traffic a carrier-sized availability causes.



▲ **Though still in her homeport,** Sailors, who would normally call the living quarters aboard **USS John F. Kennedy** home, reside on a barge moored next to the conventionally-powered aircraft carrier. "I could stay out in town if I wanted," said **IC3 Linton McClain**, V-2 VLA, "but it seems like a waste of money to me, considering I don't have the option of single BAH to live out in town here."

"We move around too much for Madison to have any stability when it comes to her education," said Missy. "So, we decided to home school. We think it's a better way to educate her, and the one-on-one attention I have with Madison makes me feel closer to her as a parent."

As a wife of a traveling shipyard worker, Missy tries to keep a positive attitude about constantly uprooting her family, a feeling many Navy wives can easily relate to.

"We're enjoying the traveling now while we're young," said Missy. "It's fun to be in places like Florida, and being able to expose Madison to different parts of the country is important. But," adds Ron's forward-thinking high school sweetheart, "if we have another baby, I'd want to stay in one place."

Like transplanted Sailors and their families, shipyard workers who are sent to a new job away from home form bonds with fellow shipyard workers to add some



◀ **Because Kennedy's ESRA** was done in her homeport of Mayport, Fla., Sailors, like **ET3(SW) Derrick Thomas**, were able to witness the birth of his first daughter, **Taylor Arianna**, who was born three weeks early.

familiarity to an otherwise unfamiliar world.

For the Bleilys, that family friend is the **Engel** family—**Matt**, a forklift operator for Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, his wife, **Jessica**, their six year-old daughter and best friend to **Madison, Rylee**, and 20 month-old **Dolvin**.

The two families recently spent a night out at a popular family restaurant, and Sailors could have easily had the same conversations: health care, stories about visiting different ports, like Kings Bay, Ga., Pearl Harbor; and San Diego; to fix ships; how to take care of their families when they move them; their experiences in apprenticeship schools; and of course work.

"We talk about the same things Sailors probably talk about when they are shipped to a new duty station," Ron Bleily said. "We all want the best for our families."

The crew believes it was able to maintain a high level of morale throughout the traditional shipyard period, because it was doing it from its homeport with an eight-section duty rotation, and working hours of 6 a.m. to 5 p.m., and no weekend work-days, which **Kennedy's** Commanding Officer, **CAPT Ronald H. Henderson Jr.**, allowed the crew to set.

"When I addressed the crew about what we wanted to accomplish with this ESRA," said **Henderson**, "I made it clear that this availability was much more than a recapitalization of the ship; it was a

recapitalization of their lives, as well."

Henderson's comments were not in vain as he, along with Naval Sea Systems Command, the city of Jacksonville, Naval Station Mayport and other local authorities began planning for the shipyard period in the spring of 2002. The brainstorming sessions led to several changes in and around Mayport, including the establishment of satellite parking for what was expected to be a 20 percent increase in the base's population due to the ESRA; rerouting of commercial traffic to ease the congestion coming into and leaving Mayport Naval Station; establishing a variety of fast-food restaurants within walking distance of C-2 Pier, where **Kennedy** was moored; and establishing mass transit systems using a vanpool, the first of its kind in Northeastern Florida.

More than 2,500 shipyard workers, 70,000 man-days of ship's force labor, mass transit systems, 11 hour days and uprooted shipyard worker families, all so Sailors



▲ **One of the advantages of a carrier,** especially in a shipyard environment, is the ease with which large quantities of items get moved around. Here, a pallet of soft drinks is set on a hanger bay elevator.

like Thomas can hold his newborn baby seconds instead of weeks after she was born. Sounds about right. 📷

Pinsky is a photojournalist assigned to All Hands

Story by JO2 Charles L. Ludwig
Photos by PH1 Shane McCoy and JO2 Charles L. Ludwig

▼ **During fights,** Lebron works close to his opponent, often using body punches to weaken the fighter. This reduces the chance of a competitor using his long arms to inflict damage and allows **Lebron** to stay out of harm's way.

SURPRISING THE COMPETITION

If you have ever seen a *Rocky* movie, it is a scene that you can appreciate: a seemingly over-matched competitor of small stature walks down the aisle of a half-empty arena, ready for the fight of his life with a man at least a foot taller than him.

That very thought makes him uneasy; he's really not scared, but definitely nervous. He has a reason to be. With that height advantage, his opponent could easily push him around the ring and use his long arms to batter him.

But as the bell rings, the uneasiness fades, as the diminutive kickboxer connects with two quick kicks to the stomach before landing a crushing right cross to the chin a mere 14 seconds into the fight, knocking the giant out in the process. As the referee raises his hand in victory, those in attendance can't believe it.

It's a feeling Religious Program Specialist 2nd Class (Fleet Marine Force) Nelson Lebron is used to. Lebron has surprised many people in his life by making a big name for himself in the sport of kickboxing. But by his admission, one doesn't usually think of a kickboxer when meeting him for the first time.

"People are a bit surprised when they find out what I do in my off time," Lebron said while working in the Chaplain's Office at Naval Special Warfare Group (NSWG) 2 in Little Creek, Va. "I can't blame them though. Most people think of a kickboxer, or any type of fighter, as a big guy like a heavyweight boxer."



▲ **Kickboxers aren't accustomed** to fighting in front of packed houses, **Lebron** says. A half-empty arena hosting the world championships in Orlando, Fla., attests to that.

▼ **A kickboxer's preparation** for a fight begins long before the opening bell rings. All fighters wrap their fists and begin shadowboxing well before their fight is on deck.



If someone is using a heavyweight boxer like Lennox Lewis or Mike Tyson as a standard, then there's no real reason to believe **Lebron** is a fighter. His physical frame, even when wearing his Navy-issue camouflage and boots, is a less-than-intimidating 61 inches and 120 pounds. And his demeanor is not what one would expect from a man who spends his

off time giving and receiving flurries of punches and kicks to the head and body; as a soft-spoken, polite man, he's more likely to offer your grandparents an escort across the street than a right jab to the chin. But that is only one side of **Lebron**, a 10-year military veteran during two stints with the Navy. While most Sailors and Marines know **Lebron** as a well-liked worker and NSWG 2's recent Sailor of the Year, those unfortunate enough to be in his way while he participates in his favorite pastime know him a bit differently.

"I'm known for being a tough fighter," **Lebron** said. "The main thing is I never quit. When I fight, I may not win every time, but you will always know I was there. I take the fight to them."

With a toughness acquired while growing up in Brooklyn, N.Y., **Lebron** has taken that fight a long way. In the four years since he made the move from boxing to kickboxing, he has been on a steady uphill climb. That climb culminated last year, when **Lebron** won national championships for three different kickboxing organizations and took home a bronze medal at

the International Amateur Kickboxing Sport Association World Championships in Kissimmee, Fla.

"The success I've had is unbelievable to me sometimes," **Lebron** says of the momentum he's been gaining in the kickboxing ranks. "It's not that I don't think I deserve it, but every now and then I feel overwhelmed. And there's more to come."

That success doesn't come so easy for **Lebron**, however. Between working as chaplain's assistant for NSWG-2, training as a field-qualified religious programs specialist and maintaining his kickboxing workout regiment, he often finds himself working as much as 17 hours a day.

"That's the part of my life that no one really understands," **Lebron** said concerning his intense daily schedule. "I enjoy the things that I do, but it can get hard to keep it up sometimes. I really have to stay on myself a lot."

The day typically starts between 4:30 and 5 a.m., when **Lebron** rises and almost immediately goes on a two-and-a-half to three mile run. After returning home and showering, he then hits the gym, where he concentrates on endurance and stamina exercises ranging from working over a

If there were
25 HOURS IN A DAY
 he would use them
ALL TO TRAIN

punching bag to dead lifts with high repetition. After another shower, it's finally off to work.

"That's when I normally meet up with the chaplain and start doing whatever tasks I have to do that day," he said. "After I get off around 4 p.m., I go back to the gym for some regular weightlifting, usually a body part a day."

For most people, that would constitute a full day, but not for **Lebron**. After his second gym trip of the day, he finally begins his kickboxing-specific training.

"I'll get to the kickboxing school at about six o'clock and start working on

boxing and martial arts training. I'll be there until at least 9 or 9:30 p.m."

All in all, **Lebron** says he works out a total of six days a week, with anywhere from three to six hours a day going toward training. He also works in two nights a week at Tidewater Community College, where he holds a 4.0 average. It's a rough cycle to say the least, and, as one could imagine, it has led to many sacrifices on his part.

"It's a very long day even for me," he says. "It doesn't leave me much chance for anything else. I'm 28-years-old, and I'm not married and don't have much of a social life. I stay as focused as possible because when I am done with this part of my life I want to be able to say, 'I did that. I didn't take the easy way out.' I want to go as far as I can."

And many people seem to believe **Lebron** can go very far. Fellow kickboxer Shannon Hudson, a teammate of **Lebron's** on the U.S. World Championship Team, thinks the sky's the limit for **Lebron's** potential. "From what I've seen of him in tournaments around the country, he can go as far as he wants. He just keeps improving and improving," Hudson said, adding that **Lebron's** military experience gives him an advantage. "I'm not in the military, but you can tell he's very disciplined. It's

◀ **A height of 61 inches** is rarely an advantage in the ring. "When someone new sees me fight, I always feel like I need to show them something because of my size," **Lebron** said.



SURPRISING THE COMPETITION



I may not win every time, but YOU WILL ALWAYS KNOW I WAS THERE

helped him in competition and training. He always sticks to his routine.”

That discipline is one of the things that may help **Lebron** overcome his one obvious disadvantage—his height. “The height thing could hurt him one day, but above that it takes mental toughness to be a kickboxer, and [**Lebron**] has that. Even when you are tired and [your opponent] is tired, you have to push through

▼ **According to Lebron**, kickboxers, like Sailors, all share a common bond no matter who they are fighting against. “It’s like a big family. We may have to beat each other up once in a while, but there’s a respect there that we can’t deny,” he said.



that, no matter what. That’s the big thing that I’ve seen him be able to do time and time again.”

Lebron doesn’t seem nearly as bothered about his usual height disadvantage. In his mind, the biggest obstacle he faces is travel. Despite what some of his peers may think, **Lebron** typically pays out-of-pocket for his trips to fight in tournaments across the country. To get days off, he continually dips his hands into his quickly dwindling leave balance.

The constant traveling and costs sometimes leave **Lebron’s** head spinning. “In the last five or six months, I’ve been to a different state for a fight almost every

▲ **A typical day for Lebron** is at least a 12-hour marathon incorporating general exercise, Navy duties and exhausting workout routines for boxing and kickboxing training. The constant grind leaves him without time for much else in his life.

other week,” he said. Those trips include visits to North Carolina, South Carolina, New Jersey, Kansas, Texas, Utah, Arizona, Nevada, Virginia and his bronze-medal experience in Florida.

“It’s taken a big toll on my wallet, and it’s totally destroyed my leave days—I’m almost in the negative there. I pay for everything completely out of pocket. All my expenses—travel, food, hotel stays—they’ve all had to come from me.”

But **Lebron** believes his money-scrunching days may be coming to a close. If he continues to excel, he feels that he may be able to get a few local sponsorships in the coming months and years.

“The main thing is that you have to continue winning,” he said. “It’s sad that way, but it’s just how the market is. In the public’s eye, they only want to wear a tie or something that is being used by someone who is a consistent winner.”

The added pressure some feel when fighting for a sponsor is something **Lebron** already feels prepared for. Being a fighter who is also in the U.S. military has given him a good bit of training in that regard.

“In some ways, I feel like I am fighting for the Navy. When someone finds out that I am in the military, that becomes part of

► **Lebron’s head-spinning training cycle** leaves him and his coaches needing a break at times. “He’s one of the hardest trainers I’ve been associated with in 25 years of martial arts experience,” said **Lebron’s** personal kickboxing coach, Craig Smith. “If there were 25 hours in a day, he would use them all to train.”

how they recognize me,” he says. “I think it reflects very positively in the Navy. It shows people that the Navy is willing to support its members in what they wish to do in life. I love the Navy for it.”

In trying to repay the Navy for their support, **Lebron** has made sure to excel in his rating. As a field-qualified RP, **Lebron** is responsible for more than just scheduling church services and community relations projects. He must be adept at artillery handling and hand-to-hand combat in support of his ultimate mission—keeping an unarmed chaplain alive in the battlefield.

“People tend to take the RP rating lightly, but any RP who is Fleet Marine Force needs to know how to handle himself and his business. I take that very seriously,” he says. “It’s hard enough to keep yourself alive in a combat situation, and it becomes twice-as-hard to do it when you are protecting another person as well.”



It’s a job to which he can easily apply to his kickboxing regimen. “Kickboxing keeps my body sharp and teaches me to think in high-pressure situations. That’s something that as an FMF RP you need to be able to do. You have to always be thinking three-to-four steps ahead.”

One area where **Lebron** isn’t looking three or four steps ahead is in his personal life. Despite his many successes, he contends that he’s only taking his life day-by-day.

“I’m just seeing where life takes me. There’s no reason for me to have a long term, big picture view of my future. If I did I would risk setting my expectations too high and falling off my big ladder. It worked for me so far.”

If that’s the case, you can expect **Lebron’s** hand to be raised in victory many more times in his life. ✎

Ludwig and McCoy are photojournalists assigned to All Hands.



▼ **Unlike many fighters**, **Lebron** does not travel with his own corner team. At the World Championships in Orlando, Fla., teammate Shannon Hudson and the father of one of his other teammates provided between-round care.

Setting the Pace

Minutes north of Memphis, Tenn., Sailors vigilantly patrol along barbed wire fences and check the identification of all personnel entering Naval Support Activity (NSA) Mid-South, Millington, Tenn. The duties of the master-at-arms force are the same here as at any base in the world – “To protect and serve.”

“We have 65 master-at-arms, DOD police and an auxiliary security force (ASF) who make up the police unit that enforces the law and protects the base population and property,” said 39-year-old Master-at-Arms 1st Class Chris Pace.

Pace arrived in Millington in the capacity of a patrolman after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. “I got out of the Navy and was in the Reserves as a construction electrician after serving 14 years as a sonar technician in submarines. I have always wanted to be an MA, but my sonar rating was critical and I was not afforded the opportunity to cross-rate,” said Pace. Fortunately for him, during his tour in the submarine community, he was able to get the NEC 9545 Physical Security. Then, when the terrorists attacked the United States, he had the required training to be activated and assigned to NSA Mid-South.

The small base offers a hometown atmosphere where approximately 5,000 Navy personnel, family members and civilians work and reside. The base is home to Naval Personnel Command, Navy Recruiting Command and Navy Manpower Analysis Center. According to Pace, the assignment has been everything he expected, “and then some.”

“I am definitely pleased with the assignment here,” he went on to say, “We have a really good team of professionals working here around the clock.” After a year and a half on patrol, Pace is now the Security Operations Officer, he is subject to a 24-hour recall in the event of any emergency on top of his administrative duties, supervising his team during 12-hour shifts starting at 5 a.m. Although it took him longer to get where he wanted to be, he feels it was worth it.

Pace submitted a package and cross-rated to MA, his third Navy rating, and is looking forward to the opportunity his new rating offers. “As an MA, you can go just about anywhere in the Navy. Ever since 9/11, security is a priority so the opportunities are almost unlimited.”

It has been a long road to get where he is today, but he is optimistic about his career. “I really like my job and I’m always looking forward to my next assignment and possibly getting some advanced training as an investigator,” said Pace. Goal oriented, he has earned his associates degree at sea through the PACE program but remains focused on finishing his bachelors’ degree and making chief petty officer.

Pace, along with the master-at-arms force and their auxiliary security force counterparts, is one Sailor protecting and serving his fellow shipmates, his Navy and his country 24 hours a day, seven days a week. ⚓

Desmond is assigned to the public affairs office, Commander, Navy Recruiting Command

Eye on the Fleet

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**.



◀ Careful Observation

Safety observer, **ABE2 Luis Solis** holds position during the launch of an **F-14 Tomcat**, assigned to **Fighter Squadron (VF) 101**, aboard **USS George Washington (CVN 73)**.

Photo by PH2 Konstandinos Goumenidis



▲ Course Correction

OS2 Ignacio Prado updates the ship's vertical plot in the Combat Information Center aboard **USS Bridge (AOE 10)**.

Photo by PH2 Monica McLaughlin

▼ Flame On

MM3 Charlie Davis prepares to light off a boiler on board **USS John F. Kennedy (CV 67)** as the carrier prepares to conclude a nine-month Extended Selected Restricted Availability period.

Photo by PH3 Joshua Karsten



Bon Voyage ▶

A family member waves good-bye as **USS Greenville (SSN 772)** departs for deployment as part of **Expeditionary Strike Group 1**.

Photo by PH2(AW/SW) Johnnie R. Robbins



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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Eye on the Fleet



▼ Fast Service

Sailors move cargo ropes to a safe area as a CH-46D *Sea Knight* from Helicopter Support Squadron (HC) 11 delivers cargo from fast combat support ship *USS Sacramento (AOE 1)* during an underway vertical replenishment.

Photo by PHAN Dustin Howell



▲ Naval Strike

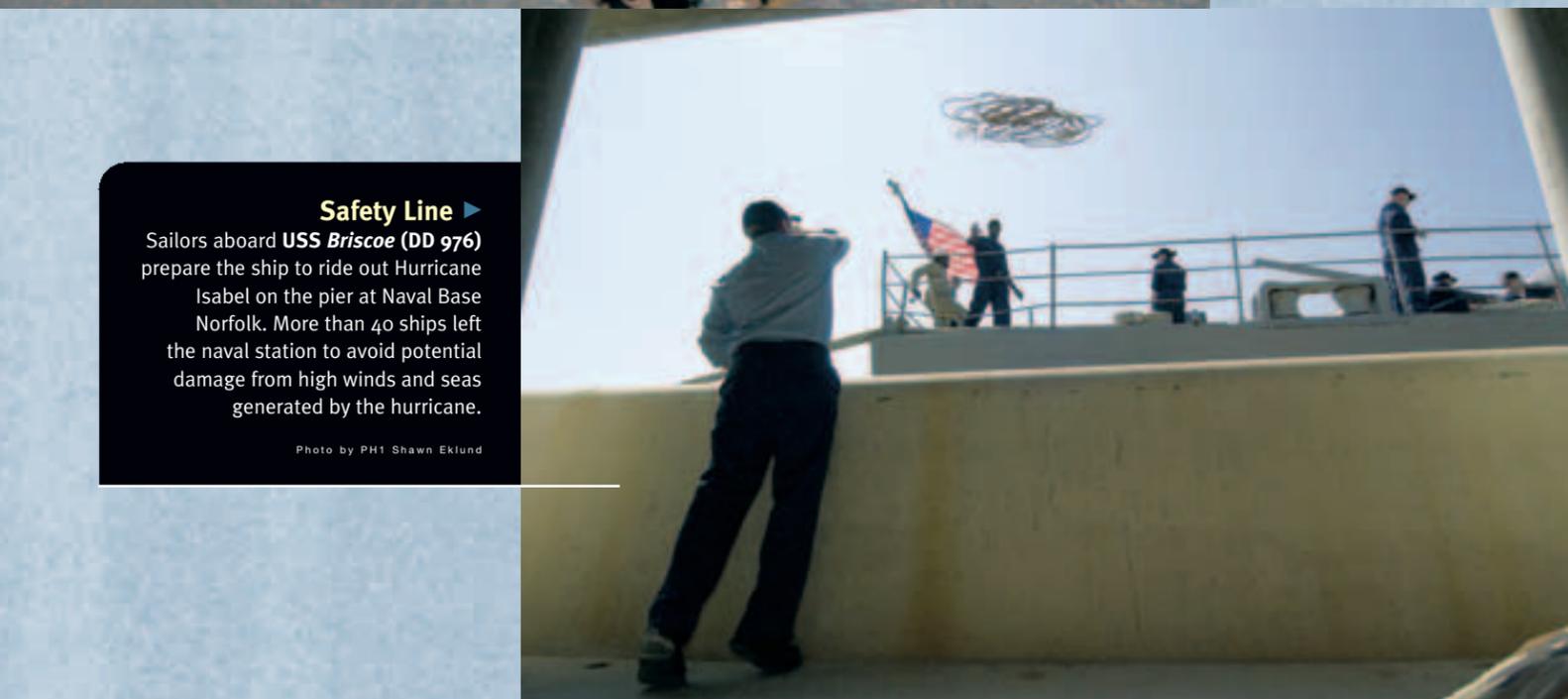
Navy junior slot back **Eric Roberts** stretches for a pass in front of the end zone as Eastern Michigan University (EMU) defenders **Jerry Perry**, left, and **Nate Brooks**, middle, add pressure. Navy scored 28 points in the second half to put the game out of reach of EMU, 39-7.

Photo by PH2 Damon Moritz

▼ Proud Son

An eager boy breaks from the gathered crowd to congratulate his father, a newly-frocked chief petty officer, assigned to the Naval Support Activity Gaeta, Italy.

Photo by PH1 Paul Phelps



► Safety Line

Sailors aboard *USS Briscoe (DD 976)* prepare the ship to ride out Hurricane Isabel on the pier at Naval Base Norfolk. More than 40 ships left the naval station to avoid potential damage from high winds and seas generated by the hurricane.

Photo by PH1 Shawn Eklund



◀ X Center Square

A young visitor to the Naval Air Station (NAS) Oceana Regional Air Show plays a game of Tic-Tac-Toe with a scuba diver at the Explosive Ordnance Disposal display.

Photo by Kevin Graves

Eye on History

Eye on History is a monthly photo feature sponsored by the Naval Historical Center.

For more photos pertaining to naval history, go to www.history.navy.mil.



◀ **1972**
The chief master-at-arms instructs his crew as they prepare to refuel the destroyer **USS Dvess (DD 880)**.



▲ **1960**
BMC Olin Austin shows Sailors how to make fenders from Manila line.



▲ **1960**
A Sailor operates the firing control of the hedgehog mount while another crew member sets automatic controls.

1939 ▶
Seamen are taught how to tie knots at NAS Memphis, Tenn.



◀ **1947**
American Sailors enjoy a glass of milk provided by the USO in Kingston, Jamaica .

U.S. Navy Photos Courtesy of the Naval Historical Center

A Navy Cereal Selling Machine?

Story by JO2 Charles L. Ludwig

Shhh! I don't want to say this too loud, because I don't want anyone who has been hiding under a rock for the last 90 years or so to hear.

Okay, here it goes; just try not to keel over because of the shock: America is completely, insanely in love with athletes! Shocking, isn't it?

Okay. Well maybe not entirely shocking, but it's definitely true. If you need proof, take a leisurely stroll down your local commissary's cereal aisle. I did the other day, and it felt like I was walking into a who's who exhibit at a sports museum. Sammy Sosa, Tiger Woods, Michael Jordan and Mike Piazza, all household names, were making appearances there that day. And they were joined by a new addition to their all-star, cereal-selling machine – Navy LTJG Henry Nuzum.

I know what you're all thinking. I had no clue who he was either until I saw the box of Cheerios sitting on the shelf, and I'm as big a sports nut as you're going to find.

Nuzum was one of five military athletes featured on a special commemorative Cheerios box. Army, Marine Corps, Air Force and Coast Guard athletes were also featured on the box, which included action pictures of each with a short biography.

It ends up **Nuzum** has some credentials, though. As a rower on the 2000 U.S. Olympic team, **Nuzum** managed an eighth-place finish in the heavyweight double sculls in the Sydney Games. He is also currently working toward making the 2004 team that will be competing in Athens.

Having trouble figuring out how an eighth-place rower managed to get a spot among so many sports immortals? So is he. "I really don't know how this happen," **Nuzum** laughingly told me. "You'd have to ask someone else. I've been on the Olympic

team, but that wasn't really high profile. Maybe they were looking for someone who had some real-world Navy experience. That's my only guess."

Nuzum, a former Tomahawk missile officer aboard USS John S. McCain (DDG 56), is likely the only U.S. Olympian who was deployed in support of **Operation Iraqi Freedom**. But he still says that as an eighth-place finisher, he's not one of the top rowers on the globe. Having a small spot on a cereal box hasn't changed that attitude.

"I'm not going to kid myself. This is probably the pinnacle of my fame in life," he said. "But I keep it in perspective. I'm not on the box for my athletic prowess, but normally athletes of any level don't get this chance. So while I take some humor in it, it is an honor."

The box, which hit commissaries exclusively in September, was designed to bring visibility to the Armed Forces Sports Program, which recently embarked on a partnership with General Mills, Inc., the parent company of Cheerios. Also as a part of that partnership, **Nuzum** and the other featured athletes participated in autograph signing sessions at commissaries throughout the United States in September.

"That's just funny," **Nuzum** said about the signings, which he did at the commissary near Lakehurst Naval Air Engineering Station in New Jersey. **Nuzum** is currently assigned to the Naval Recruiting Command in nearby Philadelphia. "I mean, people lining up to get an autograph from someone who competed in a little-known Olympic sport? It doesn't make a whole lot of sense to me, but it's pretty cool."

And it's not a bad deal for an eighth place finisher, either. **ES**

Ludwig is a photojournalist assigned to All Hands



his
Recruiter
warned him
it would be Tough.



But, he's up to the challenge of being a...



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