

**Chief of Naval Operations
Adm. Jonathan Greenert delivers remarks at the
Military Child of the Year Award
April 5, 2012**

Admiral Greenert: Thanks very much. Thank you to Operation Home Front.

Marty this morning, really? We know at your age it's tough. We know. This is a family event.

Speaking of families, Marty, the Chairman gave away a lot about who I will introduce- Nate the Great. But the fact of the matter is this apple didn't fall far from the tree.

I had the honor of meeting his mother Lorraine. His father is deployed and doing, what else, he's in charge of the engineering department on the great ship USS Elrod. And we talked tonight about growing up; actually I spent a lot of time with his brother Robert who is a senior and soon to go to Norwich University in Vermont, the Corps of Cadets, and will join to be the fifth of the Blue Star Members of the Richards family. More on that in just a minute.

We talked about coyotes, chickens, goats, rattlesnakes, golf, we talked about Pit Bulls and German Shepherds. Pit Bulls are actually nice dogs. I saw this dog dressed up. His name, as we speak, is taking a picture like he's done all night with his camera. He's been everywhere, an amazing family.

So a family of eight- in our presence tonight we have his mother Lorraine, Robert who I spoke to just a little bit ago, his sister Isabelle. Again, right now a Four Star Blue Star family. But deployed is his father James who has become the Top Snipe, those that are in charge of the engineering department, deployed in Southern Command doing drug operations.

But wait. There's Charles' brother who's a combat engineer with the Engineering Support Battalion defeating improvised explosive devices, and he's getting ready to deploy. He's at Camp Pendleton.

John is a logistics specialist on the good ship Enterprise, 51 years old, just passed through the Suez Canal on her way to the Gulf on a seven month deployment. And typical for the family, this is John who is an E3 doing an E4's job out at sea.

His brother Max is a gunner's mate on the Russell who is on her way to the Western Pacific, somewhere around North Korea probably I'm told, who is deployed.

Again, a family of service. This is where Nate gets, I think, a lot of his DNA, how he's wired.

As they say, Nate has seen a lot, which is an understatement. He calls himself a professional military brat. That's probably appropriate. Father and three brothers deployed at the same time. And as they say, as his mother was taking care packages over to the post office, there were four

care packages, they said oh, this is for one person. She said no, actually, one of each. This is how we're giving it out.

Nate has learned patriotism here at this young age, we spoke about that just a little bit ago, and he wanted to share his wisdom. Therefore, his blog, his website -- "Nate the Great, Military Brat" -- is available for you as we speak.

He is the head of the school anti-bully committee because as he said, hey, this is one of the most important things that I do, and when you see Nate you'll understand that. They all volunteer, the siblings, Nate as well, volunteer at the USO, over 200 hours last year, collecting toys for children, stuffing stockings, packing things up for our troops in Afghanistan, 400 valentine cards off to wounded warriors.

But wait, there's more.

What does he do in his spare time? I said gee, which of the sports do you like? He said, I don't know, I like football, soccer, baseball. And now it's baseball season so we're into that.

This is an extraordinary young man. I think you'll see that. I introduced myself to him tonight and I brought a simple valet, something you put on your dresser, you can put your coins or your cuff links or whatever and I said Nate, hello, I'm the Chief of Naval Operations. He looked up at me and smiled nicely and politely, said nice to meet you, sir. I said Nate, I've got a little valet here for you. He said okay, so he immediately took his coins out -- he had several -- and he threw it in there and I said well, this looks good. He said, hey Admiral, do you know the Sailor's Creed? I'm like a deer in the headlights, right? I said well, Nate, I have to confess I couldn't recite it. He said well, you can have my coin and on the inside it has the Sailors Creed on it.

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