

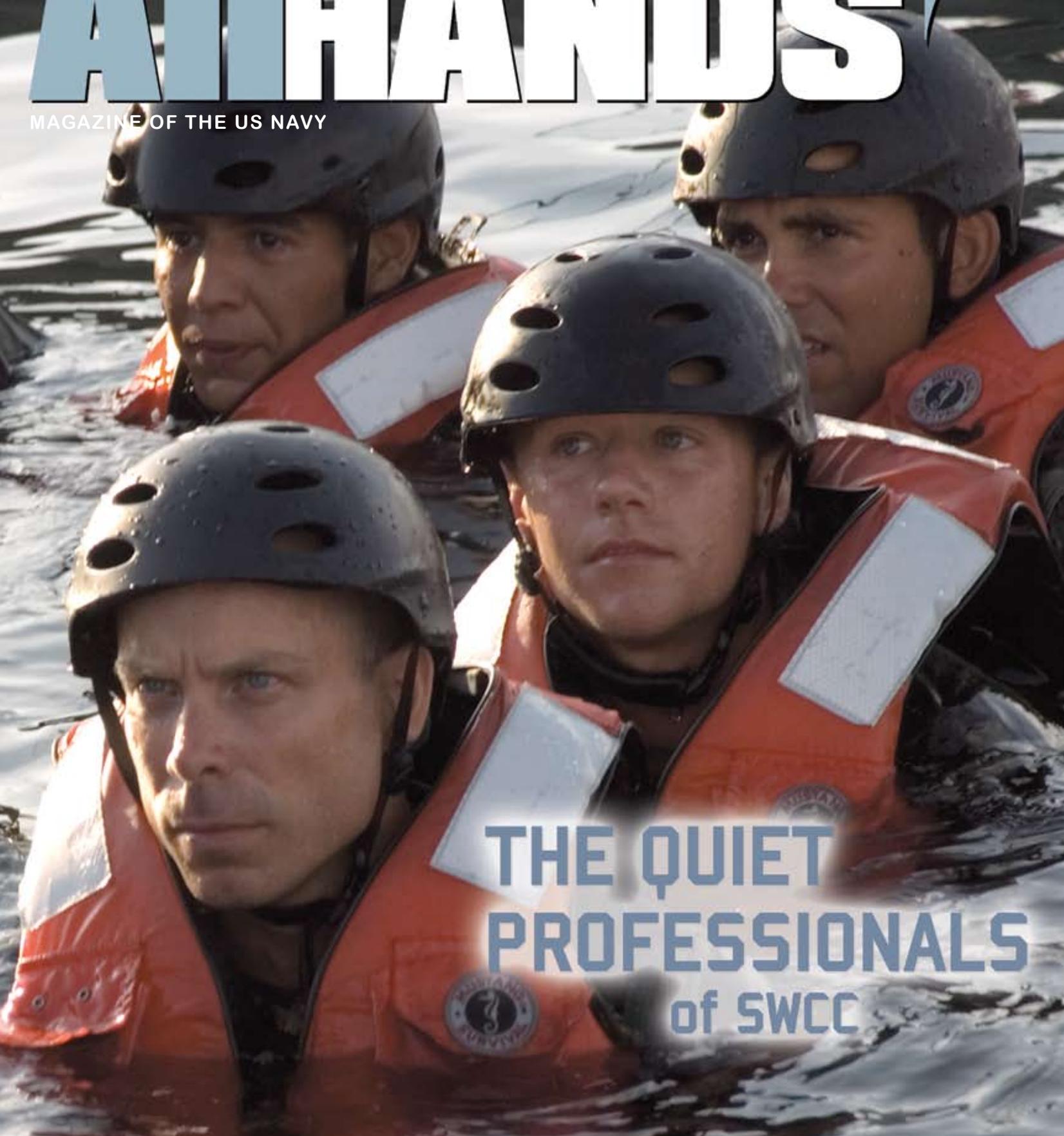
Jordanian Explosive Techs Learn From the Best



FEBRUARY 2007

# ALL HANDS

MAGAZINE OF THE US NAVY



THE QUIET  
PROFESSIONALS  
of SWCC



**[On the Front Cover]**  
SWCC students endure vigorous hours of training to prepare them for intense missions with boat teams.

Photo by MC2(AW/SW) Tiffini M. Jones

**[Next Month]**  
Turn to All Hands to learn how U.S. Sailors are training Iraqi Sailors on visit, board, search and seizure operations.

## [Departments]

- Around the Fleet — 6
- It's Tax Time — 36
- Focus on Service — 38
- History — 40

[Number 1078]



# February

## 14 The Quiet Professionals of SWCC

Since the war on terrorism began, there is no such thing as a safe zone, especially in the endless miles of ocean. At Naval Amphibious Base (NAB), Coronado, Calif., students of SWCC Special Warfare Combatantcraft Crewman (SWCC) school are challenged physically and mentally. In such a small community, SWCC team members rely on each other to get the job done.

Photo by MC2(AW/SW) Tiffini M. Jones



## 22 EOD's Infinite Response

Exercise *Infinite Response* held in Aqaba, Jordan, emphasized the proper and safe procedures of locating, recognizing and neutralizing outside threats like improvised explosive devices (IEDs), mines and underwater unexploded ordnance (UXO). Safety is what the U.S. EOD technicians taught their Jordanian counterparts through talented interpreters.

Photo by MC1(AW) Brien Aho



## 28 Playing for Pride

According to LT Sam Caldwell, "It's a baller's dream." As his all-star Navy basketball team takes the floor, Caldwell knows how important an opportunity like this can be to a Sailor. For some, this may be the last chance to play competitively at this level.

Photo by MC1(SCW) Jess M. Johnson



Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Adm. Mike Mullen, far-left, accompanied by other senior military leaders, pay their respects at the conclusion of memorial services for the nation's 38th President Gerald R. Ford. Ford died at his home in Rancho Mirage, California, Dec. 26 at the age of 93.

DOD photo by William D. Moss



# Speaking with Sailors

Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy  
MCPON (SW/FMF) Joe R. Campa

## Moving Forward with Mission, Vision and Guiding Principles

Since I took office in July, you've heard of or seen the Mission, Vision and Guiding Principles (MV-GP). If you're not aware of it, find a senior leader and ask them about it. Notice I said "senior leader." By that, I could very well be referring to a Petty Officer 2nd Class or Petty Officer 1st Class. It's essential that you recognize that the MV-GP was conceived not just to refresh the current Chief's Mess, but to prepare petty officers to join that mess.

If wearing anchors is a goal of yours, you are already a walking example of the MV-GP. You are ethical and you enforce standards. Your character is a benchmark for your peers. You are a leader who communicates up and down the chain of command and you are the technical expert in your field. If you are a Chief you are visible and relevant. You are vocal and above all else you are a deck plate leader.

We've discussed it. Now is the time to set the wheels in motion. In the next several months you are going to see MV-GP lessons inserted into the training plans of every leadership school the Navy offers. I'm going to task schools like the Senior Enlisted Academy with examining how it relates to our core values, our CPO Creed and our Sailor's Creed.

When I brief the Chief's Selection Board this spring, I'm going to stress that the first class petty officers they select to wear khakis should be living examples of the

Mission/Vision. Each board member will be aware of the emphasis I've placed on the MV-GP and my strong belief that it will help shape the current and future Chief's Mess.

Sailor of the Year instructions will place heavy emphasis on the Mission/Vision. If you are selected, it means your leadership feels you are a walking example of the MV-GP.

Guidance will be released this summer that details the operations of Chief's Messes afloat and ashore. No longer will there be realistic or philosophical differences between the two. A Chief's Mess is a Mess, at sea or not.

You will be reading and hearing a lot about Navy heritage and the emphasis I place on it in the development of leaders. Your Chiefs are the caretakers of our service's traditions and legacies. Through them, you will be as well.

We've been discussing the importance of enforcing standards. That topic will be inserted into CPO indoctrination, all Navy schools and leadership courses. Do not misinterpret that issue to believe it only refers to the way you wear your uniform. Standards apply to performance and conduct as much as appearance.

Finally, you may be aware of my web site: Directline, which can be found on [www.navy.mil](http://www.navy.mil). If not, don't worry because it's being revamped. This summer we will unveil a more relevant version that allows feedback from the fleet, the most current information and viable resources for the development of deck plate leaders.

The MV-GP is no longer an idea. It's a plan of action. If becoming a Navy leader is your goal, we've provided you the roadmap. It's up to you now.



### All HANDS

Number 1078 • February 2007  
[www.navy.mil](http://www.navy.mil)

Secretary of the Navy  
**The Honorable Donald C. Winter**  
Chief of Naval Operations  
**ADM Mike Mullen**  
Chief of Information  
**RDML Gregory J. Smith**  
Commander, Naval Media Center  
**CAPT Gordon J. Hume**  
Chief of Production  
**Dennis Casaday**  
Deputy Chief of Production  
**CDR Donald Savage**  
Chief of Publishing  
**LCDR W. Fred Kuebler**

#### EDITORIAL

Editor  
**Marie G. Johnston**  
Managing Editor  
**MCCS(AW/SW) Joseph E. Dorey**  
Assistant Editor  
**LT Jennifer Cragg**  
Photo Editors  
**MC1(AW) Shane T. McCoy**  
**MC1(AW) Brien Aho**  
Editorial Staff  
**MC1(SCW) Jess M. Johnson**  
**MC2 Rebekah Blowers**  
**MC2 Washington Caicedo**  
**MC2(AW/SW) Jason R. McCamrack**

#### EDITORIAL & WEB DESIGN

Slice  
Design + Project Management  
**Richard Rabil**  
**Juana Merlo**  
**Natalie Taylor**  
Digital Prepress Specialist  
**Lisa J. Boettner**

#### PRINTING

**Universal Printing Company**  
GPO Printing Specialist  
**John Kennedy**

All HANDS  
Recipient of the Thomas Jefferson  
Award for Excellence in 2005:



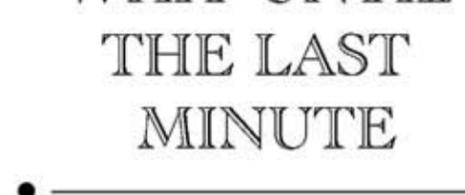
*Speaking with Sailors* is a regular column initiated by the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy as a way of reaching out to the men and women of the fleet, whether they are stationed just down the road or halfway around the world.

All Hands (USPS 372-970; ISSN 0002-5577) Number 1078 is published monthly by the Naval Media Center, Production Department, 2713 Mitscher Rd., S.W., Anacostia Annex, D.C. 20373-5819. Periodicals postage paid at Washington, D.C., and at additional mailing offices. Subscriptions: For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402 or call 202/512-1800. Subscription prices \$45 (domestic)/\$54 (foreign); \$7.50 (single copy domestic)/\$9 (single copy foreign). Postmaster: Send address changes to All Hands, Naval Media Center, Production Department 2713 Mitscher Rd., S.W., Anacostia Annex, D.C. 20373-5819. Editorial Offices: Send submissions and correspondence to Naval Media Center Production Department, ATTN: Editor, 2713 Mitscher Rd., S.W., Anacostia Annex, D.C. 20373-5819. Tel: DSN 288-4171 or 202/433-4171 Fax: DSN 288-4747 or 202/433-4747 E-Mail: [allhandsmagazine@navy.mil](mailto:allhandsmagazine@navy.mil) Message: NAVMEDIACEN WASHINGTON DC //32// Authorization: The Secretary of the Navy has determined this publication is necessary in the transaction of business required by law of the Department of the Navy. Funds for printing this publication have been approved by the Navy Publications and Printing Committee.

## INCOME TAX TIME IS UPON US



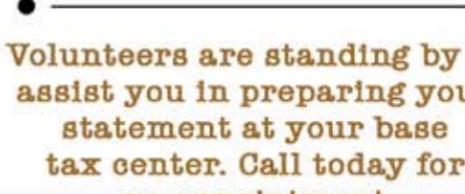
DON'T  
WAIT UNTIL  
THE LAST  
MINUTE



DEAD LINE  
APRIL 16



Volunteers are standing by to assist you in preparing your statement at your base tax center. Call today for an appointment.



## Military Housing Rates Boosted 3.5 Percent Overall

**S**ervice members received an average 3.5 percent boost in their basic allowance for housing compensation benefit in 2007, DOD officials said recently.

The planned BAH increase that started Jan. 1 works out to about \$300 million more than what was paid in 2006, officials said.

Military housing allowances are computed according to three key criteria: median current market rent; average utilities, to include electricity, heat and water/sewer costs; and average renter's insurance.

BAH rates also are based on dwelling type and number of bedrooms in a given area and then calculated for each pay grade, both with and without family members.

For service members with family members, average increases in the BAH are approximately \$44 per month. For example, a typical E-4 will

receive about \$34 more in BAH than in 2006, while an E-8 will receive about \$42 more.

The BAH rate system has built-in protections to ensure that an individual service member in a given location won't see his or her BAH rate decrease. This provision assures that members who have made long-term lease or contract commitments are not penalized if the area's housing costs decrease.

Some areas' housing costs have remained relatively stable, while others continue to rise. Most of the costliest housing in the United States with the highest BAH rates are clustered on or near the East and West coasts, and the state of Hawaii.

For more information about military pay and benefits, visit [www.dod.mil/militarypay/](http://www.dod.mil/militarypay/).

*Story by Gerry J. Gilmore, American Forces Press Service.*

### Navy League, NETC offer scholarship to family members of Alaska Sailors

**T**he Navy League and Naval Education and Training Command (NETC) recently announced the requirements for applications for the Alaska Sea Services Scholarship.

The scholarships will be awarded to the children or spouses of legal Alaska residents who are currently serving in the U.S. Navy, Marines or Coast Guard (either active duty or Reserve), retired from those services, or were serving at time of death or missing-in-action status. Those who meet the residency requirement and apply will be ranked according to academic proficiency, character, leadership ability, community involvement and financial need. Up to four \$1,000 scholarships are awarded annually.

For complete information and an application to apply for the Alaska Sea Services

Scholarship, visit [www.navyleague.org/scholarship/](http://www.navyleague.org/scholarship/) or read NAVADMIN 334/06.

Please note that all completed applications for other available Navy League Scholarships are due in Navy League offices by 5:00 p.m., March 1, 2007.

For related news, visit the Naval Education and Training Command Navy NewsStand page at [www.news.navy.mil/local/cnet/](http://www.news.navy.mil/local/cnet/).

*Story by Terry L. Welch, public affairs office, Naval Education and Training Command, Pensacola, Fla.*

### New Uniforms Expected Summer 2008

**T**ask Force Uniform recently announced that the fleet can expect to see two new uniforms appearing in Navy Exchanges by late summer of 2008.

"We have coordinated with suppliers and manufacturers of the uniforms and we're on track

for mid 2008," said Command Master Chief Robert Carroll, Task Force Uniform director.

One of the two uniforms being rolled out in 2008 is a single Navy working uniform for wear by all Sailors E-1 to O-10, and a year-round service uniform for all Sailors E-6 and below.

The uniforms will be sent to Navy Exchanges and Uniform Centers over a 24-month period. Fleet outfitting will take place in eight increments starting with fleet concentration areas. Recruit Training Command Great Lakes, Ill., will receive the new uniforms in the beginning of FY09.

Uniforms should be available to all regions within 24 months of the initial roll out, according to NAVADMIN 351/06.

The all ranks uniform is a BDU-style working uniform designed to replace seven different styles of current working uniforms. It is made of a near maintenance-free permanent press 50/50 nylon and cotton blend. Worn with a blue cotton t-shirt, it will include an eight-point cover, a black web belt with closed buckle, and smooth black leather boots. Black suede no-shine boots are available for optional wear when assigned to non-shipboard commands.

A single, year-round service uniform for Sailors E-6 and below is comprised of a short-sleeve khaki shirt for males and an over-blouse for females. Both are made from a wash and wear 75/25 polyester and wool blend with permanent military creases. Black trousers will be worn by males, and beltless black slacks and optional beltless skirt are to be worn by females. Both will wear a black unisex garrison cap. Silver anodized-metal rank insignia will be worn on shirt/blouse collars and cap.

Until the new uniforms are available for wear, all existing uniform regulations will apply.

During the expected two-year transition period, Sailors will be required to maintain a complete inventory of sea bag items with each reflecting a professional appearance.

For related news, visit the Chief of Naval Personnel Navy NewsStand page at [www.news.navy.mil/local/cnp/](http://www.news.navy.mil/local/cnp/).

*Story courtesy of the public affairs office, Chief of Naval Personnel, Washington, D.C.*

### CTF 158 Holds First Boarding Officer Training Conference

**C**ommander Task Force (CTF) 158 held a Boarding Officer Training Conference Jan. 5 aboard Ocean 6, the Navy's afloat forward operating base currently stationed in the North Persian Gulf in support of maritime security operations (MSO).

The conference was composed of CTF 158 boarding team members from USS Howard (DDG 83), USS Chinook (PC 9), USS Whirlwind (PC 11), USCGC Maui (WPB 1307), USCGC Monomoy (WPH 1326) and HMAS Warramunga (F 152). The goal of the conference was to ensure continued success of boardings to help set the conditions for security and stability in the region.

"We want every vessel we board to understand that the main reason we're here in the North Persian Gulf is to protect Iraq's oil terminals," said Commander Task Group (CTG) 158.1, Capt. Chris Noble.

The primary mission of CTG 158.1 is to deliver 24-hour protection to Iraq's oil terminals, Khawr Al Amaya Oil Terminal (KAAOT) and Al Basrah Oil Terminal (ABOT).

"If those assets are protected,



Naval Academy Midshipman 4th Class (freshman) Roarke Baldwin, assigned to 6th Company, recently received a Navy Achievement Medal for his heroic actions during a shooting at a mall in Annapolis, Md., last November.

Baldwin was inside a bookstore when he heard gunshots in the mall. He rushed out of the store while the shooters were still in

the area and found a Secret Service agent on the floor of the food court with a gunshot wound to the leg. Baldwin stayed with the fallen agent and applied pressure to the wound until medics arrived. After the victim was airlifted to the Shock Trauma Center, Baltimore, Baldwin remained at the mall to assist the agent's family while they spoke to investigators.

"I wasn't thinking about being a hero, I just did what I knew to do," said Baldwin.

it's the Iraqi people who will ultimately benefit," Noble said.

Every week the boarding teams, comprised of both Sailors and Coast Guardsmen, traverse the North Persian Gulf waters, gauging the pulse of what's going on around the exclusion zones surrounding the oil terminals. As part of the MSO, the boarding teams meet and establish rapport with fishermen while simultaneously ensuring the fishermen understand the coalition's presence in the North Persian Gulf is intended to help Iraq become a self-sufficient nation. MSO protect Iraq's sea-based infrastructure, which provides the Iraqi people the opportunity for self-determination.

The patrols help to detect, deter and intercept any vessels undertaking illegal activities. The result is a more secure and stable environment in the North Persian Gulf, which encourages maritime trade and contributes to Iraq's development.

Before beginning patrols, the boarding teams role play different scenarios they may encounter and even learn Arabic phrases, which have proven useful in establishing relationships. The teams also said preparations of this type are as important to mission accomplishment as ensuring their boats are equipped with maps and navigational aids.

Ensign Lisa T. Green, who participates in many of the CTG 158.1 boardings, said small courtesies extended to the local fishermen help establish rapport. Boarding teams often give small gifts to the fishermen, such as warm gloves and water bottles, and they are always very respectful of the hard-working fishermen.

"You'll notice that the boarding team won't just board a dhow," Green said. "They will request permission to board, shake hands with the dhow master and even remove their sunglasses when speaking."

Green said good rapport with

*continued on page 9*

## Ricky's Tour

By MC1 Mike Jones





## ▲ The Navy Munitions Command, detachment

Sewells Point, Naval Station Norfolk, performs a 21-gun salute in honor of former 38th President and Navy veteran Gerald R. Ford, who passed away Dec. 26, 2006, at his home in California.

Photo by MCSN Kiona Mckissack

## ◀ HN Joseph Malandro files medical records

at the Michaud Medical/Dental Facility in support of operations of the Combined Joint Task Force - Horn of Africa. Malandro is an individual Augmentee from the National Naval Medical Center, Bethesda, Md.

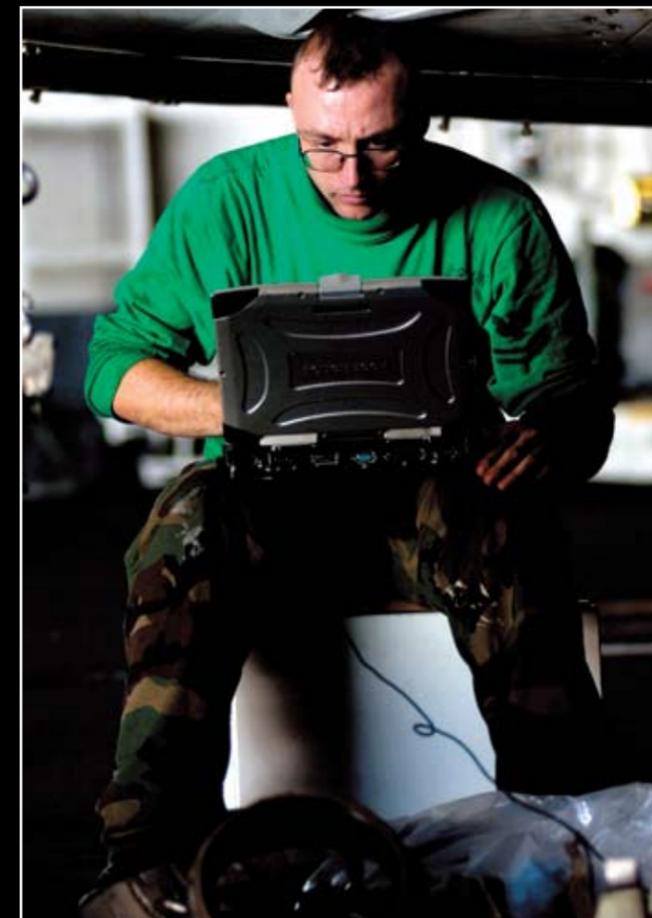
Photo by MCC Eric A. Clement



## ▼ AD2 Thomas Worman reviews maintenance

procedures for an F/A-18E *Hornet* assigned to Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 115 in the hangar bay of USS *Ronald Reagan* (CVN 76).

Photo by MC3 Christopher Blachly



*continued from page 7*

the mariners allows boarding teams to quickly assess the legitimacy of vessels, thereby ensuring the CTG 158.1 mission is not impeded.

**Story by Lt. Karen E. Eifert, Commander Task Force 158 Public Affairs.**

## Lincoln Recognizes Diversity

USS *Abraham Lincoln* (CVN 72) recently sponsored diversity training at Naval Base Kitsap, Wash., emphasizing how the virtual melting pot of a crew of more than 3,000 Sailors can work together to accomplish the ship's mission.

"Diversity is not about representation, it's about utilization," said Dr. Samuel Betances, a speaker at the event. "Our mission is to add value to the great things that you already do by making sure that everyone has a fair opportunity to be developed to their fullest potential."

Betances, who holds a doctorate degree from Harvard University added, "It takes 20 years to create a master chief or a captain, so we have to start training now so that those future leaders among us will have the tools they need to lead in an increasingly diverse Navy."

One of *Lincoln's* Sailors, Information Systems Technician Seaman Apprentice Norma Shorthair, is from a Navajo reservation in Shonto, Ariz. Shorthair said she realizes her background sets her apart from many of her shipmates, yet she embraces her family's traditions.

"Be proud of who you are; your race, your culture," said Shorthair. "Without it I'd be lost."

"Diversity is an issue that is increasingly critical to the Navy, our organization, and our ship," said CAPT C.A. McCawley, *Lincoln's* commanding officer. "To be successful we must

increase our awareness and our understanding of this important issue."

For related news, visit the USS *Abraham Lincoln* (CVN 72) Navy NewsStand page at [www.news.navy.mil/local/cvn72/](http://www.news.navy.mil/local/cvn72/).

**Story by MCSN Brandon Wilson and MCSN James Evans, public affairs office, USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72).**

## Naval Special Warfare Establishes New Command

Naval Special Warfare (NSW) Advanced Training Command was recently established in Imperial Beach, Calif.

This new command brings individual advanced training for U.S. Navy SEALs (Sea, Air, Land) under the responsibility of one command for the first time in the history of NSW.

Prior to the establishment ceremony, Advanced Training was a department at the Naval Special Warfare Center at Naval Amphibious Base, Coronado, Calif.

The new command, located on 540 acres of land near San Diego, is an ideal location to provide NSW forces with standardized, accredited and approved advanced training and curriculum. The command supports more than 30 advanced training courses, seven detachments and 15 training sites across the country, including detachments in Alaska and Hawaii.

"You cannot be the world's best without training to the highest standard of training," said Advanced Training's outgoing Officer in Charge, CDR Ryan Zinke. "We recognize that failure to provide anything less may result in mission failure and loss of life. Rest assured, NSW advanced training is the best in the world and is instrumental to our ability to intercept and engage our enemy before they

*continued on page 11*

To be considered for the "Around the Fleet" section, forward your **high resolution (5" x 7" at 300 dpi) images** with full credit and outline information, including **full name, rank and duty station** to: [navyvisualnews@navy.mil](mailto:navyvisualnews@navy.mil)

Directions on how to properly submit photos can be found at [www.navy.mil/photo\\_submit.html](http://www.navy.mil/photo_submit.html)

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

Click on the **Navy's** home page, [www.navy.mil](http://www.navy.mil), for fresh images of your shipmates in action.



▲ **Students in the chemical, biological and radiological** phase of training at the Naval Explosive Ordnance Disposal School don full protective gear and are taught to maneuver around hazardous material without spreading contamination. Having trained for more than a year, the newest EOD members are ready to become a part of EOD's tradition of saving lives and protecting property.

Photo by MC2 Jayme Pastoric

◀ **A member of the Whidbey Island-class dock landing** ship USS Ashland (LSD 48) Visit, Board, Search and Seizure (VBSS) team boards the ship after a night on patrol.

Photo by MC1 Sarah Langdon



▼ **Sailors assigned to Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron** (HSC) 25 watch as two aviation ordnancemen connect transport cables to a hovering MH-60 *Seahawk* on the flight deck of USS *Kitty Hawk* (CV 63) during a weapons off-load from USNS *Flint* (T-AE 32).

Photo by MCSN Thomas J. Holt



◀ **AA Victoria Sheppard, narrator and bow hook** for the USS Arizona Memorial Detachment white boat crew, explains the history of the U.S. Navy at Pearl Harbor for members of the Professional Bull Riders (PBR) and their friends and family during a tour. The PBR was on the island of Oahu for the Hawaii All Star Challenge tournament and visited Naval Station Pearl Harbor to meet Sailors and learn more about the history of the Navy and Pearl Harbor.

Photo by MC1 James E. Foehl

*continued from page 9*

can strike again.”

The commanding officer of the newly established command, CDR Wesley Spence, took charge of his new command of more than 200 personnel and spoke of the benefit of making advanced training for Navy SEALs available in one location.

“The establishment of the Advanced Training Command, combined with existing SEAL Qualification Training, and the East and West coast training detachments, exemplifies just how far the NSW community has progressed in its training methods and standards,” said Spence.

Naval Special Warfare Center continues to recruit young men who are not afraid to test their limits. With a proud lineage and memorable history, SEALs continue to lead the way in special operations.

Those interested in joining this elite team should contact the Navy SEALs recruiting line at 1-888-USN-SEAL, or visit the SEAL web site at [www.seal.navy.mil](http://www.seal.navy.mil).

*Story courtesy of the public affairs office, Naval Special Warfare Center, Imperial Beach, Calif.*

## Thrift Savings Plan Provides Important Benefits to Service Members

**B**ecause it is an attractive investment option with unique benefits for military members, more service members need to take advantage of the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP).

According to Army Maj. John Johnson, director of the Armed Forces Tax Council, TSP, a retirement savings plan for service members and civilian federal employees, draws participation from about half of the military.

“It’s important that everyone obviously be saving for their retirement in the first place...in tax-deferred or tax-exempt retire-

ment accounts,” Johnson noted.

TSP is a tax-deferred fund, which means the money contributed to the account is deducted right away from the person’s taxable income, and the money in the fund isn’t taxed until it is withdrawn at retirement. This represents a significant savings over the years, Johnson explained.

“If you weren’t in the TSP or another tax-deferred account, every year the income in that fund (would) get taxed,” he said. “If you look over your whole 20-year career, generally speaking, you’re going to pick up a couple hundred thousand dollars by contributing to a tax-deferred account as opposed to a taxed account.”

As of this year, military members are unlimited in the amount they can contribute to TSP. When the program was first made available to service members in 2000, they could only contribute up to 5 percent of their income. Now the only limit is the Internal Revenue Service’s \$15,000 per-year limit on contributions to tax-deferred accounts, he said. He noted that most military members won’t come close to that limit if they contribute 5 or 10 percent of their income to TSP.

Deployed troops have different limits in TSP, Johnson said. Because their income is tax-exempt and the IRS has a separate limit for that category, they can contribute up to \$44,000 per year, he said.

As another benefit to service members, the Army is testing a program where the service matches soldiers’ contributions to TSP, Johnson said. This program only applies to new enlistees who fill critical specialties. The Army will match 5 percent of the pay the Soldier contributes to TSP; the first 3 percent will be matched dollar for dollar, and the next 2 percent matched 50 cents on the dollar, he said.

After leaving the military, service members cannot continue contributing to TSP unless they take a federal job, Johnson said.

*continued on page 13*

# Around the Fleet

► **The U.S. Naval Midshipmen football team celebrates after winning the 2006 Army-Navy game at Lincoln Financial Field in Philadelphia.** United States Naval Academy Midshipmen took on the West Point Black Knights in the 107th meeting between the two service schools.

Photo by MC1 Brien Aho



▼ **EOD2 Matthew Ludwig, assigned to Naval Special Clearance Team (NSCT) 1,** controls a Foster-Miller Talon MK II mine disposal robot while searching for a simulated improvised explosive device (IED). NSCT 1 currently uses the MK II in their ordnance disposal operations worldwide.

Photo by MC3 Kenneth G. Takada



▼ **MASA Jon Moore of Mobile Security Squadron 3, scans the ocean during his security watch aboard USNS Supply (T-AOE 6).** Supply is underway in the 5th Fleet area of operation in support of maritime security operations.

Photo by MC2 Kitt Amaritnant



▲ **CWO2 Joe Maynard lifts an 80-pound crown buoy on to the back of a truck as part of Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit (MDSU) 1's first Strongman Contest.** MDSU 1 arranged the contest as part of their semi-annual health fair. The event included service members from Pearl Harbor dive commands as well as from local Army commands.

Photo by MC2 Justin P. Nesbitt

continued from page 13

They can leave their money in TSP, though, and continue to draw returns on it. The money in TSP can also be rolled over to another IRA account, he said.

Service members can sign up for TSP online at [www.tsp.gov](http://www.tsp.gov), Johnson said. This Web site offers all the tools service members need to get started in the program and manage their accounts.

**Story by Army Sgt. Sara Wood, American Forces Press Service, Alexandria, Va.**

## Navy Announces 2007 "Calendar for America"

The Navy recently announced the 2007 "Calendar for America," the official schedule of Navy Weeks in cities across America in the coming year.

"A key tactic in this effort is the execution of dozens of Navy Weeks across America each year, which collectively make up the 'Calendar for America,' said CDR John Wallach, Director of the Navy Office of Community Outreach. "On average, a Navy Week garners more than a quarter million live impressions and more than 4.4 million impressions via regional media outlets."

Navy outreach assets scheduled for the various Navy Weeks include the Blue Angels, Leap Frogs, ship visits where possible, Navy Bands, namesake ship crews, flag officer speakers, SEAL (Sea, Air and Land) and EOD (Explosive Ordnance Disposal) displays, DOD's "America Supports You" grassroots organizations and premiere recruiting assets such as the F/A-18 flight simulator, Navy NASCAR show car and new "Accelerate Your Life" experience.

The 2007 Calendar for America includes:

- Tampa, Fla., *Gasparilla Pirate Festival*, Jan. 20 – 27
- Galveston, Texas, *Galveston Mardi Gras*, Feb. 14 – 20

- Atlanta, *Golden Corral 500*, March 12 – 18
- Phoenix/Tucson, *MLB spring training*, March 15 – 28
- Louisville, Ky., *Thunder Over Louisville*, Apr. 16 – 22
- Omaha, Neb., *Offutt AFB Air Show*, Apr. 30 – May 6
- Denver, *Cinco de Mayo Festival*, Apr. 30 – May 6
- Philadelphia, *Stotesbury Regatta*, May 13 – 19
- Charlotte, N.C., *NASCAR Speed Street*, May 16 – 26
- Little Rock, Ark., *Riverfest*, May 21 – 27
- Chicagoland, *Rockford, Ill. Air Show*, May 30 – June 10
- Oklahoma City, *Star Spangled Air Show*, June 4 – 10
- Chattanooga, Tenn., *Riverbend Festival*, June 9 – 17
- New England, *New England Navy Week*, June 20 – July 4
- Detroit, *Gold Cup Hydroplane Races*, June 27 – July 15
- Pittsburgh, *Three Rivers Regatta*, July 1 – 7
- Indianapolis, *Indianapolis Air Show*, Aug. 20 – 26
- Cincinnati, *Riverfest*, Aug. 27 – Sept. 3
- St. Louis, *St. Louis Air Show*, Aug. 29 – Sept. 7
- Salt Lake City, *Utah State Fair*, Sept. 6 – 16
- Memphis, Tenn., *Mid-South Air Show*, Sept. 17 – 23
- Dallas, *Texas State Fair*, Oct. 1 – 7
- Twin Cities, Minn., *Twin Cities Marathon*, Oct. 7 – 14
- Raleigh, N.C., *North Carolina State Fair*, Oct. 14 – 21
- San Antonio, *Celebrate U.S. Military Week*, Nov. 4 – 10

For more information on the Calendar for America or to find out how to participate, contact the Navy Office of Community Outreach at 901-874-5800 (DSN 882-5800) or visit [www.navy.mil](http://www.navy.mil). Detailed information can also be found in NAVADMIN 375/06.

**Story courtesy of the Navy Office of Community Outreach, Millington, Tenn.**

# THE QUIET PROFESSIONALS of SWCC

Story and photos by  
MC2(AW/SW) Tiffini M. Jones

▲ Students must complete day and night underway evolutions to test their knowledge of advanced seamanship skills and to better prepare them for actual missions on the boat teams.

It was a steady 15 knots through the San Diego Bay; but upon clearing the channel, the boat began to pick up speed; 17 knots, 24 knots, 36 knots in a matter of seconds.

“Air contact, heading three-five-zero, position angle two!” shouted aft lookout Operations Specialist 2nd Class David Beem.

Lookouts were yelling surface and air contacts from every direction. The other two boats ahead crashed every wave at full throttle. With every crest came another heavy hit.

Once in the open water, it was all over. Some of the crew were leaning against the side of the boat and holding on with all of their strength.

Instructor, Quartermaster 1st Class (SWCC/SW) Jason Capelle looked at them with a grin and said, “Are you scared yet?”

“Hold on!” the coxswain shouted.

Since the war on terrorism began, there is no such thing as a safe zone, especially in the endless miles of vast ocean.

At Naval Amphibious Base (NAB), Coronado, Calif., students of class 54-2, Special Warfare Combatantcraft Crewman (SWCC) School are challenged physically, mentally and on navigational capabilities. In such a small community, SWCC team members rely on each other to get the job done.

The program is designed to test Sailors’ abilities to perform under pressure and have the skills to accomplish any mission, pushing their limits to the maximum.

“You have to be comfortable tying knots, doing a buddy tow and other vigorous exercises in and out of the water,” said Chief Quartermaster (SWCC/FPJ) Chris Moore, one of the instructors.

The program is broken down into three phases, two weeks of SWCC basic indoctrination, five weeks of basic crewman training (BCT) and 14 weeks of crewman qualification training (CQT).

During the indoctrination phase, candidates learn about the history of SWCC, the Navy’s Core Values, sports medicine, hygiene and nutrition. They also begin their physical training.



▲ With an average attrition rate of 45 percent, only 21 stand strong from the initial 45 SWCC candidates of BCT class 54-2.

**ON TIME!  
ON TARGET!  
NEVER QUIT!**

**- The SWCC motto**



▲ A big part of being a master of maritime special operations is taking charge and feeling comfortable in the water. Students must be ready to face fierce weather conditions and all types of mission situations in any body of water.



▲ SWCC students prepare for underway evolutions. One of their duties is to ensure proper gear is accounted for and all equipment is at its highest level of operational readiness.



▲ SWCC students finish “burn sprints” an endurance exercise involving running back and forth from the ocean to the sand dunes.

Candidates run an average of 30 miles a week, and are expected to run from an evolution, to chow and back to an evolution at a seven-minute mile pace.

From indoctrination to BCT, students begin classes in navigation, boat familiarization, hull inspection and first aid. Their physical conditioning improves along with water rescue tests. Each passing day brings harder challenges and more core strengthening.

“Initially, all students have fear in their eyes, because they are stepping into the unknown,” said Instructor, Enginemen 1st Class (SWCC/PJ) Billy Burt. “It’s our job as instructors to get them to be confident through training. The purpose of this course is to evaluate, test, and pressurize

the students to see how they react in all types of situations.”

During BCT, students are taught to expect the unexpected.

On time! On target! Never quit! It’s the SWCC motto, and it’s the motivational tool instructors try to instill in the students.

On time – Sea, Air and Land (SEAL) teams and other special operating forces (SOF) rely on SWCC to be there at a specific time. It’s imperative to all missions, including being at school. On target – The accuracy with their weapons. Never quit – this mentality is carried for life.

“Their limitations aren’t that bad,” said Instructor, Gunner’s Mate 1st Class (SWCC) Robert Staples. “They need

to realize they can push themselves a lot farther.”

“Go until you can’t go anymore, and go one more,” added Moore.

Phase three, CQT epitomizes Moore’s statement. Mission planning, rigid-hulled inflatable boat (RHIB) operations, and engineering and damage control make CQT academically challenging. Students are tested on weapon systems, chart plotting, communications and seamanship.

“Intense training comes along with CQT, driving boats and shooting weapons,” said Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Anthony Dominguez, class leader of 54-2.

Damage Controlman 2nd Class Ricardo Torres, a member of Class 54-2, said it’s all about execution.

“I’ll actually apply all of the skills I’ve been taught on a daily basis to my job and my missions,” Torres said.

Of the special forces, SWCC has the skills and knowledge of maritime insertion and extraction of special operations.

“SWCC provides platforms that very few military forces can master,” said Hull Technician 1st Class Lawrence Obst, an instructor at the school. The boat teams work hand-in-hand with Navy SEALs who are equipped to support any and all operations in maritime and riverine environments.

“We’re not fighting for our jobs,” said Staples. “Not one other person does our job in the military, and SWCC is in high demand because of it.”

Vessel Board, Search and Seizure (VBSS), close-quarter battles and counter intelligence are conducted with surface assets or combat crafts to secure afloat missions using MK-V craft, RHIBs and the SOC-R riverine boat.

“All the training at the SWCC School is geared around what the boat guy does for a living because we take the biggest beating,” said Staples.

All boats have different equipment and different operating capabilities, but all boats have one mission – combat terrorism.

“Our MK-V craft is extremely fast,” said Moore. “The boat can be going full speed and come to a complete stop within the length of that boat. It’s called a crash back,” he said.

“When USS *Cole* (DDG 67) got hit, the SWCC boat guys were the ones protecting the waters from further attacks,” said Staples.

For Burt, being part of a boat team is intense. “Most people don’t understand what we do. It’s a big misconception and we have to educate people,” said Burt. “Once they understand how tough it is to operate in a maritime environment, at night with low visibility, they gain respect and appreciate SWCC.”

The instructors have camaraderie, and they are a real close team, said Torres. “In our training, we rely on each other in the same aspects.”

The mindset of the boat teams builds confidence and mission success for the quiet professionals SWCC is known for.

“It’s more than just being part of an elite brotherhood. Being in the water, pushing fast boats, jumping, and shooting – it’s all part of an awesome job,” said Obst.

With approximately 540 designated SWCC in the military, the demand for more of the elite combatant crewman has caused the Navy to make SWCC its own rating of Special Boat Operators (SB).

Five hours after leaving the bay, the teams had plotted every fix for the evolution. It was dark; the only thing they could see were the downtown lights that seemed miles away. Their clothes were soaked; their knees were sore and everything was covered in salt from the sea spray and the aft lookout was still wide-eyed in search for contacts.

“Surface Contact one-eight-zero position angle two!” Beem shouted to the coxswain.

Beem looked at the students with a smile and said, “Don’t you just love it?”

SWCC BCT class 54-2 had just completed their first low light/night operations evolution.

The class leader of 54-2 said it best. “If you want to be a part of something bigger and better, this is the place to be,” said Dominguez.

Seven weeks down and 14 more to go; but for them, it’s just the beginning.

*Jones is assigned to Fleet Public Affairs Center, San Diego.*



▲ SWCC students practice fast roping techniques to build upper body strength to get them in shape for what they will face downrange.



▲ Students are trained in a pool on how to recover gear while under strict supervision. Repairing boat discrepancies, saving equipment and saving lives are paramount to the boat teams.

The making of an

EOD techs train the Jordanian Navy  
on IED and MCM procedures  
Story and photos by MC1(AW) Brien Aho

# EOD TECH



**S**afety, safety, safety. Whether you are training or just driving home, it's what you hear everyday in the Navy. Most of us take it for granted.

Our awareness of being safe changes once we know our lives are at stake every time we go to work. For the Navy's Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit (EODMU) 6, Det. 4, safety is paramount - it means they can go home - after a long day's work with all their body parts intact.

Explaining the safety procedures to be followed when disarming unexploded ordnance (UXO) to young recruits attending the 51-week EOD school in Panama City, Fla., can be a daunting task. But for EODMU 6 technicians who traveled to Jordan to participate in exercise Infinite Response, they faced the additional challenge of teaching safe and proper procedures for the disposal of UXO's to students who don't understand the language you speak.

"Working with the Jordanians has been outstanding. They are eager to learn, and even though we found it difficult at times to communicate, we overcame the language barrier and dove right into hands-on training," said Explosive Ordnance Disposalman 3rd Class (DV/AB) Adam Bartch.

◀ **Training for the Jordanian EOD Techs begins in the classroom** where EOD3 Adam Bartch uses a white board to explain safety procedures before heading into the desert for practical training.



Safety is what the U.S. EOD technicians participating in the annual *Infinite Response* held in Aqaba, Jordan, tried getting across everyday during the two-week exercise.

“We tried to explain the importance of not getting complacent while handling explosives,” said LT Steve Cobos, EODMU 6, Det. 4 officer in charge. “We were able to do that with persistence and with the talented interpreters who stood right next to us while we taught.”

*Infinite Response* emphasized the proper and safe procedures of locating, recognizing and neutralizing outside threats like improvised explosive devices (IEDs), mines and underwater UXO.

“We’re here to show them several things with locating and disarming IEDs safely without disrupting circuits and without the bomb going off,” said Bartch.

Before heading out to the ranges, the

EOD team gave the Jordanians classroom instruction with the help of an interpreter where they went over all the procedures dealing with UXO safety.

“We start off in a classroom environment presenting basic demo and safety procedures,” said Cobos. “Then once we are convinced they understand (by a thumbs-up from the interpreter) we bring them out to the range.”

The team showed the Jordanians basic demolition techniques and gave them hands-on experience with explosives. The primary focus was on mine countermeasures that might be used when conducting pier and hull searches for future force protection operations. For the Jordanians they were working with this was the first time they had the opportunity to conduct underwater operations.

But first they had to get to the training site. The Jordanian 15-man crew crammed themselves into a small mini van and headed out to the training site.

Once at the training site, EOD crews

gathered around and explained the safety guidelines before breaking out the explosives and diving into the training.

“The entire time we have been here, LT Cobos and his crew made sure that we were doing the procedures correctly and safely,” said Royal Jordanian navy Captain Ghayeth. “Our training has gotten better with their continued help.”

The EOD teams demonstrated numerous techniques on how to locate, and safely dispose of IEDs using methods that would leave as much evidence as possible making it easier for investigation teams to figure out who might have planted the “bomb.”

“There are several things that we demonstrated to make the disposal procedures safer and more practical which allowed the Jordanians to do their jobs more efficiently,” said Mineman 2nd Class (EOD) James Frank.

Frank and the EOD techs try to minimize the hazards of approaching a UXO by using many different safety techniques.

Bartch demonstrated to the class one

of the safety techniques used to test burn a detonation cord or time fuse. Knowing how long it takes a burning detonation cord or time fuse to reach the explosive allows an EOD tech to calculate how much time is needed to get everybody to a safe area, undercover before the detonation.

“Every time we get a fresh time fuse roll we calculate how fast the roll burns as each one burns at a different speed,” said Bartch.

After training in the desert for a few days the crews headed over to the beach where they learned how to locate limpet mines and the proper procedures used to disarm underwater UXOs.

“Limpets are small handheld mines that are placed underwater on ships, piers and other man-made structures,” said Frank.

The Jordanian navy training is imperative. The city of Aqaba is strategically important to Jordan as it is the country’s only seaport. Terrorists have operated here in the past with an attack against USS *Ashland* (LSD 48) and USS *Kearsarge* (LHD 3) in August 2005.

▲ As EOD3 Adam Bartch demonstrates the proper usage of a water disrupter cannon, Jordanian Capt. Ghayeth translates the instructions for the Jordanian EOD technicians. The cannon is used to break apart an explosive device before it blows up.

“We’re here to show them several things with locating and disarming IEDs safely ...”

- EOD3(DV/AB) Adam Bartch



▲ EOD3 Adam Bartch demonstrates to the Jordanian navy EOD technicians how to test burn detonation cord which is used to ignite larger explosives.



▲ LT Steve Cobos shows the Jordanian EOD technicians how to attach blasting caps in the loose earth of a mountain in the middle of the Jordanian desert.

Training the Jordanian navy not only benefits their sailors, but also helps the United States in the long run. Before a U.S. ship pulls into a foreign port, EOD divers are sent out to check the piers and surrounding boats for any type of device that could threaten the ship, explained Cobos.

The training provided to the Jordanian navy EOD teams helped foster relations

between the two countries and enhanced the Jordanian navy's capabilities to protect their sea ports. The diving portion of the training taught to the Jordanians helped improve their capabilities to search for underwater explosives. This training will enable them to create standard operating procedures to protect their harbor. Both countries benefit from the training exercises.

So next time you hear safety, safety,

safety, coming from either a repair locker leader or from an instructor in a classroom remember the EOD technicians around the world who have to make that long walk towards something that could kill them and pay attention, you might just make it home alive.

*Aho is a photojournalist assigned to the Naval Media Center.*



▲ EOD technicians detonate a small amount of C<sub>4</sub> at a range demonstrating to the Jordanian navy how to safely dispose of IEDs.



# PLAYING FOR PRIDE:

## The Making of the All Navy Basketball Team

Story and photos by MCI (SCW) Jess M. Johnson

**I**t's a baller's dream," said LT Sam Caldwell with a smile on his face that lets you know he'd give almost anything to take the floor with his team of all-stars.

Caldwell is in his second year of coaching the All Navy Basketball Team and knows how important an opportunity like this can be to a Sailor.

"This may be the last chance for some of these players to play competitively at this level," said Caldwell.

All active-duty and Reserve Sailors from both the Navy and Coast Guard are eligible for the Navy team, but, only about 300 apply for the team – less than 1 percent of those eligible.

The process to be part of the All-Navy Team can seem daunting. There are a lot of steps between learning about the team and making it, but as the players from this

year's team will attest, making the team is worth the effort.

"First I had to fill out an application and send it in," said Sonar Technician (Surface) 3rd Class Kariga McCullum. "Then I had to go to a tryout. At the tryout there were anywhere from 50 to 100 people trying to make the team. From there, I was picked to go to training camp where I was selected for the team."

Sailors serving overseas, aboard ships or in operational units have a more challenging path to become an All-Navy Basketball player since, upon their selection, their command may not release a person who is considered to be a key component of their organization.

"We had a couple players from commands with operational commitments who couldn't come this year," said Caldwell of some of his veteran players

from last year's championship team.

"But that's part of the Navy," said Caldwell. "Folks are on deployment doing important things so they couldn't make it."

Six of his veterans, including Yeoman 2nd Class Jason Jefferson who is stationed at Joint Forces Command Naples, Italy, were able to come back and give the team a little tournament experience. Jefferson tried out for the first time last year and recalled how he learned of the All-Navy Basketball program.

"I had a friend who played the year before last [2004]," explained Jefferson who plays basketball professionally in Italy.

This friend told him about the benefits of playing on the All-Navy Team and was sure Jefferson could make it. As a player with college and professional experience he would be a hard choice to pass up, but he realizes that no matter who you are, you

▲ MST2 Kyle Mann, a Coast Guardsman, shoots a jump shot from inside the paint against the all Marine men's basketball team.

have to be prepared to be successful.

“You have to come ready to play or you’ll get cut no matter who you are,” said Jefferson.

“Actually almost all the players have some college ball behind them,” explained Caldwell. “Kyle Mann [Coast Guard Marine Science Technician 2nd Class] played four years at the University of Nebraska. Yeoman 2nd Class Jason Jefferson played at Alcorn State and he plays pro ball in Italy now, too. Coriga played four years at Xavier University. Devon Wilson played four years at Fisk University; I’d say nine out of the 12 players all have college-level playing experience.”

Only a few players could be invited to camp, which was in Maryland this last season.

“Training camp was pretty difficult at times,” explained Assistant Coach David Glen Landrial, a retired Information Systems Technician 1st Class. “We had 24 people come in this year and we had to select down to 12 during a five-day period. We had some real tough cuts to make to get down to the final 12.”

“We had to go back through the whole thing,” said Landrial. “Being coaches you’re going to have some differences of opinions on some things. You have to be convinced that the decision you come to is the right one. It was a real tough process.”

There were definitely no guarantees for the players coming into training camp. The coaches needed to build a team that could compete with each of the other service teams. When the time came to announce their decisions to the team, many of the players were on pins and needles.

“When the coach called out the names of those who made the team, that was the most memorable part for me,” recalled Personnel Specialist Seaman Zeke Wilson.

“Getting to meet guys from all different areas of the Navy has really given me an opportunity to see what life in the Navy is all about,” explained Wilson. “The camaraderie and the learning has really been the best part about being on this team.”

There are Sailors and Coast Guardsmen



▲ Team members fielded questions from students at Douglas High School in Upper Marlboro, Md., as part of their mission to represent the finest the Navy has to offer.

from both enlisted and officer communities playing on this team of all stars. But, when they are on the court, they are all equal.

Coast Guard LT,j.g. Micah W. Bonner, a team captain in his second year on the team, said this experience has given him opportunities that he wouldn't get otherwise.

"It's been a good experience. You get to interact with the enlisted guys and with some, give them advice about becoming an officer – how to go about doing it and what it's like working as an officer. It's been good having them be able to ask you questions on the same level," explained Bonner.

Even after winning last year's Armed Forces Championship the Navy team was considered a long shot to repeat as champions. The skeptics would be proven right as the Navy's efforts would fall short at the tournament. They would only win one of their six games. But regardless of their record at the tournament, the Navy team is already looking forward to next year.

"We want the best," explained Landrial. "We're trying to set a new trend in All Navy Basketball. We're tired of the Navy being in the bottom."

Injuries hurt the team early and often this year. Jefferson got his nose broken, and Mann will need surgery to fix a badly sprained ankle. But both are serious about coming back to the team next year, especially Mann who, despite leaving active duty, still plans to try out next year.

"I'll be a Reservist next year and as a Reservist you can still play. As long as you have a Navy or Coast Guard ID you can play for the Navy. So I'll be trying out again next year and this time I'll be wearing ankle braces," joked Mann.

The team's most experienced tournament player, Master-At-Arms 1st Class Rodnick Ward has made the team almost every year since 1998.

"I'm the oldest on the team right now. I missed 99, and last year," said Ward.

Despite never having been on a team that won the gold at the tournament, Ward comes back for one main reason.

"I love it," said Ward with a smile despite losing that night's match-up against the Marine Corps. "If I didn't I wouldn't



▲ **LTJG Micah** Bonner (left) gives STS3 Karega McCullum some encouragement after losing a game at the All Armed Forces Tournament.



▲ Camaraderie built on the court gave the players a rare opportunity to interact with each other. This setting allows both officer and enlisted to speak on the same level.

be here. I put my heart in to it. Everybody in the locker room puts his heart in to it. We're just falling short right now. We've got some players who are not 100 percent. But we move on."

"You've got to come into this tournament ready to battle from day one to the last day and you have got to hold them down when they are down," said Landrial. "We haven't been successful this year at doing that, but hey, we're not stopping."

For those Sailors who may want to be part of the All Navy Team, the players and coaches want them to try if they feel they have the talent to play at this level.

"Come out," said Ward. "Put your package in; go to the mini-camp and give all you've got and do what you do. If you're a shooter, shoot. If you're a point guard distribute the ball. If you're a big man, play big. Everybody should come out, everybody in the Navy."

For those who do put in the effort to be a part of the next All-Navy Men's Basketball team they can look forward to playing with excellent players and a coach who has earned the respect of his players.

"Coach Caldwell is a great coach. He's

very passionate and wants to win. He's a great guy who is going to work for you as long as you play hard," Bonner said.

"We have an opportunity to let them [the other services] know what the Navy is really all about," said Caldwell to his players. "The only way that you get respect is to earn respect. I'm not going to say that we're here to earn respect; we're just here to do what we're here to do – win championships."

The seriousness of Caldwell's statement assures that, despite the team's showing at the 2006 tournament, he's not going to quit and his players had better not quit either.

*Johnson is a photojournalist assigned to the Naval Media Center.*



▲ Coast Guard LTJG Micah Bonner, charges down the court for the Men's All Navy Basketball Team with Maryland Nighthawks' Eric Branham hot on his heels during a scrimmage at the Bowie Recreation Center Gym in Bowie, Md.

## Applying for All Navy Sports

Men's basketball is far from the only All-Navy Sport. There are events for bowlers, boxers, cross country runners, golfers, marathoners, men's and women's soccer, rugby, men's and women's softball, tri-athletes, men's and women's volleyball and wrestlers. Although the sports are all very different, the process to be a part of them is remarkably similar.

To be an All-Navy athlete, the first step is knowing that your sport is available at that level and when it will be played. This information is available on the Morale Welfare and Recreation (MWR) website at [www.mwr.navy.mil/mwrprgms/sports.htm](http://www.mwr.navy.mil/mwrprgms/sports.htm). This website also has the application as well as the current instruction available for review.

Part of the application process includes command endorsement, because your command has to know it's possible you could make the team and may be gone for several weeks. Therefore they must grant permission from you to participate.

For some Sailors, completing their application may require a physical exam. This is mostly for those who wish to participate in sports like boxing and wrestling where there is a possibility that old injuries may be aggravated or could cause serious complications if things should go wrong.

Once you've completed all the requirements and have all the endorsements, make sure to submit your application early for consideration.

*Compiled by MCI (SCW)  
Jess M. Johnson*

# 2006 TAX TIPS

It's only February, but it's not too soon to prepare your 2006 tax returns. There are a number of law changes, such as filing extensions for service members serving in combat zones to increases in the amount of money service members can earn from the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). The All Hands staff has prepared some Tax Tips to assist you courtesy of the Internal Revenue Service.

## TAX TIP #1: TAX RELATED ASSISTANCE FOR MILITARY MEMBERS

Whether you are a whiz at preparing your own taxes or have questions on which credits and deductions to take, service members can seek assistance with their tax returns from the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program. Military members and their families worldwide receive free tax preparation assistance at offices on their installations. These VITA sites provide free tax advice, tax preparation, and assistance to military members and their families. They are trained and equipped to address military specific tax issues, such as combat zone tax benefits and the effect of the new EITC guidelines. For more information on what to bring to prepare your taxes, contact your on-base VITA tax center.

## TAX TIP #2: EXTENSIONS FOR SERVICE MEMBERS SERVING IN A COMBAT ZONE

Service members who are serving in a combat zone can receive relief from compliance actions, such as audits or enforced collections, until 180 days after the taxpayer has left the zone. Taxpayers qualifying for such combat zone relief may notify the IRS directly of their status through a special e-mail address: [combat-zone@irs.gov](mailto:combat-zone@irs.gov). Taxpayers should provide their name, social security number, stateside address, date of birth and date of deployment to the combat zone. This

notification to the IRS may be made by the taxpayer, spouse, or authorized agent or representative. Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) automatically notifies the IRS when individuals enter and exit a combat zone.

## TAX TIP #3: EXTENSIONS FOR SERVICE MEMBERS SERVING OVERSEAS BUT NOT IN A COMBAT ZONE

Service members who are stationed overseas on April 16, 2007 are entitled to an automatic 60 day extension until June 16, 2007. No action is required to apply for the extension however taxpayers should be cautioned that the extension applies to filing taxes, not on paying an amount due. All payments are required by 16 April 2007. When an overseas tax payer files their return they must make sure that the return includes some sort of proof that the service member was overseas on 16 April 2007; usually a copy of their orders will suffice.

## TAX TIP #4: CHANGES TO IRA CONTRIBUTIONS

According to the IRS, members of the military serving in combat zone localities can now put money into an individual retirement account, even if they received tax-free combat pay. Under the Heroes Earned Retirement Opportunities (HERO) Act, signed into law on Memorial Day in 2006, taxpayers can now count tax-free combat pay when determining whether they qualify to contribute to either a Roth or traditional IRA. In addition, the HERO Act allows military personnel who received tax-free combat pay in either 2004 or 2005 to make IRA contributions for those years. Eligible military members will have extra time, until May 28, 2009, to make these special back-year contributions.

## TAX TIP #5: INCREASE IN EITC UNDER 2005

The maximum amount of income you can get from EITC and receive the credit is higher for 2006 than it was for 2005. You may be able to take the credit for 2006 if: you have more than one qualifying child and you earn less than \$36,348 (\$38,348 if married filing jointly); you have one qualifying child and you earn less than \$32,001 (\$34,001 if married filing jointly); or you do not have a qualifying child and you earn less than \$12,120 (\$14,120 if married filing jointly).

## TAX TIP #6: NEW OPTION TO SPLIT REFUNDS BETWEEN BANK ACCOUNTS

A new refund option is now available for filers of Form 1040, Form 1040A, Form 1040EZ, Form 1040NR, Form 1040NR-EZ, Form 1040-PR, and Form 1040-SS. Filers of these tax forms for 2006 will be able to elect to have their federal income tax refund automatically deposited into two or three accounts at a bank or other financial institution (such as a mutual fund, brokerage firm, or credit union). Individuals electing this split refund option must file Form 8888, Direct Deposit of Refund to More Than One Account.

## TAX TIP #7: TELEPHONE TAX REFUND

The Telephone Excise Tax Refund (TETR) is a one-time payment available on your 2006 federal income tax return. It is designed to refund previously collected long distance telephone taxes. Individuals, businesses and tax-exempt organizations are eligible to request it. Individual taxpayers can take a standard amount from \$30 to \$60 based on the number of exemptions claimed on their tax return.

## TAX TIP #8: DEADLINE TO FILE TAXES

The deadline to file your taxes is Monday, April 16th unless you live in Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Vermont, or the District of Columbia, where you have until April 17, 2007. Individuals who are not eligible for the automatic extensions can apply to extend filing taxes for up to six months (16 Oct 07).

## TAX TIP #9: WHICH FORM TO USE

Although the actual rules are more complicated, for most people these easy rules can help you decide which form to file: no children, no house, no business - 1040EZ; no house or business - 1040A; and all others - 1040.

## TAX TIP #10: REFUND ANTICIPATION LOANS

They come by many names by paid preparers but the idea is the same, you can walk out that day with a refund check in your hands. It may seem like easy, quick money! The problem is how much you pay for that money. What actually happens is that the tax payer is signing up for a loan from a company working with the paid preparer and then signs their rights to their refund to pay for the loan. E-filed returns are processed and money direct deposited into the taxpayer's bank account(s) with one to two weeks on average. The National Consumer Law Center and the Center for Responsible Lending state that the actual cost of a Refund Anticipation Loan can be anywhere between 40 percent and 700 percent A.P.R. Using the on-base VITA tax center eliminates all fees and charges. You get 100 percent of the refund. You earned it, you should get it!

**For more information about filing your taxes, visit [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) or contact your on-base VITA tax center.**



# BOMBS AWAY

Story and photo by MCSN Kenneth R. Hendrix

**N**aval attack aircraft and forces would not be able to strike targets and provide ground support without aviation ordnance.

Since the birth of the aircraft carrier, it's been the duty of aviation ordnancemen to service aircraft guns; and stow, assemble and load aviation ordnance to include guided missiles, bombs, mines and torpedoes.

Aviation Ordnanceman 1st Class (AW) Fletcher Saffell joined the Navy with an interest in explosives, and he got exactly what he asked for.

"I read the description of the AO job rate, and I was like, 'Yes!' that's definitely what I would like to do," said Saffell.

Currently assigned to Navy Munitions Command CONUS East Division, Det. Sewells Point as Ordnance Handling Department Leading Petty Officer, Saffell enjoys the fast-paced and often potentially hazardous environments.

"To be an AO in the Navy today, you must have a lot of self-discipline, a good head on your shoulders and it's important to know everything in the Naval Training Education Manual," said Saffell.

As an AO, Saffell is impressed with the structure and camaraderie that is demonstrated throughout the rate.

"It's outstanding to see everyone on the flight deck loading bombs, putting 20mm ammo in the guns of the birds, and building ordnance inside the magazine. It's unbelievable."

*Hendrix is assigned to Fleet Public Affairs Center Atlantic, Norfolk.*

Focus on  
**Service**

## USS Mason (DE 529) First Ship Manned by African-Americans

**U**SS *Mason* (DDG 87) is the third ship to bear the name and is the 37th ship of Arleigh Burke Class of *Aegis* guided missile destroyers. But the significance of this ship is the fact that the second *Mason* was the first ship to be almost entirely manned by African-Americans.

The first ship to bear the name *Mason* was named for John Young Mason, born April 19, 1799 in Greene County, Virginia. Both a political leader and diplomat, he was Secretary of the Navy for Presidents John Tyler and James K. Polk.

The second ship to bear the name *Mason* (DE 529) was named for ENS Newton Henry Mason and was commissioned March 20, 1944. ENS Mason enlisted as a seaman in the Naval Reserve on 7 November 1940 and was appointed an aviation cadet on 10 February 1941. He was assigned to Fighting Squadron 3 in September 1941 and died following aerial combat against the Japanese forces in the Battle of the Coral Sea, 8 and 9 May 1942. Ensign Mason was posthumously awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for his skill and courage in battle.

In late 1943 the Navy announced its plan to place an all black crew with white officers aboard *Mason*. One hundred and sixty black Sailors were enrolled in all fields of operational and technical training and manned the ship at commissioning. This was the first time black Americans were permitted to be trained and serve in ratings other than cooks and stewards.

Although known as “Eleanor’s Folly” for Eleanor Roosevelt’s introduction of the idea for an all black crew, *Mason* served with distinction during World War II. During the worst North Atlantic storm of the century, *Mason* was serving as escort to a convoy of merchant ships bound for England. During the storm the convoy was forced to break up and *Mason* was chosen to escort a group of ships to their destination. With land in sight *Mason*’s deck split apart threatening the structural integrity of the ship. Emergency repairs were conducted and *Mason* returned immediately to assist the remainder of the convoy.

The *Mason* crew was recommended for commendations from both their captain, LCDR Bill Blackford, and the convoy commander, CDR Alfred Lind. The commendations were not awarded during the war. At the end of the war *Mason* was assigned as a training ship operating from Miami, Fla. until being decommissioned and sold for scrap in 1947. On July 26, 1947



U.S. Navy Photo

**Gunner’s Mates from USS *Mason* (DE 529) train on the ship’s small arms. Prior to 1943 African-Americans weren’t allowed to serve in ratings outside stewards and cooks. *Mason*’s crew would prove African-Americans can perform as well as their white counterparts in any situation.**

President Truman signed Executive Order 9981, officially desegregating the armed forces.

Through the efforts of the *Mason* veterans and the author Mary Pat Kelly, the *Mason* story has been chronicled in the book “Proudly We Served.” Their persistence in telling the *Mason* story paid off in 1994 when President William Clinton awarded the long overdue commendation to sixty-seven surviving crewmembers. In 1998, then Secretary of the Navy, John H. Dalton made his decision to name an Arleigh Burke destroyer USS *Mason* (DDG 87) to mark the contributions of USS *Mason* (DE 529) Sailors to equality and desegregation in our Navy’s ranks.

Compiled from USS *Mason* (DDG 87) website.

**Crews Into Shape**

NO “Weigh-in” required

**REGISTER BY**  
**28 FEB. 2007**

**4 - week**  
**CHALLENGE**  
4 - 31 March 2007

Entire DoD family is invited on board

Goal: Exercising and eating right

**Crews Into Shape**

Register at: Navy Environmental Health Center

This competition brings people together for a team approach to wellness. Each crew member earns points for exercising, maintaining or achieving a goal weight by eating fruits, vegetables and drinking fluids/water.

For more information go to:  
[www-nehc.med.navy.mil/hp/crews\\_into\\_shape](http://www-nehc.med.navy.mil/hp/crews_into_shape)



# NOW PODCASTING!

Navy-Marine Corps Radio, Video News & Vidbits  
available any time at [www.navy.mil](http://www.navy.mil)

