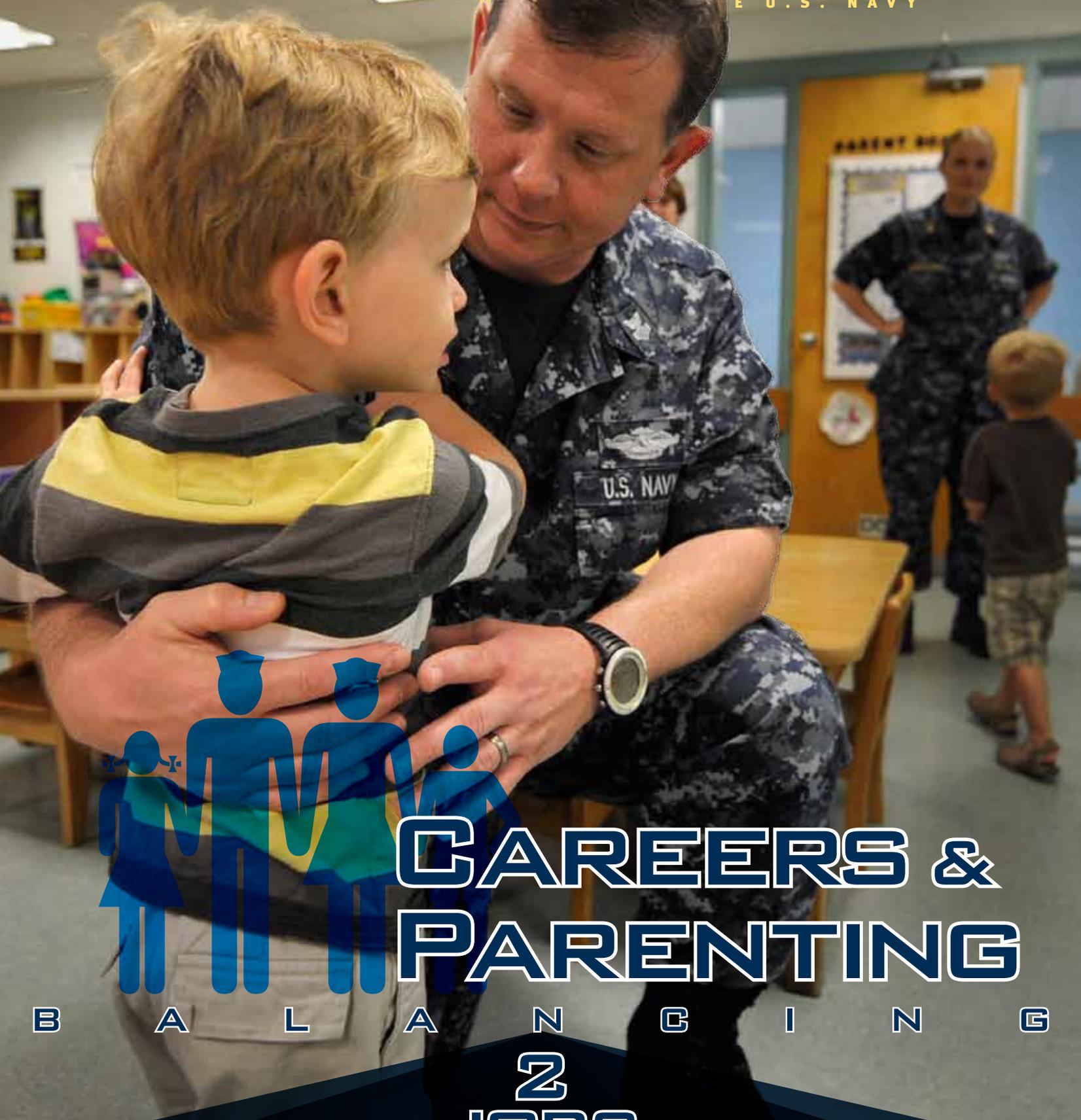


AUGUST 2010

ALL HANDS

U.S. NAVY



CAREERS & PARENTING

B A L A N C I N G

2 JOBS



[On the Front Cover]

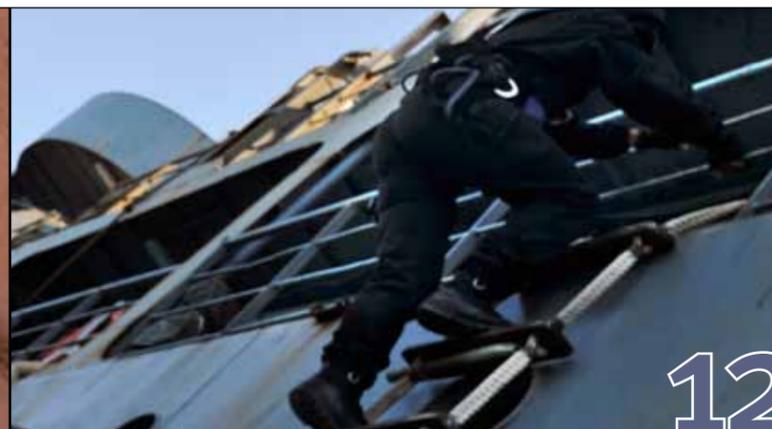
HM1(FMF) Christopher Barraclough comforts his two-year-old son Owen at the Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek - Fort Story Child Development Center before reporting to work at Portsmouth Naval Hospital as his wife, ACC(AW/SW) Shirley Barraclough watches. The Barracloughs are balancing professional careers with parenting duties in an operational environment.

Photo by MC1 Bruce Cummins



EN1(SW) Cheryl Wheeler hugs her son, two-year-old Nathan Wheeler, before leaving for the Norfolk-based USS *Bulkeley* (DDG 84) for the day.

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The Mediterranean:
Phoenix Express 2010 Returns to Crete

Just as it was to ancient Greeks, Egyptians and Phoenicians, the security and freedom of maritime sea lanes in the Mediterranean is vital to the 17 different countries that participated in Exercise *Phoenix Express 2010*, one of the largest annual Mediterranean Sea exercises.

Photo by MC2(SW/AW) Felicito Rustique

Frontier Sentinel:
Getting to Know our Northern Neighbors

To combat maritime terrorist threats in North American waterways, the U.S. Navy's 2nd Fleet, headquartered in Norfolk, the Canadian Maritime Forces Command or the Canadian Navy and other agencies recently participated in Exercise *Frontier Sentinel 2010*, an exercise that focuses on coastal defense procedures.

Photo by Cpl. Rick Ayer

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Balancing Two Jobs – Careers and Parenting

With the traditional family structure shifting from what was previously the norm, and Sailors accepting more non-traditional roles in support of ongoing contingency operations, the importance of ensuring a family's needs has become increasingly more important throughout the U.S. Armed Forces.

Photo by MC1 Bruce Cummins

[Next Month]

All Hands focuses on *Carat 2010* in Singapore, and catches up with the Leap Frogs in Milwaukee and San Diego.



Sailors on the bow of USS *New Orleans* (LPD 18) catch some sea spray as they stow gear away during a replenishment at sea. *New Orleans* and embarked Navy and Marine Corps units are participating in *Southern Partnership Station 2010*, an annual deployment of U.S. military training teams to the U.S. Southern Command areas of responsibility.

Photo by MC1 Brien Aho

On-line Tools Ease Career Management

Shipmates,

It may not seem so, but managing your career today has never been easier. Navy Personnel Command (NPC) has a wealth of information and tools available to help you make informed career decisions. With the abundance of online tools, you have greater control of the information that affects your career.

We have the world's finest Navy manned with the best Sailors. But we can only maintain that position by having the right Sailor in the right job. That's what the Perform to Serve (PTS) program does – it's designed to retain highly skilled and motivated Sailors and provides guidance, application information, conversion quotas and opportunities for Sailors in grades from E-1 to E-6.

Recent changes to the PTS policy make it more important than ever for Sailors to understand the PTS process. NAVADMIN 128/10 provides a timeline when PTS applications should be submitted – commands can submit applications up to 15 months prior to a Sailor's end of active obligated service (EAOS) or projected rotation date (PRD). Sailors should consult their career counselor and submit a PTS application NO LATER than 13 months prior to their EAOS/PRD.

If you're in an overmanned rating and have not been approved to stay in rate, look for an undermanned rating into which you can convert. Remember, your ASVAB score determines what rate you qualify for, but you can always retake it to improve your score and become eligible for more ratings. Your career counselor can tell you what ratings you qualify for in Fleet Ride.

For more information on any PTS issues, see your command career counselor.

Another web-based tool, important for you to review, is the Career Management System Interactive Detailing (CMS/ID); use it to apply for permanent change of station (PCS) orders in accordance with the



newly-compressed detailing window. The detailing window is now seven-to-nine months before a Sailor's PRD, allowing only three months to negotiate for orders before being considered for an involuntary "needs of the Navy" assignment. But, if you stay on top of your PTS application, keep in contact with your command career counselor (CCC) and keep an eye on CMS/ID, you should have enough time to make sound career choices.

Of course, to ensure you're eligible for the promotions, schools, and special programs that may come your way throughout your Navy career; you must also ensure your records are accurate. The Electronic Service Record (ESR) – <https://nspis.nmci.navy.mil> – replaces the old paper field service record allowing you to update and generate documents to reflect your current status and career achievements. Electronic leave, which is currently being tested, will also reside in the ESR.

Your official military personnel record and electronic training jacket include documents such as accession training, education performance, decorations and awards, assignments and duties.

The Physical Readiness Information Management System allows you to view physical fitness assessment results as well as complete the physical activity risk factor questionnaire. These systems are all accessible through BUPERS On-Line at <https://www.bol.navy.mil>.

If you have any career questions, ask your chief and speak with your career counselor. If the CCC isn't available, contact the NPC Customer Service Center at 1-866-U-ASK-NPC (827-5672) or visit the knowledge base located through the NPC website at www.npc.navy.mil.

Remember, we're here to help you navigate a course for a successful career. We all work together toward that one common goal.

ONE TEAM, ONE FIGHT! AH

ALL HANDS

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**READINESS
= RESPECT**

Photo by MC1(AW) R. Jason Brunson



More than 100 Sailors depart Fort Jackson, S.C., after completing the U.S. Navy Individual Augmentee Combat Training course at the post. The Sailors will take assignments in Iraq, Afghanistan, Kuwait and the Horn of Africa (Djibouti) to supplement Army troops.

Navy Recognizes IA/GSA on Fitness Reports and Evals

To ensure the Navy's individual augmentees' (IA) service is properly recognized, the Navy has modified its performance evaluations and advancement eligibility.

Beginning Aug. 1, regular reporting seniors must maintain regular performance evaluation continuity and use a new billet code subcategory (Block 21) code "INDIV AUG" to break out those Sailors who serve in an IA assignment, according to NAVADMIN 215/10.

"It's important for us to recognize the performance and contributions of our Sailors who are serving as IAs," said Jim Price, Navy Personnel Command (NPC) performance evaluation division director. "This revised policy sets a Navywide standard to ensure all our Sailors receive the same opportunities to excel."

The NAVADMIN explains a Sailor is considered IA when: in receipt of individual deployment orders from NPC to include IA manpower management assignments, global war on terrorism support assignments (GSA), mobilized Reserve personnel not mobilized as part of an established commissioned Reserve component unit, health services augmenta-

tion program support personnel and Overseas Contingency Operation Support Assignment.

If a Sailor's reporting period occurs while on an IA, reporting seniors use the new billet code as long as the Sailor was at the parent command 240 days or less, or if the performance period is less than 240 days. Additionally, if the Sailor finished an IA before the reporting period ends, reporting seniors still use the new billet subcategory if the Sailor has been at the parent command 180 days or less. Those Sailors who exceed the 240- or 180-day periods will be evaluated with their peers.

The message also contains specific guidance for revised advancement eligibility and performance mark average (PMA) computations. For Sailors serving on an IA who report after Aug. 1 the following guidance is provided:

- Concurrent performance evaluation completed while on an IA assignment will count toward PMA calculations and for time in rate waivers if a "promotable" or higher promotion recommendation is assigned.
- Compute PMA using all evaluations in the respective pay grade, including frocking, for the computation period announced.

- Commanding officers and officers-in-charge may waive up to one year of the required time in rate for Sailors in grades E-5 and E-6.

For more details regarding the changes, read the NAVADMIN at www.npc.navy.mil or review the frequently asked questions at www.npc.navy.mil/careerinfo/performance-evaluation/faq.htm. AH

Story courtesy of Navy Personnel Command, Millington, Tenn.

Preparation Key to Weathering Hurricanes

The annual hurricane season is in full swing, and some experts predict this could be a busy year for storms. But, the Naval Safety Center (NSC) has storm preparation tips that could lessen the damage to life and property if a hurricane does come ashore.

Derek Nelson, who heads the NSC's Media Division, recently helped put together a pocket-sized hurricane preparedness guide. He said preparation is important even when evacuation isn't necessary.

"Don't wait until the wind is blowing and the rain is pouring to get water and non-perishable food," Nelson said. "Track the storm as it approaches and preparation before landfall is imminent."

The NSC suggests making a yard and property inspection well in advance of the storm. Remove diseased or damaged tree branches and secure objects that could become airborne from high winds.

But, winds aren't the only danger. Flooding is also a major concern.

"Here in Norfolk, the city publishes a map that shows the flood zone," Nelson said.

He recommended that residents of any city find out if they're in a flood-prone location. If so, move valuables to the highest level of the house.

Loss of electricity is a nuisance during a storm, but it can also be dangerous if there's no way to monitor the hurricane.

"Think about what will happen when you don't have electricity for a few days. Don't fill your freezer with food that will spoil. Also, keep a battery-operated radio handy with plenty of spare batteries," Nelson said.

While he has evacuated the city several times in advance of storms, Nelson recognizes that most people won't have to take that drastic step. But it's important to have a plan,

just in case. Find an inland evacuation location well in advance, and make sure everyone in the family knows what to do and when to act.

"It's a lot easier to take a little time and energy to be prepared than to try to figure out what to do once it's too late," Nelson said.

For more information about general hurricane safety, visit www.public.navy.mil/navsafecen/Documents/media/safetips/f-m/hurricane.doc. AH

Story by April Phillips, Naval Safety Center, Norfolk.

Update EFMP Status Before Negotiating Orders

There are currently 16,000 Navy families enrolled in the Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP), but some Sailors are not updating their packages before entering their detailing window.

"Enrollment in the EFM program is mandatory for all family members with long-term medical, mental health or educational needs and is required immediately upon identification of a special need," said Cmdr.

Cynthia Granby, EFMP branch head at Navy Personnel Command.

"Before a detailee can release orders, an updated EFM status is needed. The sponsor is responsible for knowing his or her EFM update timeframe and for updating the file prior to negotiating for orders. Local coordinators at the nearest military treatment facility can be contacted to confirm update status and timeframe." Family member status updates are required nine months prior to a Sailor's projected rotation date, every three years, or whenever the enrolled member's need changes. Temporary enrollments (Category VI) must be updated within a year of assignment.

The EFMP is required for authorized family members who present a physical, emotional, developmental or educational disability or a condition that requires special medical, mental health or education services and reside with or are in the custody of a Sailor. Enrollment ensures family members' needs are identified so that Sailors are stationed where those needs can best be met.

"The program is a benefit for Sailors and commands," said Kathleen Wells, Navy EFMP manager. "It's available to help alleviate hardships on family members by ensuring

their special needs are considered in the detailing process."

"EFMP remains flexible," Granby said. "Once the sponsor enrolls and family needs are identified, [there's] a good chance at obtaining a career enhancing assignment."

EFMP families are classed into one of six categories. For those families in Categories IV and V, the Navy has a separate program, Navy EFMP Respite Care, which provides up to 40 hours of free in-home care for exceptional family members and their siblings.

"Many family members enrolled in the program have complex needs that cannot be met using typical in-home care," said Sharon Fatheree, Navy Child and Youth Programs, outreach program manager for fleet and family readiness. "The Navy EFMP Respite Care Program is provided through the Child and Youth Programs and was designed to offer parents in-home care with specialized providers trained to meet the individual needs of the family member so parents can feel safe leaving children in in-home care to run errands, go to medical appointments or just get a change to reconnect with their spouse."

Currently, Respite Care is offered at five locations: Jacksonville, Fla.; Bremerton, Wash.;

continued on page 9

SHIPMATES



Lincoln Sailor Discovers, Stops Shipboard Fire

Airman Stephanie Lopez, assigned aboard USS *Abraham Lincoln* (CVN 72), was recently awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (NAM) for her actions during a shipboard fire.

Lopez, from Washougal, Wash., was on steam watch making security rounds when she went into the catapult-3 launch valves space and saw what she thought were flames.

"I felt kind of scared," said Lopez. "At first, I wasn't actually sure if it was a fire or not. I thought maybe a light had burst open, and that it was sparking."

ABE3 Corey Roudebush, of Waunakee, Wis., was one of the Sailors nearby who inspected the scene.

"I checked it out, and determined that there were flames in the corner," said Roudebush. "I stayed calm and posted a watch outside while [Lopez] activated the steam-smothering [valve] and one of the other petty officers called maintenance control and informed the chain of command. We just stayed calm and did what we were trained to do."

Lopez's rapid response quickly diffused what could have been a catastrophic fire. Her actions earned her the second NAM she has received in her three-year Navy career.

ABE3 Caleb Durbin, of Ozark, Mo., was posted as the watch and claimed Lopez is a hero from his point of view.

"She did well," said Durbin. "She's my hero. I'm proud that after all the training we did, I know we can trust these guys."

Lopez thanked Roudebush and Durbin for the training they gave her when she learned how to stand steam watch in January. Her actions were second-nature due to the proper procedures they taught her since she checked aboard.

"When somebody is trying to teach you something, listen, because they're not talking for their own good," Lopez said. "They're talking for you. In the future, you're going to be put in a position where you're going to need to know what you're doing."

Story and photo by MC2 Alan Gragg, USS *Abraham Lincoln* (CVN 72).



Photo by MC3 Eddie Harrison



Photo by MC3 Brian Aho



Photo by MC3 Kathleen A. Gorby



Photo by MC3 Kevin S. O'Brien

Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus (second from right) tours waters off the coast of Alabama to observe oil skimming operations.

Right—
A Cambodian child gives a high-five to Lt. Derrick Horne, a Navy chaplain embarked aboard USNS *Mercy* (T-AH 19), during a community service event at the Enfants du Cambodge orphanage in Sihanoukville, Cambodia.

BMCS Scott Wasserman jokes with PS1 Christopher Miller in the chow line as the Navy and Marine Corps senior enlisted USS *New Orleans* (LPD 18) take over galley duties for dinner.

ND1 Frederick Heimgartnes, assigned to USS *Frank Cable* (AS 40), performs dive checks on ND2 Adam Coe, assigned to Naval Special Warfare Unit 3.

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San Diego; Norfolk; Naval District Washington, D.C.; and 50 independent locations in CONUS. Sailors interested in Respite Care can visit the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies website at www.naccrra.org/MilitaryPrograms/navy.php for more information or to be put on the waiting list for care.

For more information about EFMP, visit their website at www.npc.navy.mil/CommandSupport/ExceptionalFamilyMember/ or call the NPC Customer Service Center toll-free at 1-866-827-5672. **AH**

Story courtesy of Navy Personnel Command, Millington, Tenn.

Shipmates Looking Out for Shipmates Key To Suicide Prevention

According to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, more than 33,000 people in the United States commit suicide every year. Suicide is the fourth leading cause of death for adults between the ages of 18 and 65.

According to Capt. Gerald D. Seely, chaplain for Navy Region Southwest, the Navy is trying to get a handle on why Sailors take their own lives and how the amount of suicides can be decreased.

He explained that suicide prevention is everyone's responsibility. "It's not just the mental health advisor's, the chaplain's or the commanding officer's job to watch out for Sailors. It's fellow shipmates looking out for each other," said Seely. "These are the folks you work with day in and day out. We have to stay engaged and alert. If we can do that, we could get a real handle on this issue."

"There are many warning signs that may indicate one of your fellow Sailors is at risk for suicide. Change in behavior, personality, irritability and low energy levels could be a red flag," said Seely.

"Some of the symptoms are a direct result of stressors in someone's life. Relationships and deployments are big ones," said Seely. "It's usually not just one thing, but a combination of stressors piled on top of someone. The more stress, the more at risk a Sailor could be."

According to Seely, if you know one of your shipmates may be thinking about suicide or is at risk of committing suicide, the response is the acronym **ACT**.

- **"A" Ask.** Don't be afraid to ask the question, "Are you thinking of suicide or of harming yourself?" It is a myth that by asking these questions one gives the person at risk the idea to harm themselves. The reality is that someone who is at risk for suicide has already experienced high levels of stress or may be suffering from depression, and, as a result, may not be able to see and understand all of their options to resolve their problems. So, asking the question does not trigger the idea of suicide. Instead if triggering the idea of suicide, asking a person at risk let's them know you are concerned and their symptoms are being noticed.

- **"C" Care.** Let them know you care and want to help. It sometimes takes commitment and courage to show someone you care about them and are willing to get involved. You may be met with resistance but, sometimes we must walk through this resistance to help. This can be healing. Empathy for another is a powerful thing.

- **"T" Treat.** Get help. There are many resources such as a chaplain, your chain of command, medical, Fleet and Family Service Centers and hospital emergency rooms.

According to Seely, Sailors need to get away from the stigma that if they are depressed or have other mental health issues, they will get in trouble.

"The military has become better at treating mental health issues," said Seely. "There is nothing wrong with going to talk to a trained professional at one of the many facilities the military offers. There is a lot of help out there."

For more information about suicide prevention, visit www.npc.navy.mil/CommandSupport/SuicidePrevention. **AH**

Story by MC3(SW/AW) Michelle Rhonehouse, Navy Region Southwest, San Diego.

Firearm Policy Update Aims to Reduce Accidental Discharges

The Navy recently updated the personal firearms policy, effectively consolidating the regulation for storing firearms on base to combat the increase in accidental discharges and injuries related to firearms.

The NAVADMIN, updates Chief of Naval Operations Instruction 5530.14E, the Navy Physical Security and Law Enforcement Program. It provides guidance for the possession of personal weapons aboard Navy installations whether in Navy housing areas or base armories and state's installations. Commanding officers are responsible for control and accountability of personal firearms aboard Navy installations.

"Firearm safety should be paramount and firearm education should be increased," said Hull Maintenance Technician 1st Class Jarod Gumbelton, of the Southwest Regional Maintenance Center master-at-arms department. "I have more than 10 years of experience teaching firearm safety during my military service, and I believe this policy will help to reduce accidental discharges ... and help to protect family members and minors."

Navy officials reported 28 acts of Sailor misconduct or suicide involving firearms occurred on board Navy installations in FY08, while

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another 111 incidents occurred off base, resulting in 26 deaths.

The policy now states Sailors may store personal firearms in certain locations aboard Navy installations under controlled circumstances and with prior written approval of the installation's commanding officer.

"I think the key things Sailors need to know are they must have prior approval to transport or store personal firearms on an installation, and can obtain the forms used and the processes and rules for bringing a personally-owned firearms onto the installation by contacting the installation security officer," said Dave Lee, a public affairs specialist at Commander Navy Installations Command.

The revised policy instructs Sailors who own firearms to take their responsibilities seriously and comply with all regulations. Navy officials say violators of these regulations may be subject to administrative and or disciplinary action under the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

Navy personnel must also comply with federal, state and local laws and regulations, as well as applicable Status of Forces Agreements and host nation laws when overseas concerning firearm ownership, possession, registration, transportation and use.

The revision, outlined in NAVADMIN 196/10, is expected to be in effect after installations review and revise their current operating procedures, according to Commander Navy Installations Command. **AH**

Story by EM3 Lori D. Bent, Navy Public Affairs Support Element, West, San Diego.

DANTES Modifies VOLED Testing Rules

To ensure that service members adequately prepare for college credit examinations, the Defense

Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES) will only provide funding for initial testing for exams taken after May 20, 2010. If a retest is required, it will be at the expense of the service member.

The mission of DANTES is to support the off-duty, voluntary education programs of DoD and conduct special projects and development activities in support of education-related functions of the DoD. DANTES programs include providing various examinations, such as high school equivalency, college admissions and college credit, and an extensive number of certification and licensing exams. Funding for retesting had previously been provided by DANTES.

Effective immediately, DANTES will only fund a service member's initial examination fee for each College Level Entrance Examination Program (CLEP) exam, DANTES Subject Standardized Tests (DSST) and Excelsior College Examinations (ECE). Retests will continue to be funded through DANTES for service members who took a test prior to May 20 and take the retest before Dec. 11, 2010.

"The initial pass rates for military on CLEP, DSST and ECE exams are lower than the statistical average and more than half of those who try the same exam again, don't do much better," said Dr. Carol Berry, DANTES director. "With funded retesting, service members may have taken exams with little or no preparation. With the prospect of having to pay for a retest, we anticipate more studying before the tests, and better scores."

"The new retesting rules will not only save the Navy money, but will save the service members quite a bit of time," said Ann Hunter, voluntary education chief for the Chief of Naval Personnel. "If you fail a CLEP, DSST or ECE exam, you have to wait 180 calendar days to retake the exam. Ensuring that you're ready for the test and can qualify for college credits imme-

diately after taking the exam gives a service member a head start on their voluntary education goals."

"Service members need to remember that these exams equate to a final course exam and should be treated as such," added Hunter. "Navy College counselors will be advising Sailors who desire to take a CLEP, DSST, ECE exam to prepare first. Group study and preparation sessions will be particularly helpful before attempting the exams.

Free exam study sheets are available at the Navy Knowledge Online (NKO) Web site under the learning tab, or on the DANTES website."

"This policy goes hand-in-glove with our latest tuition assistance management control that requires new-accession Sailors to be at their first permanent duty station one year before using Tuition Assistance (TA)," continued Hunter. "Although DANTES-funded exams are not under the same one-year restriction as TA, Sailors can use this time to prepare for the DANTES-funded exams."

For more information about DANTES, visit www.dantes.doded.mil. **AH**

Story by Ed Barker, Naval Education and Training Command, Pensacola, Fla.

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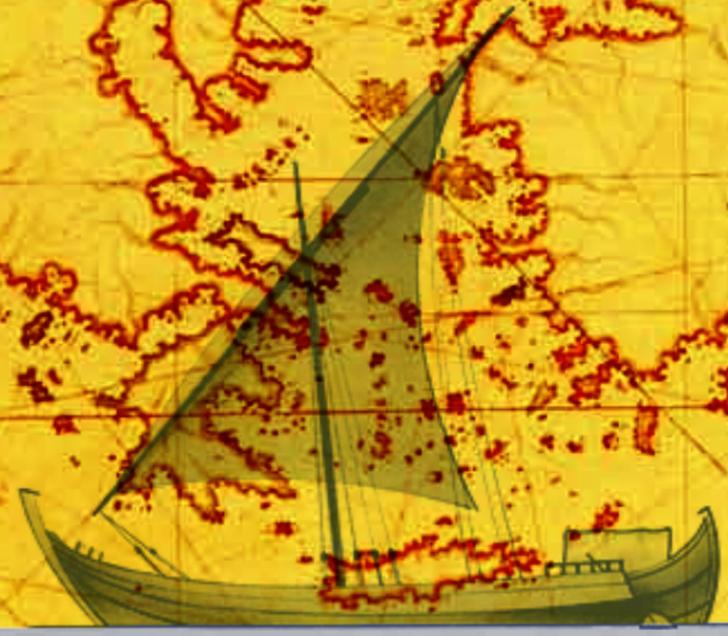
Above— Lt. Cmdr. Dorey Harlan, a pediatrician assigned to the Military Sealift Command hospital ship USNS *Mercy* (T-AH 19), examines a child during a medical community service event at the Damril Clinic in Kampong Cham, Cambodia.

Above from left— HM2 Charity Sibal, a lab technician assigned to Navy Environmental and Preventive Medicine (NEPMU) 6 Entomology Division, Pearl Harbor, examines a praying mantis for study.

HM1 Oluyinka Adefisan, the Vice Chief of Naval Operations Sailor of the Year, assigned to the National Naval Medical Center Bethesda, Md., announces "play ball" before the start of the Washington Nationals game during Navy Day at Nationals Park.

ASE2 Stephen Bessette installs a wire harness on a replacement canopy for an F/A-18E *Super Hornet* from Strike Fighter Squadron 143 aboard USS *Dwight D. Eisenhower* (CVN 69).

USS *Gunston Hall* (LSD 44) participated in *Phoenix Express 2010* and provided berthing facilities, communications for maritime interdiction operations teams, medical training, and transportation support via rigid-hull inflatable boats for three multinational countries.



PHENIX

THE MEDITERRANEAN: PHOENIX EXPRESS 2010 RETURNS TO CRETE

Story by MC1 Lisa Borges | Illustrations by Tim Mazurek

SOMEWHERE OFF THE COAST OF GREECE, A SAILOR STANDS WATCH ABOARD A WARSHIP AND NOTICES AN UNIDENTIFIED VESSEL TRAVELLING TOWARD THE SHIP. THE SAILOR, CALLING ON TRAINING RECEIVED

THROUGHOUT YEARS AT SEA, SOUNDS THE ALERT, ALL THE WHILE OBSERVING THE VESSEL AND PREPARING FOR WHAT COULD BE AN ADVERSARIAL ENCOUNTER—ANYTHING FROM A SHIP FROM A RIVAL EMPIRE OR A VESSEL SMUGGLING WEAPONS.



Photo by MC1 Lisa A. Borges

Ensign Brendan Hamm, division officer for Machinery Division on *Gunston Hall* and *Phoenix Express 2010* training liaison, runs through the visit, board, search and seizure training scenario with the Tunisian Maritime Interdiction Operation (MIO) team lead officer.

Right— Spanish Navy Marines MIO team readies themselves for fast-rope training conducted by NATO Maritime Interdiction Operations Training Center during the onshore portion of *PE 10*.



Photo by MC2 Jimmy C. Pan

This scenario has played in the waters of the Mediterranean Sea for more than 3,000 years. The cradle of ancient maritime trade, the Mediterranean has served as the crossroads of the European, African and Middle Eastern civilizations. Some of the first sail designs are depicted in Egyptian drawings from 1,250 B.C., while along the coast of modern day Lebanon, Syria and northern Israel, Phoenicians developed an enterprising maritime trading culture that spread across the Mediterranean during the first millennium.

Just as it was to the ancient Greeks, Egyptians and Phoenicians, the security and freedom of maritime sea lanes in the Mediterranean is vital to the 17 different countries that participated in Exercise *Phoenix Express 2010* (PE 10), one of the largest annual Mediterranean Sea exercises.

Involving sailors and soldiers from Africa, Europe and the United States, the annual two-week multinational exercise and multicontinental partnership coordinates the efforts of numerous military interdiction operations (MIO) teams in maintaining maritime safety while enhancing maritime regional partnerships.

"*Phoenix Express* is important to Naval Forces Europe, Naval Forces Africa and 6th Fleet (COMNAVEUROPE CNE/CNA-C6F) in that it helps us work on our interoperability and develop the capability of our European and African partners as we approach maritime security in the Mediterranean together," said Rear Adm. Gerard Hueber, U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa, deputy chief for strategy, resources and plans. "We focus on illicit trafficking whether it's personnel, arms or any other type of activity."

Now in its fifth iteration, *PE 10* has historically provided a training mechanism designed to serve as a long-term effort to improve regional

cooperation and maritime security; to increase interoperability between participating countries; and to promote friendship and mutual understanding, something exercise participants said has been successful and is evidenced through the increasing number of participants from area countries.

"Five years ago, there were six nations participating in this exercise," said Capt. Martin Beck, commander, Naval Expeditionary Task Force Europe and Africa and Commander, Task Force 68. "The exercise has grown to 17 nations. They have 11 ships participating in the exercise this year. It shows tremendous growth, participation, interoperability and mutual exchange."

Participants in *PE 10* included representatives from Algeria, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Malta, Morocco, Portugal, Senegal, Spain, Tunisia, Turkey and the United States, with other nations sending observers to various events.

"We've had observers from Kenya and Nigeria aboard the ship," said Lt. William Phillips, an assessment analyst, COMNAVEUROPE CNE/CNA-C6F. "They have an important function as a continuous span for *Phoenix Express* to add new countries from Africa, and it's good to bring the observers on so they can see what we are doing and take that back to their countries and hopefully expand the exercise."

Other observers included representatives from Egypt, Cape Verde and Albania.

PE 10 training centered on the development of increased maritime safety and security through maritime domain awareness (MDA), better sharing practices and the ability to operate jointly. Participating countries worked together against shared maritime issues and scenarios are designed with real-world issues including criminal activity, narcotics trafficking, weapons trafficking and trafficking of persons.

Although *PE 10* officially began May 10, some teams from North Africa had pre-exercise training April 19 – May 7 in Rota, Spain, with Marines from Fleet Anti-terrorism Security Team (FAST) Company Europe. This pre-training focused on tactics, techniques and procedures for military interdiction operations (MIO) teams, and covered live fire, helicopter rope suspension techniques, close quarters battle and Marine Corps Martial Arts Program classes.

The main portion of the exercise took place in Greece, around Souda Bay, Crete, where participants built their education in two phases, the first of which was the pre-sail or port phase series of events which occurred at the NATO Maritime Interdiction Operations Training Center (NMIOTC) in Souda Bay.

Courses at the NMIOTC included inspection detection techniques, intelligence gathering, MIO planning, boarding team psychology, suspect vessel crew psychology and crew control, medical training, boat handling and fast rope, all of which proved valuable to participating service members.

"I think what [starts] here at this training facility in Souda Bay at the NATO Maritime Interdiction Operations Center is a process for at sea where we're able to develop our boarding skills and our maritime interdiction operations as we approach this maritime security collectively," Hueber said.

Participants said the pre-sail series of events significantly enhanced their ability to perform their missions.

"My guys have learned many things about boarding: how to come along side the ship, how to board a ship, how to inspect a ship, how to take a suspect, how to look for something and to suspect many things," said Lt. j.g. Youssoubh Ly, a Senegal Navy liaison.

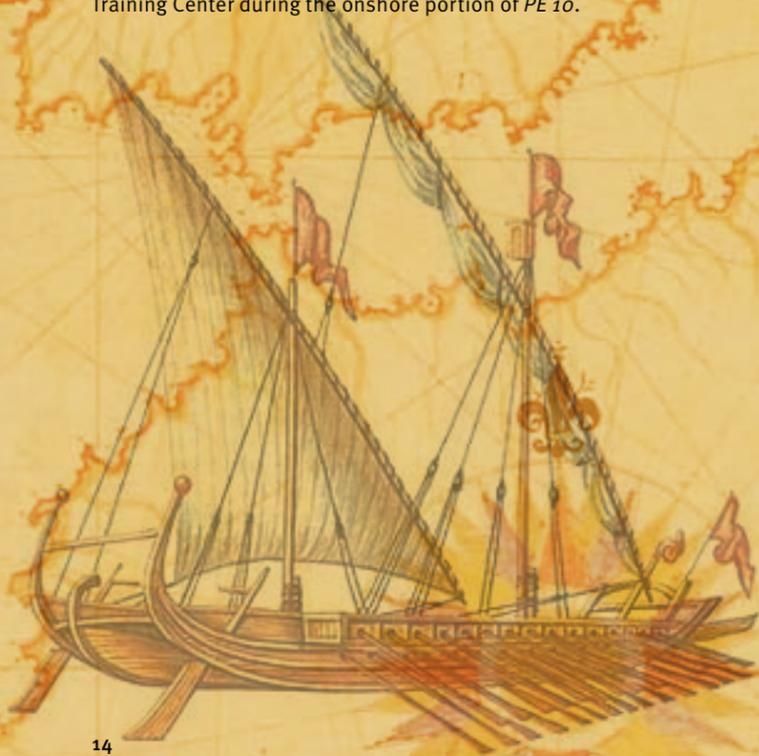




Photo by MC2 (SW) Edward Vasquez

Portuguese Marines from the Portuguese Republic ship *Bartolomeu Dias* (F-333) come alongside Landing Craft Utility 1660 on a VBSS mission during the at sea portion of the exercise.



Photo by MC2 (SW/AW) Felicio Rustique

A Moroccan MIO team member participates in a simulated VBSS evolution aboard the Greek training ship *Aris*.

But training wasn't relegated to the NMIOC; various countries hosted workshops to showcase some of their standard shipboard exercises. USS *Gunston Hall* (LSD 44) Sailors provided a flight deck safety workshop; the Italian ship ITS *Comandante Foscari* (P 493) conducted a damage control exercise; the Spanish vessel SPS *Cazadora* (P 78) hosted a navigation seminar and Portuguese Sailors held a deck seamanship workshop aboard *Bartolomeu* (F 333).

The training scenarios during the *PE 10* pre-sail events provided participants a springboard into the next phase of the exercise, something Armed Forces of Malta Capt. Edric Zahra said is crucial.

"This is my third year being here, and it is a really good exercise," he said. "First of all, they go through the basics and they prepare you for operations at sea."

Once the first phase was completed, exercise participants boarded ships, setting sail in the Mediterranean in an effort to test the skills learned, with several MIO teams participating aboard other country's vessels.

Gunston Hall hosted Morocco, Senegal and Tunisian service members, and while several exercise participants remained involved in the tactical aspect of the exercise, others had departed earlier to establish the communications center in the combined maritime operations and coordination center (CMOCC) in Kenitra, Morocco, from where the scenario was coordinated and monitored.

Underway events were focused on increased maritime safety and security through maritime domain awareness (MDA) and the automatic identification system (AIS) including interaction between forces afloat and the CMOCC ashore. Other training included conducting integrated maritime patrol aircraft (MPA) operations and practice surface exercises and maneuvers to include search and rescue (SAR) and replenishment-at-sea (RAS).

Combined maritime forces conducted training scenarios in force protection and MIO to include VBSS and helicopter VBSS on various platforms. During this phase of the exercise, USNS *LCpl. Roy M. Wheat* (T-AK 3016), a container ship, and USNS *Laramie* (T-AO 203), a replenishment oiler, played a crucial role as target vessels.

"We consider it part of our job to support the Navy with their training," said Capt. John Mattfeld, commanding officer of *LCpl. Roy H. Wheat*. "We try and provide realistic experience for the teams so they know what they're going to deal with in a real life situation. Because for the most part the training platforms are not really similar to a commercial vessel as we much as the *Roy Wheat* is similar to a commercial vessel."

To offset the bigger ships and round out MIO teams experience, Landing Craft Unit 1660 provided a smaller platform for search and seizure training, something exercise participants said was important.

"I think this kind of exercise is a real opportunity of training because we don't have too many ships of training," said 2nd Lt. Doris Fonseca, a Portuguese Navy VBSS boarding officer. "In this situation we can train with many different cultures and many types of situations so I think this is really good opportunity of training."

While U.S. Navy assets provided the training areas for several of the exercise scenarios, other nation's provided both leadership and tactical guidance. The surface action groups (SAG) working with CMOCC were Moroccan and Turkish, with both countries leading the underway portion of *PE 10* and dividing participating vessels into two groups. SAG A Commander was led by Turkey and the SAG B Commander was from Morocco. Having various leaders also strengthens partnerships, according to *Gunston Hall's* commanding officer.

"I am happy to see that we are allowing the Moroccan CO to be the leader of the SAG instead of the United States always taking a role because



Photo by MC2 (SW/AW) Felicio Rustique

Turkish MIO team members perform a visit, board, search and seizure on the USNS *LCpl Roy M. Wheat*.

it's important that the issues we are dealing with like piracy, drug trafficking and trafficking human persons that's really a global issue and the United States can't be everywhere at once," said Cmdr. Fred Wilhelm. "So the more nations that form in the coalition and take a lead role in this, the easier it's going to be to knock down the issues that we are facing out in maritime domain."

Although not leading their SAG, *Gunston Hall* contributed in other ways. Their crew was responsible for supporting visiting MIO teams by providing crew members to manage 11-meter rigid hulled inflatable boats and to get the teams to their target vessel. This portion of the partnership was seen as an eye-opening experience for many of the young Sailors.

"It was an experience. It was neat watching other countries board and see how they do what they do," said Seaman Katherine Spoonmore of 2nd Division, deck department aboard *Gunston Hall*. "It's important in that it shows everyone is concerned with maritime security and different countries can come together to react."

PE 10 scenarios required the direct involvement of all hands.

"It gives the younger Sailors a hands-on experience of what we do. We supply and support them and get them where they need to go," said Boatswain's Mate 1st Class (SW) Bole Hunt, 1st Division, deck department.

While deck department was assisting in one way, the medical department took time to work with the 6th Fleet medical team to do some partnership training, too. They worked together with doctors, nurses and medics from various countries who trained daily on different medical procedures. Training topics ranged from very basic first aid to other technical topics like implementing a combination airway device.

"This training opportunity is one of the most intensive trainings I've participated in," said Lt. Megan Brelsford, *Gunston Hall's* senior medical officer. "I love to teach and learn how they do things differently; medicine is my passion."

This was the first time a host ship medical team had a chance to get involved with *PE 10*. However, the medical training wasn't only for the doctors



Photo by MC2 Jimmy C. Pan

A member of the Senegalese Armed Forces fast-ropes down from a Greek-operated MH-60S *Seahawk* helicopter during the exercise.



Photo by MC2 (SW/AW) Felicitio Rustique

Spanish Navy Marines MIO team members verify ship documents on board USNS *LCpl Roy M. Wheat*.

and nurses. Medical casualties were made part of the MIO trainings as they were doing VBSSs. Teams were judged on how they handled situations like a heavy bleeding, shock, head wounds and fractures to name a few. During a VBSS, the Portuguese were given the scenario that one of their team members was hurt and had fractured his leg.

“They adhered to the scenario all the way back to their ship where they actually put that member in sick call, said Chief Hospital Corpsman (SCW) Terry Garrett, senior enlisted medical planner for *PE 10*. “They took their medical training very seriously.”

On the final day of underway training, *Gunston Hall* had a mass casualty drill which peaked interest of all visitors. The training evolution started with a mock helicopter accident and nine injured people with various kinds of wounds, some very serious. Stretcher-bearers were brought out to the scene to move two people. Crew members impressed the visitors by handling so many aspects at one time.

“Although they were well-trained, [visiting medical personnel] may have not been familiar with how it’s done on a U.S. ship,” said HM2(SW) Mercedes Sawin of the medical department. “I think it was a good experience for them to see how the whole ship gets involved for a mass casualty, to see how much is involved from other departments.”

Another corpsman spent the drill translating information to many of the medical visitors in French.

“This is the first time they’ve seen a mass casualty drill,” said HM3 Guy Leppy. “They said it looks like a real scene, and they are impressed with how everyone is organized.”

PE 10 participants not only trained hard and accomplished a lot but also were able to take a day off for a little friendly competition in between the two phases of the exercise. Everyone was invited to compete in games of soccer and basketball. This provided a backdrop for everyone to mingle and get to know each other. Lots of patriotic spirit could be found during games while supporters waved their own country’s flags. Each country was invited to bring a cultural dish for a potluck style picnic after the games. The Americans and Portuguese shared a grill to prepare their dishes. Foods like paella, grilled chicken, beef, rice, fruit drinks and hamburgers and hot dogs were some of the popular fare.

Many enjoyed the sports day event because it gave everyone an opportunity to make friends and be around more than one group of people. Sailors enjoyed tasting the different foods.

“We were talking with the Greek team that we played earlier today; they’re a bunch of cool guys. And we talked to a couple of Portuguese; they’re pretty cool, too,” said Quartermaster Seaman Joseph Johnson, a soccer participant from *Gunston Hall*.

“I’ve had a great time so far. I love playing soccer. It’s been easy to come out and have fun with all different countries,” Johnson added.

Sports Day created an environment that falls in line with what *PE 10* is really about – promoting friendships, mutual understanding and cooperation among regional partners.

Hard work and hard play at *PE 10* helped to create new friendships and seal partnerships, which is important for the future. Some of the



Photo by MC1 Lisa Borges

Lt. Meagan Brelsford, senior medical officer aboard *USS Gunston Hall* (LSD 44), provides a shipboard medical training evolution for multinational doctors, nurses and medics that highlights various medical casualty scenarios, basic cardiopulmonary resuscitation and surgery-related injuries.

visiting medics were getting addresses from the hospital corpsman so they could keep in touch and continue discussing medical issues.

“The other thing is you make friends,” said Zahra. “So whenever you are out there on an operation, maybe a friend of yours is doing something similar, and he can give you support so it’s not only the training but the friendship with the people - that really, really helps.”

Hueber echoed Zahra’s thoughts. “I think *PE* is a great opportunity where we bring together our African and European partners for a collective bond and a collective goal of maritime security in the Mediterranean.”

So the scenario that can easily become a situation could end like this thanks to opportunities presented at *PE 10*.

While you wait on heightened alert, the captain prepares to make his move. A few minutes go by as he communicates with a Greek captain on the bridge-to-bridge radio. Their team has boarded the ship and has cleared the unidentified boat. You notice the boat is changing its course. No hero-making today, but there is a friendly reminder of regional cooperation, maritime security training and the value of partnerships. **AH**

Borges and Mazurek are assigned to Defense Media Activity – Anacostia, Washington, D.C.



Photo by MC2 (SW/AW) Felicitio Rustique

Spanish Navy Marines MIO team participate in a medical boarding incident scenario.

EN1(SW/EXW) Juan Gonzales, an instructor at the Center for Naval Engineering, plays with two-year-old Nathan Wheeler, the son of friend EN1(SW) Cheryl Wheeler, before she leaves for USS *Bulkeley* (DDG 84) for the day.

CAREERS & PARENTING

B A L A N C I N G

2
JOBS

WHETHER ABOARD A SHIP DESTINED FOR WATERS UNKNOWN, ON A REGULARLY SCHEDULED DEPLOYMENT OR ON AN INDIVIDUAL AUGMENTEE ASSIGNMENT SUPPORTING THE U.S. ARMY, AIR FORCE OR MARINES CORPS IN OVERSEAS CONTINGENCY EFFORTS AROUND THE WORLD, ONE OF THE MOST DIFFICULT ASPECTS OF THEIR JOB ISN'T THE HOURS OF BRIDGE WATCH OR MANNING A .50 CALIBER MACHINE GUN MOUNTED ON A HUMVEE.

Story and photos by MC1(SW) Bruce Cummins



EN1(SW) Cheryl Wheeler's designated Agent Assistant Marcia Sapp interacts with Wheeler's two-year-old Nathan. Sapp is Nathan's primary caregiver under the auspices of DoD Instruction 1342.19, the Family Care Plan, while Wheeler is deployed aboard the Norfolk-based USS *Bulkeley* (DDG 84).



EN1(SW) Cheryl Wheeler enjoys a playful moment with her son, two-year-old Nathan, before leaving for USS *Bulkeley* (DDG 84) for the day, while EN1(SW/EXW) Juan Gonzales watches.

The battle they fight is seen only through photos or trinkets affixed inside a rack or locker aboard ship, a randomly scribbled crayon drawing folded up and carried in a wallet or inside a body armor vest.

With an unparalleled operational schedule that could see service members engaged in training evolutions, maritime security operations or serving in non-traditional roles in areas thousands of miles from where they call home, U.S. Navy Sailors have historically proven flexible, embodying a value system born through an understanding of a mission.

The most difficult thing to do for so many Sailors, is to say good-bye.

BALANCING A CAREER WHILE PARENTING

"Your family doesn't come in your seabag..."

With diverse family structures and Sailors accepting more non-traditional roles in support of ongoing contingency operations, the importance of providing for family needs has become increasingly more important throughout the U.S. Armed Forces.

DoD and U.S. Navy regulations include provisions requiring single-parents and dual-military couples with children to ensure acceptable child care provisions are in place in the event of a deployment, something Engineman 1st Class (SW) Cheryl Wheeler, currently assigned aboard USS *Bulkeley* (DDG 84) said remains the single-most important thing a parent must do.

"After making a family care plan, the first thing I had to do was get a will, especially in my situation because the father's not in the picture," said Wheeler, a 28-year-old Detroit native. "That was really hard; you have to make decisions in the event you'll have to leave your child for an extended period of time. But, I'm in the military, and I know anything could happen."

Wheeler, like an estimated 16,000 Sailors on active duty today, is a single parent, something she said was unplanned but now represents the most important piece of her life.

"My son is the most important thing for me, and since I've done this

for [almost] two years now, I've found that balance," said Wheeler. "Although leaving my son is difficult – I miss him all day, talk about him all day – I know he's taken care of because I've taken the proper steps to ensure he's covered."

Wheeler said it is absolutely crucial to thoroughly read and understand the family care plan (DoD Instruction 1342.19). The instruction and guidelines represent an effort to standardize family care requirements through identifying three basic guidelines – short-term care providers, long-term care providers and care provision details.

While each of these items in the family care plan are designed to ensure family members receive the care they require, said the program also serves to assist service members in recognizing potential gaps or problem areas in their plan and fixing them.

Single parents and dual-military couples with children are required to designate a non-military person, who will agree in writing, to accept care of the service member's child at any time in the event the service member is called to duty or deployed with no-notice. The regulation further states that the individual who accepts this responsibility cannot be another service member, but the person can be a military spouse and must reside in an area near where the service member is stationed. The short-term care provider must sign the family care plan.

In addition to the short-term care provider, single parents and military couples with children must also identify a long-term care provider, a non-military person, who agrees to provide long-term care for their children in the event the service member is deployed for a significant period, or in the event they are selected for an unaccompanied overseas tour or assigned to a ship at sea.

The long-term care provider does not have to live in the local area, but the family care plan must contain provisions to transfer the child from the short-term care provider to the long-term care provider in the event a no-notice deployment turns into a long-term deployment. The long-term care provider must sign the family care plan.

Master-at-Arms 1st Class (SW/AW) Esslin Joiner, a fellow Sailor aboard *Bulkeley*, agreed with Wheeler's appraisal of the significance of the family care plan. Raising two daughters aged 9 and 14, Joiner, a 13-year Navy veteran, stressed the importance of the plan and how it has affected her.

"The family care plan is the most important thing," she said. "It kind of pushes you to make sure you have all the things you'll need in place. It really details what you're going to need as far as being deployable."

But despite ensuring her 2-year-old son, Nathan, is cared for during her upcoming deployment aboard *Bulkeley*, Wheeler, along with Joiner and countless other Sailors, confronts another issue facing parents on active duty, something for which all the preparation in the world cannot prepare those leaving what they know as home.

"I have my family care plan in place, so I am ready," said Wheeler. "All the pieces I need are in place, so the only struggle I'll have is the emotional battle of leaving Nathan. That's my little boy, my best friend."

This is an emotional battle faced by mariners since the age of sail. But according to Kathy Korth, Family Readiness Program Manager, situations such as this, while necessary are combated by a variety of courses and classes offered through the Fleet and Family Support Center.

"We cover everything from parenting and finances to managing stress and anger," Korth said. "We meet with Sailors and family members individually, in the classroom, even over the phone or Internet if they live too far from the base to come in. We're flexible to their needs, and it's all free. Fleet and Family Support Centers strive every day at preparing spouses and family members to meet the unique challenges of military life."

Despite the courses and preparation service members can take, the variety of counseling services available to ease the transition for both parents and children, a deployment still represents a significant change,



MA1(SW/AW) Esslin Joiner (center) supervises her 14-year-old daughter Keyori Moore (left) and nine-year-old daughter Daija Thompson (right) as they complete their homework.





EM3 Jordan Johnson plays with his son Jordan Jr. after a shift aboard USS *Oak Hill* (LSD 51).

something Electrician's Mate 3rd Class Jordan Johnson said he accepts by finding ways to keep in touch with his wife and nearly 2-year-old son, Jordan Jr., while he is deployed aboard USS *Oak Hill* (LSD 51).

"Going underway, going on deployment, is the hardest thing, but I signed up for it, and I knew what to expect," said Johnson a Little Rock, Ark., native. "We were on deployment last year when he was learning to stand up and begin to walk, and I missed all of that. We did our best to keep in touch, send-

ing pictures and videos and tried to make it as painless as possible."

Johnson, preparing for another deployment aboard *Oak Hill* is married to another Sailor, Danielle, a seaman boatswain's mate who works at Norfolk Naval Shipyard and said the operational tempo of the ship often affects the time Jordan Jr. can spend with his father.

"Schedules are the most difficult thing," said Danielle. "He's missing family time with our son due to the deployments and work schedule, but being military I know how it works so I can prepare myself. It doesn't make it any easier, though."

To ensure the lines of communication remain open, Johnson said he and his wife are looking at different ways to ensure his son knows he is missed and to provide him the opportunity to remember some of the moments the family shared before *Oak Hill's* upcoming deployment.

"I bought a camcorder to take videos for my wife to show him while I'm gone, so he'll have something to look at while I'm underway," he said. "We'll send e-mails and photos, and when in port we'll use whatever technology possible to keep in touch."

The advent of technology has significantly increased communication between deployed service members and their loved ones, according to Hospital Corpsman 1st Class (FMP) Christopher Barraclough. He and his wife, Chief Air Traffic Controller (AW/SW) Shirley Barraclough, have been married since 1994 and have endured multiple deployments while raising their three children. Barraclough said the ability to be in contact via electronic communication has significantly enhanced his morale while deployed, but along with countless other Sailors, he also keeps reminders of his family with him while deployed.

"I'm big on e-mail and the little things that mean so much," said Barraclough. "It's that cross in your pocket, a drawing from your kids, a picture of your family. I've kept these things on me – they're sentimental and made me feel I had a part of them with me, and if something ever did happen, it would have put me more at peace knowing that I had something from them with me."

Barraclough who has completed multiple deployments with both Marine expeditionary units as well as Navy special warfare units, and Shirley, the air traffic control leading chief aboard USS *Bataan* (LHD 5), represent the growing number of dual-military

couples in the Navy, a steadily increasing trend during the past decade. In areas all over the world, deployments for either Sailor can – and do – happen, sometimes at a moment's notice.

"It's hard to balance," Shirley said. "it's scary to think about me being on deployment and him getting called up on deployment. Do I want him to go? No. Has it changed our minds on one of us getting out? Absolutely. But the Navy's done a great job on spouse co-location when it comes to dual deployment."

Through their years of deployment experience, the Barracloughs have seen a trend shift in the Navy – a more proactive approach toward parenting scenarios. This is something evident through numerous programs offered on bases worldwide, as well as a different outlook on service members with parenting considerations.

"The Navy is more accommodating now when it comes to adjusting schedules, or if there's an illness with a child, a problem at school," said Barraclough. I try and push young Sailors toward the FFSC because we've used a lot of the programs they've offered. Honestly, if you're happy at home and you're able to work through the family issues, you'll perform better at work because you won't have that extra stress."

One program available to service members that has proven invaluable to Shirley throughout her years on active duty is the Morale, Welfare and Recreation Child Development Center (CDC).

"As a dual-military couple, our biggest savior has been the CDC," she said. "Day care is very expensive, and the CDCs provide a very affordable alternative along with early education. All three of our children have gone through CDC."

The CDCs offer alternative child care, providing rank-based fees that can greatly offset the cost of civilian child care, according to Shirley Barraclough. She also said a new initiative at some Navy installations will further the sometimes limited options available to Sailors using the CDC, particularly for shift workers and those individuals on weekend duty.

"The Navy doesn't work Monday through Friday from nine to five," she said. "And now, bases in the area have 24-hour CDCs, so people that have duty, people who work night shifts will have a place to drop off their children and know they're safe."

According to Chuck Clymer, Child and Youth Program Manager, the 24-hour CDCs provide a home-like atmosphere,



AC2 Robin Betts leaves her two-year-old daughter, Ciani, with Naval Station Norfolk Child and Youth Program 24/7 Child Development Group Home Education Technician Dally Hicks before going to work at Naval Station Oceana Air Det. Norfolk.

that children frequenting the CDC can easily find comforting.

"There is a living room, and there are bedrooms, which are age appropriate," Clymer said. "Each CDC is nationally accredited, using the highest child care standards in the nation. That offers peace of mind, so a Sailor can focus on the mission."

Barraclough also said that involvement in a spouse's Navy career can significantly ease misgivings both children and another parent might have about an upcoming deployment.

"Spouses need to get involved," he said. "This can open your eyes to the Navy as a whole and you can understand what your spouse is going through. I made it a point to get in touch with the *Bataan* Family Readiness Group," he said. "I wanted to be involved. She supported me when I was deployed and I wanted to be supportive of what she was going through and get involved with her career."

Shirley Barraclough said that Sailors can sometimes forget a lot of the difficulties a spouse and children can endure during an extended deployment, but having experienced both sides of the deployment cycle, she said.

"A lot of military members haven't been on the other side," she said. "I've watched my husband deploy and a lot of people haven't seen it from that perspective. Those in leadership roles need to talk to their Sailors. There are a lot of people who have no idea what it's like on the other side, seeing their spouses gone for seven months. It's difficult dealing with the bills, the doctor's appointments, the household chores, the responsibilities and the stress.

Adding my perspective in, about

being married to a Sailor, can hopefully show others how difficult the other side is, the non-deploying side."

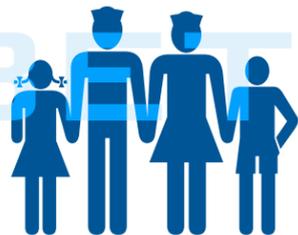
Shirley added that despite the difficulties incurred while raising a family and navigating a successful Navy career, the duty for which she initially took on – raising her right hand in defense of the country as a U.S. Navy Sailor – is still of paramount concern, something she stressed can be balanced with being a parent through receptive leadership.

"The No. 1 thing we do is deploy to protect and defend," she said. "So when the world calls out, as military members we're there to protect and answer the call. The chain of command understands that some of these deployments are [unexpected], and they understand that there are issues and responsibilities, and they are accommodating."

Joiner said that while the Navy has caused her to mature, to accept new roles and responsibilities, and instilled within her a value system she hopes her children will recognize and understand, she believes her children have had an equal impact on her livelihood as a Sailor.

"Being a Sailor has made me a much more responsible person and has shown me to be committed – and with that comes responsibilities," she said. "As the military has made me the person I am today, these qualities have bettered me as a parent, and these are characteristics I can take and put into my children, who have made me a better Sailor. With them, I am a stronger person and more capable of doing my job every day." AH

Cummins is assigned to Defense Media Activity – Anacostia, Washington, D.C.





Frontier Sentinel:

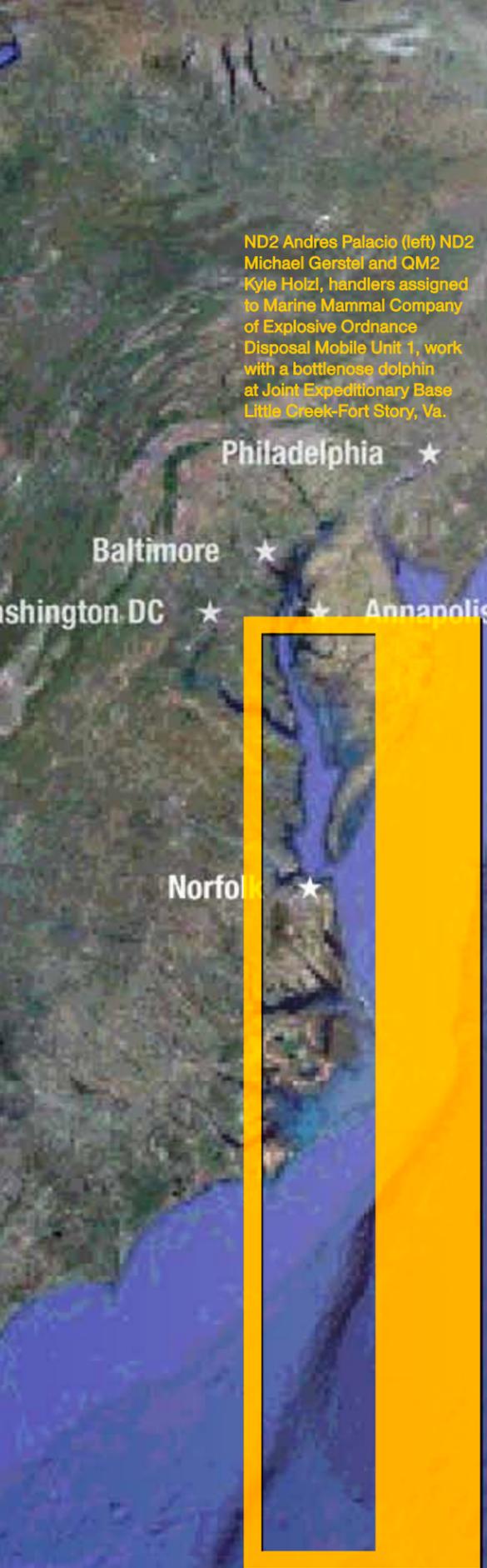
Getting to Know Our Northern Neighbors

Story courtesy of Commander, U.S. 2nd Fleet

While the U.S. Navy's role defending national interests and conducting operations to foster stability and security abroad is well known, the role it plays in defending the nation's coast line is perhaps less publicized but just as crucial.

Canadian Clearance Divers (from left to right) Petty Officer 2nd Class Craig Shannon, Leading Seaman Danny Landry and Master Seaman Dwayne Earl from Fleet Diving Unit Atlantic disembark from HMCS Goose Bay (MM 707) during Exercise *Frontier Sentinel*.

Photo by Corporal Rick Ayer



ND2 Andres Palacio (left) ND2 Michael Gerstel and QM2 Kyle Holzi, handlers assigned to Marine Mammal Company of Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit 1, work with a bottlenose dolphin at Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story, Va.

In recent years, terrorism has moved to the forefront of the American conscience due to attacks on North American interests, infrastructure and ideologies. To combat this situation, numerous agencies are partnering to ensure borders and airports are protected.



Photo by M/C1 Bruce Cummins

To combat a maritime terrorist threat, the U.S. Navy's 2nd Fleet (C2F), headquartered in Norfolk, the Canadian Maritime Forces Command, or the Canadian Navy, and other agencies annually participate in Exercise *Frontier Sentinel 2010 (FS2010)* that focuses on coastal defense procedures in North American waterways.

According to Vice Adm. Mel Williams Jr., Commander U.S. 2nd Fleet senior representative for *FS2010*, the cooperative efforts of more than 2,500 U.S. Sailors, U.S. Coast Guardsmen, Canadian forces and other U.S. organizations showcased how the U.S. Navy can jointly function with other entities to protect shipping lanes and harbor security efforts against waterborne threats.

"*Frontier Sentinel* is a series of exercise tests that validate the ability of U.S. forces, Canadian forces and civilian agencies to jointly respond to mutual maritime threats to North America," said Williams. "We have plans and procedures in place with *Frontier Sentinel*, to test joint operational planning and execution for North American security. As a result, we strengthen our ability as allies for continental defense."

FS2010 was staged off the coast of Virginia to evaluate existing plans for a bilateral response to maritime homeland defense and security threats to North American maritime security.

The seventh iteration of the C2F/Joint Task Force Atlantic Area-sponsored exercise used numerous U.S. Navy mine-hunting and amphibious assets, Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit (EODMU) 1 Sailors, the Navy's rapidly deployable Marine Mammal Company and several elements of the Maritime Com-

mand Element of the Canadian Navy. Scenarios included identifying potential ships of interest, visit board search and seizure (VBSS) and numerous mine-hunting and mine-countermeasure efforts, from identification to simulated detonation of underwater explosives marking the entrance to the Chesapeake Bay.

Cmdr. David Givey, a C2F operations plans and policy planner, said the joint exercise was developed as a result of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. Previous joint ventures designed to combat aerial terrorist threats existed with Canadian elements, but *FS2010* specifically addresses maritime security of coastal areas, said Givey.

"These are live events and actions in which we can increase our continental defense posture," Givey noted. "*Frontier Sentinel* allows us to look at our existing plans and improve our cross-border relationship for homeland defense and homeland security. This allows us to work with other agencies and the Coast Guard for a more complete defense. Part of this exercise is to see how we can create better [operability] between our inter-agency partners, our local law enforcement agencies, customs and border patrol and strengthen our partnership with Canada by integrating a more combined defense plan."

FS2010 focuses on leveraging the unique capabilities and strengths of combined forces as it refines the ways they can operate together in response of crises of mutual interest.

"This is an incredibly complex exercise drawing on the expertise of more than a dozen American and Canadian agencies, joint assets and an integrated command team," said Cmdr. Rob Green, Coastal/Mine Warfare Operational Test and Evaluation officer at the Canadian Forces Maritime Warfare Centre in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.

"In the face of this complexity, we are proving once again that Canadians and Americans can stand shoulder-to-shoulder against shared adversity. You would be hard-pressed to find any two nations in the world that can operate together this seamlessly."

The Canadian Maritime Forces Command coastal defense vessels HMCS *Glouce Bay* (MM 701) and HMCS *Goose Bay* (MM 707) were instrumental in partnering with U.S. Navy



Photo by M/C1 Bruce Cummins

ND2 Class Michael Gerstel, a handler assigned to Marine Mammal Company of Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit (EODMU) 1, rewards a bottlenose dolphin after a successful training evolution at Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story.

AWCS Francisco Garcia acts as technical safety officer during a minesweeping mission. Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron 14 specializes in mine warfare and special operations support.

Below—
Naval air crew men work with maintenance personnel to get the Q-24A Sonar "Fish" in order during a pre-flight check on the aircraft, while on a minesweeping mission.

AW2 Steven Shoots works as a handler to get the Q-24 Sonar "Fish" out into the water to sweep for mines.



Photo by M/C1 Christopher B. Stoltz

Washington DC ★ Annapolis



Photo by M/C1 Christopher B. Stoltz



Photo by M/C1 Christopher B. Stoltz

amphibious assets in numerous mine-hunting and mine-countermeasure efforts.

The two multipurpose vessel's capabilities include coastal surveillance, sovereignty patrol, route survey and training, but during *FS2010* they were used to search for possible explosive devices.

The unique attributes of the Canadian ships significantly enhanced mission effectiveness because *Glace Bay* carried a route survey payload that allowed significant ocean mapping and identification of potential mines, while *Goose Bay* transported a six-man combat dive team that could dispose of any mines located.

According to Green, the importance of the exercise could not be understated, citing that shared borders and coastlines between Canada and the United States are a direct reflection of the military and economic partnership the two countries enjoy.

"We're hand-in-hand in this together," said Green. "This is a very important scenario. Approximately 90 percent of all Canadian and U.S. trade across the world comes by ocean. Any threat to shutting down our ports is very serious, and we train to counter that."

The interoperability included the use of unmanned underwater vehicles (UUVs) during the largest maritime homeland defense exercises, with a handful of technical experts using the devices to ensure exercise success.

One of the UUV organizations that participated in *FS2010* was EODMU 1's UUV platoon from San Diego. They tracked, identified and collected information about underwater objects of interest posing a simulated threat to vessels transiting the Chesapeake Bay.

"The UUV system is a vehicle we program to run a certain mission," said Chief Aerographer's Mate (AW/EXW) David Elliott, EODMU 1 UUV leading chief petty officer. "The [sonar] UUV goes down and completes the mission using side scan to help locate objects as small as a basketball. This can help in mine location and salvage, something critical in an effort like this exercise."

The joint perspective *FS2010* used was crucial in allowing the EODMU 1 UUV platoon to accomplish their tasking.

"We wouldn't be able to do what we're doing without the Coast Guard being here running pickets for the very busy channel, and



Master Seaman Josh Davis (left) and Master Seaman Wayne Laughlin operate a winch that deploys the Kline Side Scan Sonar in the waters around Norfolk.

"You would be hard-pressed to find any two nations in the world that can operate together this seamlessly."

—Cmdr. Rob Green

the Canadian ships also locating underwater objects of interest," said Elliott. "It's one big collaboration - we're working together getting lessons learned so that if a real-world maritime homeland defense situation arises we would be able to draw not only on our assets, but we can rely on our allies to get the job done and bring everyone back safely."

The Naval Oceanography Mine Warfare Center's (NOMWC) UUV Platoon from the John C. Stennis Space Center, Miss., was tasked with sending the platoon's UUVs into the areas of Little Creek and Thimble Shoals to locate underwater objects of interest, relay and verify that information to other minehunting entities.

AG2 Jason Fisher, an NOMWC UUV Platoon UUV operator, said the vehicles represent a shift in the way mine warfare is waged.

"These are cutting-edge technology," said Fisher. "I feel these vehicles represent the future of the Navy's mine countermeasure force. A fleet of UUVs could clear the way for amphibious beach assaults, SEAL teams and EOD. Our motto is 'taking the man out of the minefield,' and when I look at a UUV, I imagine the lives we will be able to save."

EODMU 1 Marine Mammal program relied on nearly 50 years of research that proved vital to *FS2010*.

"This is the only program of its kind in the Navy - we use the only organic asset in the world that can hunt mines and take them down," said Chief Navy Diver (DSW/EXW) Brandon Ghan, the leading chief petty officer for EODMU 1 Marine Mammal company. "We're using bottlenose dolphins for mine hunting operations, and our role in *Frontier Sentinel* is to hunt and find (simulated) mines in the harbor; to clear a path for ships to exit the Chesapeake Bay."

Ghan said the reason behind the program's involvement in *FS2010* stems from the very real concept of a waterborne threat in a heavily trafficked harbor, something mitigated by the unique capabilities brought to the table by the animals with the Navy-Marine Mammal Program.

Canadian Leading Seaman Lindsay Walker mans the helm on *Glace Bay* during Exercise *Frontier Sentinel* in Norfolk.

"Homeland defense has become more prevalent in what we do," said Ghan. "The threat of having one of our own harbors mined has become a real threat, and these mammals are perfect assets for this."

While the threat is very real, *FS2010* ensures that the expertise and resolve of those working to protect the waters and harbors of North America remains unrivaled. AH

Story courtesy of Commander, 2nd Fleet, Norfolk.



What Are Your Numbers?

Story by MC2(SW) Elizabeth Vlahos

What's your number? No, not your phone number. It's the numbers that show how hard your heart is working and how healthy you are – blood pressure, heart rate, cholesterol – those numbers.

Let's face it, your body is a machine – if it were a car, your heart would be the engine that keeps it running, and if you don't take care of your car, it will eventually break down and stop running. The same is true of your heart, but if it breaks down and stops running for good ... you're dead.

Blood Pressure 101

Anyone who's had their blood pressure taken is probably scratching their head over what those numbers mean. 112/75? What the heck does diastolic mean? What's worse: Stage 1 or Stage 2 hypertension? Read on.

The numbers your doctor or hospital corpsman jots down on your vitals sheet are systolic and diastolic measurements. The systolic number is the higher number - or maximum pressure - which measures the pressure in your arteries when your heart beats.

The diastolic number is the lower number - or minimum pressure - on your blood pressure reading, which measures arterial pressure between heart beats.

Now that we've covered that, here are the numbers to aim for and the ones to avoid, according to the Mayo Clinic.

Normal: Below 120 systolic and 80 diastolic; but doctors recommend keeping it below 115/75.

Pre-hypertension: 120 to 139 systolic; 80-89 diastolic. This condition tends to get worse over time; within four years of being diagnosed as pre-hypertensive, roughly one-third of adults aged 35 to 64 and roughly half of adults aged 65 or older develop high blood pressure.

Stage 1 hypertension: 140 to 159 systolic; 90 to 99 diastolic.

Stage 2 hypertension: 160 or higher systolic; 100 or higher diastolic.

The more pressure put on the arteries can mean higher blood pressure, which can represent a higher likelihood for serious health problems. High blood pressure can put individuals – including those 20-year old Sailors who think they're invincible - at risk for artery damage, heart failure, aneurysms, stroke, organ damage and vision loss.

Know Your Cholesterol

Hypercholesterolemia would be a killer in a game of Scrabble, so let's just stick with "high blood cholesterol."

Every cell in the body contains cholesterol, which the body uses to build healthy cells and vital hormones. Cholesterol is important in the breakdown of fat-soluble Vitamins A, D, E and K.

But, too much cholesterol can be a bad thing. There are three types of cholesterol in the blood, and knowing what they are and what they do is quite important. Keep in mind, it just shows up on nutrition labels as "cholesterol" without differentiation.

Low-density lipoprotein (LDL) is commonly known as "bad" cholesterol. LDL transports cholesterol particles throughout the body, leaving it on the walls of the arteries. Think of LDL cholesterol as a garbage truck with trash flying out the back as it rolls down the road, because that's exactly what it does to arteries.

Very-low-density lipoproteins (VLDL), or "really bad" cholesterols, act as "litterbugs," so to speak. VLDL cholesterol makes LDL cholesterol particles larger, causing the blood vessels to narrow. Avoid saturated fats and cut out trans fats to lower your LDL and VLDL levels.

High-density lipoproteins (HDL) are commonly known as "good" cholesterol. HDL cholesterol picks up excess cholesterol from the arteries and returns it to the liver for metabolism. Think of HDL cholesterol as the arterial janitorial staff. The higher the number, the better for you.

High blood cholesterol can cause myriad problems for the body including heart attacks, coronary artery disease and blood clots. part of the brain stops, a stroke could occur.

Either way, the prospects are not good.

Get to the Heart of the Matter

Heart rate is another word for pulse, and it's pretty simple to explain. Taking the pulse for 15 seconds and multiplying that number by four will give an approximate heart rate.

A low resting heart rate means the heart doesn't have to work hard to pump blood through the arteries. But, a high resting heart rate, can indicate the heart may be working harder than it should. Your doctor can tell you what a healthy range is, but it varies between men and women.

Don't Let Your Number Be Up

Some causes and risk factors of high blood cholesterol and hypertension are beyond individual control. Age, race, and family history aren't something you can change on a whim.

But an overweight, sedentary smoker who subsists on potato chips and beer on a regular basis may be tempting fate.

And feeling like you're consistently in a pressure cooker doesn't help – too much stress is bad for your health.

Here are some measures medical professionals often recommend to keep your numbers manageable:

Save the hot dogs for the World Series. Eat a variety of lean meats, whole grains and heart-healthy fats, such as olive oil and canola oil. Load up on fruits and vegetables as well.

Eliminate trans fats. Trans fats can raise LDL and you want to lower HDL cholesterol – wherever possible. Read food labels and watch what you eat when dining out.

Put down the salt shaker. Excess sodium is a key culprit in hypertension, and since you aren't a deer, your food doesn't need to taste like a salt lick.

Get off the recliner and move! Exercise can be one of the best tools to regulate cholesterol levels and blood pressure, as well as keep weight under control. Losing even five to 10 pounds can do wonders in reducing overall cholesterol levels. Medical professionals recommend 30 minutes of cardiovascular exercise three times a week. And don't forget the strength training, either.

Put the smoking lamp out for good. Tobacco injures the walls of blood vessels and speeds up hardening of the arteries. For those who use tobacco, the Navy has numerous resources when it comes to tobacco cessation, so take advantage of them! For those who don't use tobacco, don't start. Your heart and lungs will thank you.

Chill out, man! Practice techniques such as deep breathing, muscle relaxation and meditation to help you relax. Also, get plenty of sleep – it works wonders with stress management.

Treatment. For the causes beyond individual control, medical professionals can prescribe medications to help regulate blood pressure and cholesterol levels. That said, it's the individual's responsibility to take an active part in his or her own care – medication can't do it alone.

Managing numbers isn't just for accountants - blood pressure and cholesterol levels are the numbers on which people should concentrate to improve the quality of life. **AH**

Vlahos is assigned to Defense Media Activity – Anacostia, Washington, D.C.

Civilian expeditionary workforce

Story by Defense Media Activity – Anacostia

The contribution of the DoN civilian work force as pillars of continuity and organizational memory is increasingly expanding beyond the traditional man, train and equip roles to the operational arena.

As the nation's military forces pull together to support war-time missions in Iraq and Afghanistan, hundreds of Navy civilians have also volunteered to fill global expeditionary augmentation requirements.

To lead this effort, the DoD Civilian Expeditionary Workforce (CEW) was created in January 2009 to provide a deployable work force trained and equipped to support military missions. Under the program, DoD civilians – in careers ranging from engineers to contract specialists – deploy for about a year to Iraq and Afghanistan, but also serve in some capacity in Europe and Africa.

For Ralph Gootee, a senior intelligence specialist with Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technology Division, Indian Head, Md., who recently completed an 11-month deployment assigned to Joint Psychological Operations Task Force (JPOFT), Doha, Qatar, volunteering for a civilian individual augmentee deployment was an opportunity to support troops in combat missions.

“My primary reason for volunteering was to gain a better understanding of the intelligence requirements in Iraq and Afghanistan so I could better support Joint Service EOD,” said Gootee. “During the meetings [with EOD units] I realized that most of the intelligence officers and enlisted had served a combat tour. Although I had many more years of intelligence experience, training and a tremendous understanding of the intelligence community, I had never directly supported combat troops.”

The CEW process involves applying for the positions via their website HYPERLINK www.cpms.osd.mil/expeditionary. The applicants' resumes are reviewed and matched to the position(s) for which they applied or other available positions that match their qualifications. For those selected, the preparation for deployment involves medical screenings, legal and financial arrangements and a combination of online and practical training.

“My training was at CONUS Replacement Center, Fort Benning, Ga. All the trainers there had recently returned from either Iraq or Afghanistan and understood the requirements,” said Gootee.

In addition to the CRC in Fort Benning, a joint, pre-deployment training program at the Indiana National Guard Camp Atterbury Joint Maneuver Training Center, and Muscatatuck Urban Training Center for employees deploying to Iraq and Afghanistan began in January 2010. The 10-day training is a one-stop, fully integrated training and pre-deployment platform. This training consists of an intense mix of classroom and field exercises, providing a learning environment where the austere setting simulates the conditions of deployment and helps strengthen emotional and mental resilience.

Once in theater, the true potential of the experience really starts to pan out. As a member of the JPOFT, Gootee not only collected and analyzed information to inform the coalition efforts in the region but also strengthened his professional philosophy.

“One of the major professional gains from the deployment is that it reaffirmed by core intelligence analyst's belief -- that an intelligence analyst must know his subject matter thoroughly, develop wide and deep network of contacts, and share his knowledge everyday,” said Gootee. “I have a quote from Lt Gen. [William] Boykin over my desk ‘Intelligence is for Sharing.’”

As he learned the ropes and figured out the nuances of this joint environment, Gootee also referred to a quote from Maj. Gen. Michael Flynn as a source of guidance and inspiration. “Flynn, captures the heart of the Intelligence Analysts when he states, ‘Analysts must absorb information with the thoroughness of historians, organize it with the skill of librarians, and disseminate it with the zeal of journalists.’”

The experiences of this deployment also deepened his understanding of the uniformed men and women with whom he serves.

“Hands down the most most rewarding part was the professional and dedicated men and woman I met. The experience was truly amazing.

Although I did not like being separated from my family for one year – it is after the six month mark you truly gain an understanding of the job and who and where to go the accomplish the mission,” Gotee said.

“I now have that understanding, and I have a much greater respect for the military members many of whom have served two or three tours deployments.” **AH**





SN Craig Hagan, from Lakewood, Calif., steadies the phone and distance line aboard USS *Essex* (LHD 2). *Essex* recently earned the first Vice Adm. Bulkeley Award for Afloat Safety Culture.

RIMPAC 2010 Begins as Ships Arrive in Hawaii

The biennial *Rim of the Pacific* (RIMPAC) exercise officially kicked off June 23 as 14 nations, 32 ships, five submarines, more than 170 aircraft and 20,000 personnel arrived in Hawaii.

By June 28, Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet (PACFLT) was hosting units and personnel from Australia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, France, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Netherlands, Peru, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Thailand and the United States.

Adm. Patrick Walsh, PACFLT, and Vice Adm. Richard Hunt, commander, Combined Task Force, are scheduled to officially open the exercise with a press conference June 28 at 9:30 a.m. on Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam.

The world's largest multinational maritime exercise took place from June 23 through Aug. 1 in the waters around the Hawaiian Islands. The exercise consisted of three major phases. Phase I, the Harbor Phase, from June 28 through July 5 will consist of operational planning meetings, safety briefings and sporting events. This phase is designed to make final preparations for the at-sea phases of the exercises, as well as build on professional and personal relationships between the participating countries.

Phase II, the Operational Phase, was driven by a structured schedule of events and started July 6 through July 24. This portion includes live fire gunnery and missile exercises, maritime interdiction and vessel boardings, anti-surface warfare, undersea warfare, naval maneuvers, air defense exercises, as well as, explosive ordnance disposal, diving and salvage operations, mine clearance operations and an amphibious

Ships from 14 nations are in port at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii, for the 2010 *Rim of the Pacific* exercise.

landing. This phase exercised the ability of each nation to conduct robust command and control operations with multinational players and enhances each unit's operational capabilities.

Phase III, the Tactical Phase of the exercise, was scenario-driven and took place July 25 through July 30. The intense training during this phase allowed participating nations to further strengthen their maritime skills and capabilities and improve their ability to communicate and operate in simulated hostile scenarios. This phase concluded with the ships' return to Pearl Harbor, where participating nations will reconvene to discuss the exercise and overall accomplishments.

The theme of RIMPAC 2010 was "Combined Agility, Synergy and Support," and marked the 22nd exercise in the series that originated in 1971. **AH**

Story by MCz(SW) Mark Logico, Commander, Navy Region Hawaii Pearl Harbor.

USS *Essex* Earns Inaugural VADM Bulkeley Award

USS *Essex* (LHD 2) recently earned the inaugural Vice Adm. Bulkeley Award for Afloat Safety Culture.

Rear Adm. Arthur J. Johnson, commander, Naval Safety Center (NSC), presented the ship's Commanding Officer, Capt. Troy Hart and Safety Officer, Lt. Cmdr. Phillip Aramburu with the award in a ceremony on board the *Sasebo*, Japan, based amphibious ship.

Johnson said the award recognizes the importance transparency and communications plays in reducing mishaps.

"This award symbolizes a culture shift toward transparency that is taking place and which benefits fleet readiness as a whole. By being willing to share what you've learned, you've raised awareness which leads to reduced mishaps," Johnson said.

Essex safety department Sailors contributed numerous articles to safety publications on lessons learned and best practices. Johnson also commended the ship for making the most of the petty officers assigned to the ship's safety department.

"USS *Essex* has empowered the ship's safety petty officers to be aggressive about identifying, reporting, and correcting minor hazards. This keeps those minor problems from becoming major problems," Johnson said.

Essex had a verified 51 percent reduction in accidents and injuries during the last two years and had no Class A or Class B mishaps in 2009. These are the most serious mishap classes.

The award is named for Vice Adm. John D. Bulkeley, a Navy officer who earned the Medal of Honor during World War II and who served as the head of the Navy's Board of Inspection and Survey (INSURV) from 1967 to 1988. INSURV is responsible for inspecting ships prior to their deployments. It's known to be a rigorous inspection, but one that is needed to prevent mishaps.

For more information on afloat safety and mishap reduction, visit www.safetycenter.navy.mil. **AH**

Story by April Phillips, Naval Safety Center, Norfolk.

Ceremony Dedicates Center of Excellence

A dedication ceremony was recently held to commemorate the completion of the National Intrepid Center of Excellence (NICoE), Bethesda, Md.

The new facility, located on the grounds of the National Naval Medical Center (NNMC), will be dedicated to the diagnosis, treatment and research of traumatic brain injury (TBI) and other psychological health disorders that affect service members, veterans and their families.

According to Dr. Thomas DeGraba, deputy director and chief of medical operations for NICoE, since Sept. 11, 2001, health care providers have come to identify the effects of TBI and psychological health issues on service members that prevent them from re-engaging in the military or civilian careers and from reconnecting with their family and friends.

Roughly two years ago, Congress set up the Defense Center of Excellence to bring together the many different scopes of expertise that the Defense Department has to offer.

"TBI can affect many different aspects of cognitive function, everything from disturbances in language to spatial orientation to short-term and long-term memory," said DeGraba. "We needed a place that brings all the resources in medical care for both TBI and psychological health to help understand the person as a whole."

This interdisciplinary approach allows all members of the patient's treatment team to collaborate and, therefore, better coordinate the patient's treatment plan.

"When a warrior and family leaves the NICoE, they leave with an individualized plan for improvement and long-term follow up," said DeGraba. "The center's mission is not just to identify the problems, but to provide those warriors with the strategies to recover."

The two-story, 72,000 square-foot facility uses state-of-the-art technology to offer individuals the most detailed diagnosis, said Dr. James Kelly, director of NICoE.

The magnetic resonance imaging center allows researchers to look for characteristics of brain injuries.

The center, which has approximately 100 staff members, will also use magneto-encephalography (MEG), said Kelly. "The MEG can look even deeper into the structure of the brain than an electroencephalography (EEG). While an EEG determines whether pathways in the brain are working properly, an MEG can see how it's working and how it's changed as a result of a TBI, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety and stress," said Kelly.

Additionally, the center will use positron emission tomography (PET) scans, that allow physicians to look at the functional areas of the brain to see how an injured brain works as opposed to a non-injured brain.

Another aspect of NICoE is that it incorporates a holistic medical approach into care and uses treatments to include meditation, music and art therapy, yoga and spiritual exercises, said DeGraba.

At any given time, there will be about 20 patients at NICoE, each remaining at the center for an average of one to two weeks, said Kelly. "[NICoE] is also for families affected by these invisible wounds," said Kelly.

Warriors will be encouraged to be accompanied by their family members and will stay at the new NICoE dedicated Fisher House, which is currently under construction on base, said DeGraba.

The home has the capacity to house 21 families at a time, allowing them to be a part of a loved one's care while they're in treatment at the center.

"Fisher House provides us the ability to evaluate the family as well as the warriors, and that way we can begin to initiate family therapy, and that helps strengthen the family unit," said DeGraba. "If we can create that stabilization in their personal lives, it will dramatically increase the likelihood of recovery and improve their capability in their work and active duty lives. We're really excited about that."

DeGraba noted there will also be a tutoring program in place for children of the families staying at the Fisher House.

Capt. Michael Hendee, chief of staff for NICOE, added that the facility will fit well with the service integration efforts at NNMC, particularly in terms of manning. The staff will include civil service members, contractors and uniformed personnel from the Navy, Army, Air Force and Public Health Service.

“The mission of the NICOE is to be the leader in advancing world class psychological health and traumatic brain treatment, research and education,” said Hendee.

DeGraba echoed the sentiment.

“To be that place of hope, healing, discovery and learning, that place where the next generation of innovative care occurs, it’s tremendous,” said DeGraba. “The journey has really just begun now. ... We’re now at the edge of the beginning of our new capabilities to better understand those things that are preventing our wounded warriors from regaining that quality of life.” **AH**

Story by Sarah Fortney, National Naval Medical Center, Bethesda, Md.

USS George H.W. Bush Conducts First Missile Launch

USS *George H.W. Bush* (CVN 77) successfully fired two evolved NATO *Sea Sparrow* missiles and two *Rolling Airframe* missiles (RAM) for the first time, to conclude its recent first combat systems ship’s qualification trials (CSSQT).

CSSQT is part of the series of qualifications and certifications the aircraft carrier must undergo in preparation for her upcoming maiden deployment.

According to Cmdr. John B. Vliet, combat systems officer, CSSQT is a combined effort between the combat systems, operations and weapons departments to test the carrier’s self-defense systems.

“It’s an end-to-end testing of the combat systems suite, to include tactics, techniques and procedures,” Vliet said. “It’s an operational verification of the ship’s war-fighting and self-defense capabilities. Combat systems and operations department have worked around the clock for the last six months, grooming personnel and training for this exercise. More than 200 personnel have directly or indirectly supported this evolution.”

Of those 200-plus personnel, two of the most directly involved were Fire Controlman 2nd Class (SW/AW) Ezekiel S. Ramirez, work center supervisor for the evolved NATO *Sea Sparrow* surface missile system, and FC2(SW/AW) Ryan P. McWilliams, work center supervisor for the RAM system.

The evolved NATO *Sea Sparrow* missile is a semi-active missile that requires feed from directors to locate its target, and RAM is a passive missile, meaning the missile uses built-in sensors to home in on targets.

All of the missiles used during the launch were telemetry missiles, which are live missiles that have the warheads replaced with data recovery technology used to gauge accuracy.

Ramirez and McWilliams, on board experts for the missile systems, said that the launch was the culmination of months of hard work and preparation that included more than 40 maintenance checks, going aloft to fix radar, multiple pre-fire checks and 21 “detect-to-engage” pre-fire drills.

“We’ve been preparing for this evolution ever since the ship left the shipyard and we took ownership of the system,” said McWilliams. “This was one of the hardest evolutions combat systems department will have to do during the existence of this aircraft carrier.”

Prior to the launch, Ramirez and McWilliams were responsible for loading the two launchers for each system.



A NATO *Sea Sparrow* missile is launched from USS *George H.W. Bush* (CVN 77). *Bush* completed her first missile launch while underway conducting combat systems ship qualification trials.

“The NATO *Sea Sparrow* missile system holds eight missiles in each launcher and the RAM uses 21 missiles in each launcher,” said Ramirez. “It’s a lot of work for one launch, but when we deploy we will have to load a total of 58 missiles.”

Ramirez stressed the significance of the successful missile fire, what it meant for the entire command and for the small group of 14 Sailors directly involved with operation of the missile systems.

“It’s a pretty big accomplishment,” he said. “We are the aircraft carrier’s first and last line of defense. This test is the way we prove that the self-defense systems work. We’re finally doing our job.”

Directing the crew in the Combat Direction Center (CDC) were the Blue and Gold Team tactical action officers (TAO), Lt. Chris Caton and Lt. Jeff Moen of the operations department. CDC Officer, Cmdr. Les Spanheimer credits proactive tactical leadership and outstanding teamwork with the successful missile test.

“Lt. Caton began training our tactical watchstanders with live aircraft while the ship was still being outfitted in the shipyards,” said Spanheimer. “That proactive tactical development combined with a perfectly groomed weapons system helped us demonstrate today how very capable this ship is.”

According to Caton, the test involved two watch teams made up of 13 to 15 people. “During the exercise the watch teams are responsible for communicating with Range Control, tracking and data-linking the targets and engaging those threats when they enter our engagement envelope. We’ve been preparing for this for well over a year, putting in long hours.”

FC1(SW/AW) John L. Rodriguez-Hardy and FC2(SW) Jason E. Pugh, members of the Gold Team, said the reason for two watch teams was to create two unique scenarios for each missile system. They said that the watch teams acted as the communications link between combat systems and the weapons systems.

The lengthy systems certification process, which involved weapons onload and system approval from Carrier Strike Group 2 and the Board of Inspection and Survey (INSURV), directly involved the aircraft carrier’s weapons department.

According to Aviation Ordnanceman 1st Class (AW/SW) Chris J. Morrison of Weapons department, the certification involved every member of Weapons Inventory Control.

“We had to verify and requisition the exact missiles being used in the launch,” he said. “Once missiles were on board, we were responsible for turning them over to combat systems personnel. From there we inspected, stowed and moved the missiles to the launchers.”

In addition to all the preparation that went into the test, Vliet described how the systems operators had to be fully prepared to handle any situation.

“The operators and technical experts have got to be ready and fully understand all of the dud and misfire procedures in the event of an equipment or missile casualty,” Morrison said.

Ramirez reaffirmed the team’s readiness with confidence.

“We’re fully trained and capable to handle misfires,” he said. “We’re ready no matter what happens. We are here to defend the ship. We’re ready and willing to do our job.” **AH**

Story by MCSN J. Scott St. Clair, USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77).

USS San Jacinto Excels at Counter-Piracy Mission

During the first five months of her deployment, USS *San Jacinto* (CG 56) has interdicted several skiffs, captured pirates and played a key role in keeping sea lanes safe.

USS *San Jacinto* left Norfolk on a seven-month deployment to the Gulf of Aden at the beginning of 2010, in support of Combined Task Force (CTF) 151’s counter-piracy mission.

Typically, Aegis cruisers are used as a primary air defense platform to support amphibious or expeditionary readiness groups. Due to the diversity of the current battle space, *San Jacinto*’s primary duties have changed to support CTF 151.

“Recently, Aegis cruisers have been tasked with visit, board, search and seizure (VBSS) and anti-piracy operations,” said Fire Controlman 1st Class Christopher Ladera, a member of USS *San Jacinto*’s VBSS team. “With the changing threat in the world, I think we play an important role in helping suppress piracy.”

San Jacinto, at less than 600 feet long, is considered a comparatively small and maneuverable warship. Armed with offensive and defensive weapons systems, multi-function radars, two rigid-hull inflatable boats and two SH-60B *Sea Hawk* helicopters, not to mention a highly-trained VBSS team, it can respond quickly to changes in counter-piracy conditions.

“*San Jacinto* is a multi-mission ship,” said Capt. John Cordle, commanding officer. “As an independent deployer, we are capable of plugging into any strike group or task force. This requires a great deal of flexibility and a good grounding in the basics.”

USS *San Jacinto*’s VBSS team gained the confidence to conduct the counter-piracy mission with an extensive training program which included schools, training exercises and weapons qualifications.

“Preparing for deployment was a deployment in itself,” Ladera recalled. “Once the VBSS schools were completed, it was very important for us as a team to become familiar with communications, tactical movements, and physical fitness.”

The intense training was crucial to *San Jacinto*’s success in their new role countering piracy, said VBSS team boarding officer Lt.j.g. Sam Williard.

“We keep our focus on the basics and get the little things right, and the big things fall right into place.”

On May 31, USS *San Jacinto* disrupted nine suspected Somali pirates from attacking a Maltese-flagged motor vessel. Earlier in the month, the ship had rescued five Yemeni mariners from 13 suspected Somali pirates, while conducting routine counter narcotics operations 68 miles southeast of Ras Fartak, Yemen.

Despite the ship’s record of success in countering piracy and the approaching end of the ship’s deployment cycle, the crew remains at the ready for the next attack.

“We knew before we deployed that we would largely be focused on the mission of counter-piracy, but it’s impossible to accurately predict what the level of piracy activity will be or when and where an attack will take place,” Williard noted. **AH**

Story and photo by MC2 Ja’lon A. Rhinehart, Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command/Commander, U.S. 5th Fleet.

Members of the visit, board, search and seizure team embarked aboard USS *San Jacinto* (CG 56) load into a rigid-hull inflatable boat to investigate a suspicious dhow. *San Jacinto* deployed as part of Combined Task Force 151 in support of maritime security operations in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of responsibility.



Operation *Desert Shield*: Severing the Supply Line to Iraq

Story by MC2(SW) Elizabeth Vlahos

When Iraq invaded Kuwait, Aug. 2, 1990, USS *Robert G. Bradley* (FFG 49) was patrolling the Persian Gulf about 50 miles off the coast of Kuwait when the alarm sounded.

“We heard pleas for help from Kuwait over the bridge-to-bridge radio over and over again,” said Lt.j.g. Ted Anderson, *Bradley*’s combat systems officer. “It made us realize just how real it was.”

The first message about the Iraqi invasion propelled *Bradley* into general quarters. All Sailors manned their battle stations to guard against possible airborne and waterborne attacks.

Along with the shelling barrage into Kuwait, Iraqi forces threatened Saudi Arabia by positioning themselves near one of the principal invasion routes. This prompted Saudi Arabia to ask the United States for assistance in the form of military presence. Then-President George H.W. Bush responded by authorizing Operation *Desert Shield*. Within 48 hours of the initial invasion, Military Sealift Command (MSC) ships steamed out of Guam, Saipan and Diego Garcia toward the Middle East with the necessary supplies and equipment for U.S. forces.

On Aug. 3, Bush asked world leaders to support a collective course of diplomatic and economic sanctions banning all imports from Iraq, as well as freezing Iraqi assets in the United States. The U.N. Security Council passed Resolution 661, authorizing multinational naval vessels to begin enforcing the sanctions against Iraq. The next day, USS *Independence* (CV 62) and her eight-ship battle group pulled away from a routine deployment in the Indian Ocean and headed for the North Arabian Sea to support U.S. and allied efforts.

By Aug. 6, the USS *Saratoga* (CV 60) Carrier Battle Group and USS *Wisconsin* (BB 64) departed Norfolk on a regularly scheduled 6th Fleet deployment, putting them closer to the center of the action. The next day, Aug. 7, less than a week after the Iraqi invasion

of Kuwait, then-Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney traveled to Saudi Arabia to discuss the use of Saudi airstrips and naval installations as staging bases.

U.S. ships vigilantly scanned the horizon for merchant vessels transiting the shipping lanes. Their mission was to stop the oil from flowing through Middle Eastern waters into Iraq. Battle group and destroyer squadron commanders in the Red and North Arabian Seas controlled the operations directly as thousands of merchant vessels were tracked, challenged, identified, warned, then – if found to be in violation of sanction guidelines – boarded and diverted.

Warships averaged 10 challenges a day in a process that intensified following the approval of military force to ensure merchant vessels complied with the sanctions.

Even though the United States cut off oil and supplies to the Iraqis, they needed the same things themselves to maintain readiness on station. A solid foundation of maritime strategic planning and sealift pre-positioning enabled the United States to dispatch the MSC ships to the Middle East with the necessary supplies and equipment. The sealift for *Desert Shield* became, with no prior buildup – the largest and fastest sealift to a single operating area in the history of warfare to date, as well as the farthest. The average voyage covered nearly 8,700 miles.

During the 1980s, the Navy invested more than \$7 billion on the sealift improvement effort to provide maximum transport capability and medical support with minimum delay. Thanks to the Navy’s foresight the sealift capability afforded allied naval forces the ability to implement and sustain the sanctions immediately after they were imposed. By severing Saddam Hussein’s economic lifeline and cutting off Iraqi troops from the equipment and supplies they needed, the U.S. ships’ proximity to the theater of operations allowed Marines to begin offloading their supplies in Saudi Arabia less than two weeks after the invasion of Kuwait. **AH**

Vlahos is assigned to Defense Media Activity
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Lt.jg. Vincent “Doc” Lopez

Story by Air Force 2nd Lieutenant Mark Lazane
Photos by Air Force Master Sergeant Demetrius Lester

Provincial reconstruction teams (PRTs) were created by the United States and coalition forces in 2003. Since then, these teams have made significant progress toward stabilization efforts in Afghanistan, focusing on developing health care, furthering the country’s infrastructure, promoting an agricultural economy and ensuring local government processes function.

The mission of PRT Paktika entails assisting the stabilization and security of Paktika province, a large province on Afghanistan’s eastern border near the Pakistan tribal areas. Lt.jg. Vincent “Doc” Lopez currently serves with PRT Paktika as the team’s lead medical officer, and liaison to residents of Paktika province.

“The mission is difficult at times and there are definitely obstacles to overcome” said Lopez, a physician assistant from Phoenix. “But with help from the dedicated Afghan people, little by little, we can provide them with stability and improve their quality of life.”

Lopez added that while his daily tasking includes a variety of administrative and other crucial jobs, direct interaction with the people of PRT Paktika takes the lion’s share of his mission.

“I spend a lot of my time meeting and mentoring the Afghanistan public health leadership team,” he said. “I have meetings with them about once a week on average. These meetings usually consist of discussions about provincial public health care needs. We also discuss issues regarding malnutrition, clean water, medical training, clinic construction and midwife programs. I visit the provincial clinics and meet the local medical staff as part of our PRT mission. One of the main purposes is to serve as a liaison to the director of public health as he is unable to visit some of these clinics due to the imminent danger.”

Lopez and the PRT Paktika medical team also operate a daily sick call and remain prepared as first-responders to insurgent attacks or improvised explosive devices (IEDs) that might happen any day.

Lopez could have stayed a civilian physician’s assistant but felt compelled – again – to serve in the Navy. Initially joining in 1991, Lopez spent five years as an active-duty hospital corpsman, earning Field Medical Service School (FMSS) qualification at Camp LeJeune, N.C. He subsequently accepted an honorable discharge, but pursued further medical training, eventually becoming a physician’s assistant through a program at Stanford University, Stanford, Calif.

Lopez returned to an active duty status in 2008, and sought out the PRT Paktika Global War on Terrorism support assignment.



“I wanted to be a Navy officer,” said Lopez. “I wanted to come to Afghanistan. I knew I’d deploy. That’s why I signed up – I knew there were people I’d be able to help and I wanted to help them.”

In Paktika province, medical facilities and equipment are scarce and Afghan citizens don’t have guaranteed medical care. But with more than three years of experience with Level-I trauma care, and having worked at several clinics prior to his current assignment, Lopez’ experience and expertise in difficult situations reflects directly in his ability to work within and guide a team.

“Measuring success can be difficult here,” he said. “I measure my success directly from comments from my troops and my medical providers around the province. If they feel more capable of performing their job, then I know I’m doing my mine correctly.” **AH**

Lazane and Lester are assigned to Paktika Provincial
Reconstruction Team, Afghanistan.



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