

THE NEWPORT CONTINUUM



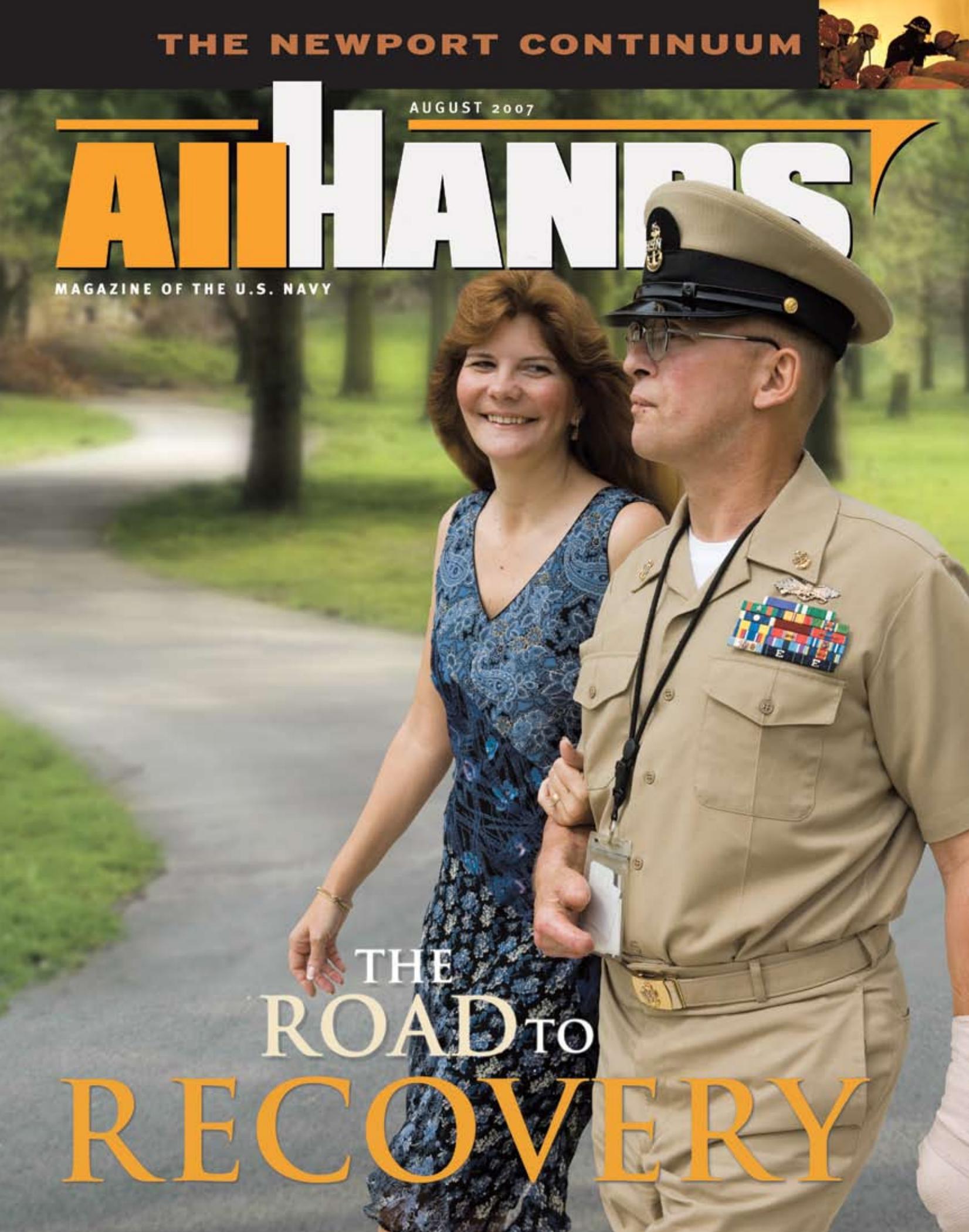
AUGUST 2007

AIH HANDS

MAGAZINE OF THE U.S. NAVY

THE
ROAD TO

RECOVERY





[On the Front Cover]

BUSC(SCW) Robert Westover and his wife Pamela head out for a walk after the morning meeting at Brooke Army Medical Center, San Antonio.

Photo by MC1(AW) Brien Aho

Photo illustration by Juana Merlo

[Next Month]

All Hands takes a look at the Navy's maritime strategy.

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14 The Road to Recovery

For our Sailors, Marines, Soldiers and Airmen who have been badly burned, their road to recovery usually leads to Brooke Army Medical Center (BAMC), Ft. Sam Houston, Texas, one of the nation's leading burn units. This becomes home to our wounded heroes who are fighting daily to get their lives back to normal.

Photo by MC1(AW) Brien Aho

August



24 The Newport Continuum

They come to Newport, R.I., as junior officers, and return at many of the most critical points in their careers. The Navy's Surface Warfare Officers School (SWOS), is there at every juncture, providing a reassuring beacon of light as these Sailors navigate the waters of their naval service.

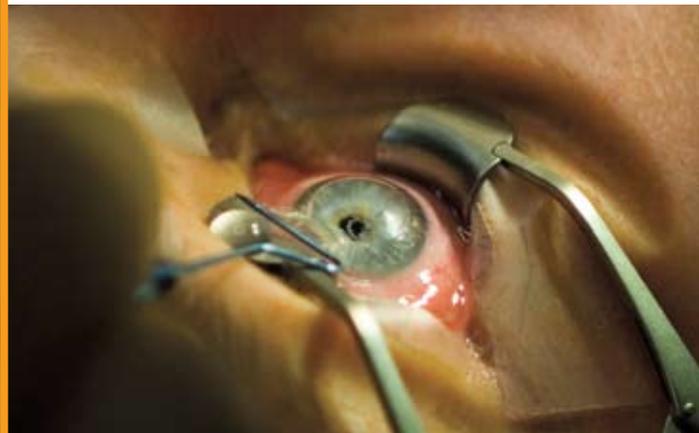
Photo by MC2(SW/AW) Jason McCammack



30 Navy Offers Newest Technology

Sailors and Marines may now have the opportunity to have their vision corrected using the newest technology in laser eye surgery called IntraLase. The new procedure offers the patient many benefits including being fully operational faster.

Photo by MC1(AW) Brien Aho



Speaking with Sailors

Commander, Naval Media Center
Capt. Gordon J. Hume

This month marks a milestone for *All Hands* magazine – it has been 85 years since the first edition was released. Originally published on Aug. 30, 1922, as *Bureau of Navigation News Bulletin No. 1*, the predecessor of *All Hands* magazine was a three-page newsletter distributed around the Navy informing Sailors about such things as education, recruitment and the transportation of family members. Twenty years later, to coincide with the organizational change that created the Bureau of Naval Personnel, the title was changed to *Bureau of Naval Personnel Information Bulletin*. And, in June 1945 the headline declared, “Victory in Europe” and a new banner at the top of the cover simply read, *All Hands*.

“There is a simple little story behind this change of name,” said a note in the edition announcing the change. “In September 1943, to make as explicit as possible the fact that this magazine is intended for all naval personnel – for all hands – a little box of blue was placed on the cover with a prominent statement to that effect. Readers understood.

This was a magazine they had come to consider their own, to differentiate from the countless “bulletins.” This was their common, comprehensive source of news and information – not official but authoritative – and it was for all hands. And so, they changed the name among themselves and actually began calling the Information Bulletin by a new name: “ALL HANDS.” And it has been *All Hands* ever since.

Just as the magazine has evolved from its humble beginnings as a three-page “bulletin” to a 40-page monthly layout, so too have many of our other information products.

One of the most significant of those changes took place July 1 when we premiered the first edition of “All Hands Television.” This new, monthly half-hour show replaced the weekly, “Navy/Marine Corps News” and has been developed in an effort to provide you a closer, more in-depth look at some of the issues that affect you and our Navy.

Though reluctant at first to retire Navy/Marine Corps News, a show that over the years had evolved from “Navy Video News” to “Navy News This Week,” we felt this was the next step in the evolution of how we deliver relevant news and information to the fleet. Through cutting-edge technology and the dedication of the entire Naval Media Center Team, All Hands Television will provide in-depth reporting on the Sailors of the world’s finest Navy and report about the issues they face.

The latest Navy news will still be available six times a day through “Daily News Update,” available on Armed Forces Radio and Television Service (AFRTS), Direct-to-Sailor Television (DTS) and the Pentagon Channel, as well as on “All Hands Radio News” (formerly known as “Navy/Marine Corps Radio News”) available on Armed Forces Network Radio.

Some of the changes we have made are based on the fact that the technology available to you to gather news and information, and your entertainment, has caused you to change the way you expect your information. As a result, we have worked hard to keep up with technology to deliver the information how and when you want it. That’s why our broadcast products are not only available to you on AFRTS, DTS and the Pentagon Channel, but are also available for viewing via streaming media on the Navy’s Web site (www.navy.mil) and can be downloaded in podcast format using any of today’s podcasting software.



Many of you have already discovered some of the other new offerings available to you. In June the CNO began providing a weekly podcast as part of his continuing effort to have an ongoing conversation with the Navy community. The CNO’s Podcast is available every Monday on Navy.mil and via your favorite podcasting software.

You may have watched the first of our multimedia presentations, “Individual Augmentees: Preparing for Boots on the Ground” which was produced to compliment last month’s *All Hands* magazine cover story by the same title. The presentation combines still images, audio and video to tell the story of how your shipmates prepare for IA assignments prior to deploying to Iraq, Afghanistan or Djibouti to contribute in the fight against terrorism.

Those are just two examples of how we are working to find new methods of getting information to you the way you want it.

If you do have an idea of how we might better serve you or if you have a story you think would be of interest to your shipmates, please contact the Naval Media Center Assignment Desk by emailing them at assignments@navy.mil or by calling them at (202) 433-0300 or DSN 288-0300.

We will continue to explore new ways of moving information to you and look forward to hearing from you with your ideas.

ALL HANDS

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www.navy.mil

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**Bureau of
Naval Personnel**

Around the Fleet

Humanitarian Missions Essential to Relationships, Global War on Terrorism

U SNS *Comfort* (T-AH 20) recently left Norfolk en route to Central America, South America and the Caribbean and USS *Peleliu* (LHA 5) steamed toward the Philippines.

The ships are proving critical to fighting the global war on terrorism. Fighting it, that is, with a helping hand.

In his third podcast to the fleet, accessible at www.navy.mil, Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Mullen made it clear that humanitarian missions help foster and sustain relationships, while building the sort of trust that can help prevent the spread of terrorism.

"I believe if you have these kinds of relationships they would go a long way to ensuring that we don't get into a war or get into a fight with people that we're engaged with like this," Mullen said.

According to Mullen, the Navy learned valuable lessons after it contributed to disaster relief efforts in Indonesia after a tsunami devastated the region in December 2004. He worked closely with then-Commander U.S. Pacific Fleet Adm. Gary Roughead to send USNS *Mercy* (T-AH 19) back to Indonesia last summer.

The current deployments of *Peleliu* and *Comfort*, both four months in length, are

aimed at conducting humanitarian assistance, training and community relations activities.

Comfort is expected to visit 12 nations where its embarked 500 medical professionals will provide treatment to an estimated 85,000 patients from communities with limited health care access. *Peleliu's* deployment falls under the auspices of *Pacific Partnership 2007* and will include stops in Vietnam, the Philippines, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and the Marshall Islands.

Both ships are taking with them representatives from various non-governmental and aid agencies.

In his podcast, the CNO also talked about the Navy's efforts to craft a new maritime strategy. He said he didn't think America was familiar enough with why it needed a Navy.

"It's a new era," he said. "There are new challenges out there and we need to work hard on making sure we touch base with America, throughout America, on why we do need a Navy and what our Navy's up to."

What does that mean for the Sailor aboard *Comfort*, *Peleliu* or one fulfilling an individual augmentee billet?

"They should know that they are a key part of our maritime strategy," Mullen said. "They're building relationships. They're making a difference in people's lives. They're doing what navies can do because we are out and about and around the world. And it's the strength of those



Photo by MC3 Robert J. Stratchko

Friends and family members wave goodbye as USNS *Comfort* (T-AH 20) gets underway to take part in a multi-month humanitarian assistance deployment to the U.S. Southern Command area of responsibility. During the deployment, *Comfort* expects to provide medical treatment to approximately 85,000 patients in more than a dozen countries.

relationships that will be remembered for many, many years by the young children they engage with who grow up." ❧

Story courtesy public affairs, Chief of Naval Operations, Washington, D.C.

Ricky's Tour

By MC1 Mike Jones



www.rickystour.com

Navy Moves to Make IA Assignments Part of Detailing Process

With the recent implementation of NAVADMIN 147/07, removing Sailors from their current duty assignment to fill individual augmentee (IA) orders will gradually become the exception as the Navy moves to make most global war on terrorism (GWOT) support tours part of the normal detailing process.

Phase One began in June for officers and will begin this month for enlisted Sailors. During this time frame, Navy Personnel Command will start to bring about 1,200 Joint Manning Document (JMD) driven GWOT billets into the normal detailing process as they become open between September and December 2008. These billets account for about one-third of all the active-duty IA requirements that exist today.

Phase Two will continue this process, adding additional billets to make a total of about 80 percent of the IA requirements. Phase Three will add the emergent fill billets into the process, which currently consist of about 20 percent of the IA requirements.

Under these plans, Sailors would volunteer for an IA assignment at their Projected Rotation Date (PRD) and PCS to either San Diego or Norfolk where they will be attached to the Expeditionary Combat Readiness Center while they carry out their temporary duty GWOT Support Assignment (GSA).

"The desired end state is a Sailor assignment and distribution system which retains predictability for our Sailors and stability for our commands, yet is agile enough to respond to the

requirements of our combatant commanders in the GWOT," said Adm. John C. Harvey, Chief of Naval Personnel.

According to Harvey, the current process of selecting Sailors to fill IA billets will continue in the short term, but as we transition into the new process, there will be less and less requirements for commands to pull Sailors mid-tour.

"Our existing IA process meets mission and has matured to the point that we average nearly 60 days notice (to our Sailors)," said Harvey. "However, it also limits Sailor input into the process, masks unit-level manning impacts and its unpredictability breeds uncertainty and concern from the fleet."

The new process is expected to improve the predictability of GWOT assignments, enable volunteerism, improve manning stability at the unit level, and add detailer involvement for oversight of professional development and career progression.

For more information on IA assignments or processes, go to <http://www.npc.navy.mil/CareerInfo/Augmentation/>. 

Story courtesy Navy Personnel Command, Millington, Tenn.

New Instruction Underscores Navy's Commitment to Family Issues

The Navy recently announced the release of OPNAVINST 6000.1C, Navy Guidelines Concerning Pregnancy and Parenthood, updating the Navy's pregnancy instruction for the first time since 2003.

The revision incorporates legislative and DOD changes

to the current policy regarding both pregnancy and parenthood, following an 18-month comprehensive review coordinated by the Office of Women's Policy.

"The Navy continues to evolve in the size and shape of our force and our instructions and policies need to reflect that changing demographic and emphasis on family," said Vice Adm. John C. Harvey Jr., Chief of Naval Personnel. "How we handle family issues will continue to be a major factor in whether many individuals decide to stay in the Navy. We need to make sure we are doing what is in the best interest of the individual, the family, and the Navy, and the updated instruction continues



Senior Chief Damage Controlman (SW) John Jones

was recently named the Navy's Senior Enlisted Instructor of the Year (IOY) by the Navy Education and Training Command. Jones is the leading chief petty officer of the Education Training Evaluation Division, Recruit Training Command (RTC), Naval Station Great Lakes, and also serves as an instructor for the Naval Basic Orientation Division where he teaches recruits leadership, Navy Core Values and various Navy management skills. He also keeps his hand in the school's damage control and shipboard fire fighting training.

"I think being an instructor here at RTC is very special. We are responsible for instructing Sailors at the beginning of their Navy careers. We turn civilians into Sailors."

Jones also said the award is a direct reflection of his fellow instructors at RTC and shares the award with each of them.

"This award should be recognition for all the instructors at RTC because we are at the beginning of the whole process. Being named the Instructor of the Year validates the great work we all do here," he said.

Story and photo by Scott A. Thornbloom, Naval Station Great Lakes.

us in that direction."

The Bureau of Medicine and the Office of Women's Policy reviewed the most recent medical literature and determined that the current instruction no longer met the needs of Navy women.

Specifically, the new instruction extends the operational deferment for new mothers from four months to 12 months following delivery. This change was intended to properly address medical concerns that may arise following pregnancy that may not show up until six months post partum. Increased post partum depression testing is also provided for, as is greater support for military members undergoing adoptions and in-vitro fertilization.

"The release of this updated

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Around the Fleet



◀ **The “Blue Angels” fly over the Battle of Midway** commemoration ceremony at the Center for Information Dominance (CID) Corry Station, Pensacola, Fla. Nine veterans of the Battle of Midway joined hundreds of CID Sailors, Soldiers, Airmen, Marines, Coast Guardsmen and guests at the commemoration, held annually to celebrate the decisive victory at Midway.

Photo by Gary Nichols



▲ **Sailors assigned to USS *Wasp* (LHD 1) pose for a** photograph in Times Square while on liberty. The 20th annual New York Fleet Week provided an opportunity for New Yorkers to meet Sailors, Marines and Coast Guardsmen and thank them for their service.

Photo by MC1 Michael W. Pendergrass

◀ **QMSN Ellysa McCreary communicates with USS *Laramie* (T-AO-203)** using flags during a replenishment at sea aboard USS *Harry S. Truman* (CVN 75). McCreary’s non-verbal communication ensured that the ships remain a safe distance from each other.

Photo by MC3 Mari Matsumoto

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instruction is very exciting, but it is by no means an end-state for us,” said Lt. Stephanie Miller, head of the Office of Women’s Policy, Arlington, Va. “We are constantly looking at new issues and ways to make sure we are doing the right thing for women and families in the Navy.”

Several other minor changes are incorporated. For information on these and other changes to the instruction, refer to NAVADMIN 157/07. ❧

Story courtesy of Chief of Naval Personnel Diversity Directorate, Washington, D.C.

Navy Unveils Newest Ship Navigation, Bridge Simulator

Naval Base San Diego recently unveiled its newest navigation, seamanship and ship handling trainer (NSST).

NSST is a state-of-the-art bridge simulator used to train ship crews in navigation and ship handling using virtual technology.

The NSST program was launched to improve training efficiency and effectiveness and to reduce training costs. The program updates the Navy’s current navigation, seamanship and ship handling training systems and provides high fidelity, user-friendly navigation training in all fleet concentration areas and on board Navy warships.

“I firmly believe this is going to have a dramatic effect on the ability to train our officers and bridge crews to navigate and perform ship handling,” said Vice Adm. Terrance T. Etnyre, Commander, Naval Surface Forces.

The NSST system has already been established in Everett, Wash.; Pearl Harbor; and

Yokosuka and Sasebo, Japan.

“These simulators are designed essentially to create a virtual maritime environment identical to conditions you would experience at sea in a real ship,” said Garland Hardy, a sub-contractor assigned to provide NSST training. “That allows us to provide realistic training to the Navy for all aspects of navigation, ship handling and seamanship. We can teach people how to respond to dangerous situations and potentially catastrophic scenarios in an environment that is completely safe.”

Quartermaster 1st Class (SW) Jose Loya, assigned to Afloat Training Group, Pacific, said the training was very realistic.

“If you know you are going to do an underway replenishment, you can come here, jump on the simulator and try to get the effect,” said Loya. “It’s going to benefit the Navy and all the ship handlers out there.” ❧

Story by MC2 Stephanie Tigner, Fleet Public Affairs Center, Pacific, San Diego.

CLASSRON Stands Up in San Diego

The newest Class Squadron (CLASSRON) was recently established for Guided Missile Cruisers (CG) on Naval Station San Diego. The new CG CLASSRON will be engaged in the training, maintaining, manning and logistics processes for the entire class of 22 CGs.

CLASSRONs are functional command organizations specific to particular ship classes, which execute processes that ensure all ships with that particular class are at the right levels of combat readiness and available for tasking by combatant commanders. They use metric-based analysis to assess readiness, examine class trends



▲ A Navy corpsman with the Police Transition Team, Regimental Combat Team 6, examines an Iraqi man who is applying for the Iraqi police at the new Iraqi police station in Fallujah.

Photo by Cpl. Samuel D. Corum

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

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

Mail your submissions to:
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Click on the Navy’s home page, www.navy.mil, for fresh images of your shipmates in action.

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Around the Fleet



▲ **Sailors of the Vietnamese People's Navy stand** by for inspection by Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Mullen during a welcoming ceremony to mark his visit to Hai Phong.

Photo by MC1 Chad J. McNeeley



◀ **SHSR Jamal Powell (left) and SR Stephen** Harmon stand forward lookout watch aboard USS *Normandy* (CG 60) as the ship navigates an ice field north of Iceland.

Photo by L.t. j.g Ryan Birkelbach



▲ Dr. Gene Griessman delivers the Gettysburg Address

while portraying Abraham Lincoln before members of the crew on the flight deck of USS *Abraham Lincoln* (CVN 72). Griessman, an author, former television host and professional Lincoln impersonator visited *Lincoln* to meet the crew of the warship that bears Lincoln's name and to perform his unique brand of motivational speaking.

Photo by MC3 James R. Evans



▲ Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 1

Seabees practice marching while dressed in mission oriented protective posture (MOPP) 4 to acclimate themselves to the gear. The Seabees are preparing for exercise Operation *Desert Heat*.

Photo by MC2 Ja'lon A. Rhinehart

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and provide recommendations and solutions. Currently there are eight CLASSRONS established as part of the Surface Warfare Enterprise.

"What we do is we look at issues from two sides," said Capt. David Matawitz, Commander, Cruiser-Class Squadron. "One, we look at: readiness; we analyze [a] matrix across the class, we examine trends, we look for root causes across the entire class and then we bring those up to the Surface Warfare Enterprise and the main ship training process.

"So we are looking from the top down," continued Matawitz. We also go out to the ships and look for problems on the individual deck plates, and push problems up. If one ship has an issue we look across the class to see if it's on other ships, and frankly, you will often find that one ship with a problem is not all by itself... often it will be across the entire class."

Regardless of where a ship is homeported, CLASSRON staffs will be focused on providing combat ready warships to the operational commanders.

"Our primary goal here is to make war ships ready for tasking across all of the positions: logistics, manpower, training and maintenance," said Matawitz. "[CGs] are getting the latest and greatest equipment and one of the things that we have to do is to make sure that the training, maintenance, and the manning is properly identified as these new systems get installed."

The CLASSRON will not replace the existing Afloat Training Groups or Type Commands (TYCOM). They will provide the immediate superiors in command and TYCOM with the ability to find process inefficiencies and to apply resources to achieve desired results.

"This command is going to bridge the gap between the

surface warfare enterprise, afloat training groups, immediate superiors in command and other ships in finding ways to increase productivity and reduce redundancies among the cruiser class," said Top-side Warfare Officer Lt. R J. Angeles. "This allows us to take an analysis of the current issues and provide solutions that are current among the class. We are able to investigate different issues that exist which allow us to provide recommendation analysis to higher commands to resolve these problems." ❧

Story courtesy of Commander Naval Surface Force, San Diego.

NECC Establishes Riverine Squadron 3

Navy Expeditionary Combat Command (NECC) recently established Riverine Squadron (RIVRON) 3 during a ceremony at Naval Weapons Station Yorktown, Va.

RIVRON 3 is the final planned riverine squadron established under NECC.

After RIVRON 3 completes several months of specialized training on small boat driving, navigation and combat, they will deploy around the world to provide support to armed forces in the riverine environment.

RIVRON 3's 230 Sailors are a part of the Navy Riverine Force, which together are charged with the mission of conducting 24/7 operations in all weather conditions to protect legitimate commerce and transit as well as protect the lines of communication in the riverine environment. ❧

Story by MC2(SW) Matthew D. Leistikow, Fleet Public Affairs Center Atlantic, Norfolk.



An Incredible Journey Begins

Story and photos by MC2(SW/AW) Jason McCammack

“Stop looking around for Mommy and Daddy and move it!”

With those halting words, the young men and women who will make up the U.S. Naval Academy’s class of 2011 knew it was time to say goodbye to the protective womb of childhood and embark on a journey that would see them molded into the Navy and Marine Corps’ next generation of leaders.



◀ The plebes raise their right hand

as they recite the Oath of Office at the Naval Academy's Tecumseh Court.

preconceived notions that are about to be annihilated. It's an incredible journey."

The plebes were welcomed aboard in two groups. On I-Day Minus One, prior enlisted Sailors and Naval Academy Preparatory School (NAPS) graduates were processed in, while the following day saw the arrival of the wide-eyed neophytes, mostly fresh from high school with little or no exposure to the demands of life in the military.

At Alumni Hall the plebes cycled through name-tag distribution, medical examinations, uniform fittings, equipment issue and filled out form after mind-numbing form.

Throughout I-Day the plebes did one thing – they stood in line. They stood in line to be examined by doctors, they stood in line to be issued PT gear and the most unprepared even stood in line for a perfunctory buzz-cut or bob.

"Everything has its purpose," said Shields. "I think one the reasons they load you up with all that gear, which ends up weighing 50 or 60 lbs., is to prepare you for the challenge that lies ahead."

"The first and last words out of your mouth is 'sir' and 'ma'am.' Do you understand?"

The occasional orders barked by the Academy's upper-classmen throughout I-Day served as a warning about upcoming challenges. But for the students who make up the class of 2011, just making it this far was no easy feat. The Naval Academy received more than 12,000 applications for the class of 2011. This number was pared down to 1,212 (957 men and 255 women) by I-Day.

For a select few, their new standing as prospective plebes is an even greater adjustment than for others.

Former Marine, Midshipman 4th Class Patrick McConnell, class of 2011, spent the past two-and-a-half years assigned as a gate guard at the Academy.

McConnell, who led 35 to 50 troops at any given time, now faces the life at the bottom of the Academy's food chain. He believes his training as a Marine will serve him well as a midshipman.

"Mentally, there's nothing they can throw at me that I haven't seen being prior enlisted, but it's a very different approach that is taken here," he said.

Nicknamed "I-Day," Induction Day, is the first day of Plebe Summer (first-year students at the Academy are known as plebes). As the month of June drew to a close, the prospective plebes gave their parents one last hug and got in line for in-processing outside Alumni Hall.

Plebe Summer, a demanding, excruciating seven-week orientation, marks the period that selected candidates to the Naval Academy are transformed from civilians to midshipmen. Plebe Summer is full of early mornings and late nights. Physical and mental demands on the plebe's time will seem never-ending, but there is a purpose:

the development of leadership ability, motivation, moral strength, physical skills and stamina – the traits of any outstanding officer in the Navy or Marine Corps.

"Everything is just a huge blur," recalled Ensign Wes Shields, a recent Naval Academy graduate working the in-processing labyrinth at Alumni Hall. "There are so many life-changing events that happen within an eight-hour period. Huge swells of emotion come and go. First, they are just sad to separate from their parents. Then they'll go through so many other emotions. Everybody is very naïve at this point, but they're also dedicated, intimidated and full of



◀ On “I-Day minus 1,” prior-enlisted

plebes form a line inside Alumni Hall as they begin in-processing, where they’ll move from station to station for medical examinations, uniform issue and perform many other administrative tasks.

“Marine boot camp brings you down to nothing, builds you back up and everyone comes out with the same bar code. Here, they are reshaping and changing perspectives.”

McConnell said he didn’t even know the Naval Academy existed until he got his orders here as a Marine - but the assignment changed his life.

“It was an opportunity to take a good look at how the grass was greener on the other side,” he said. “To be able to get over to that green grass is truly unbelievable.”

The prospective plebes had infinite reasons for choosing to apply to the Academy, but one reason resonated throughout the class – a call to service.

“There is nothing better you can do than serve your country and this is the best place to do that,” said Midn. 4/C Tim Baker, Class of 2011. “My grandfather was a pilot at the Battle of Midway, so for me, the call of duty led me right here.”

Another draw for many of the prospective plebes was the Naval Academy’s reverence for honor and traditional values.

One of the numerous stations during I-Day in-processing was called “Fake ID Amnesty.” Ens. Kevin No Lamping, Naval Academy honor advisor, informed each and every plebe that this was their “last opportunity to throw away any fake IDs, pornography or any other inappropriate material.”

No Lamping said that an unflinching honor code is a time-honored connection between current midshipmen to their predecessors at the Naval Academy.

“Honor is everything we do here,” he said. “We should embody what honor is. It is what separates us from other institutions. If you lie, cheat or steal here it’s not just your instructors you’re responsible to – in fact, other midshipmen will hold you accountable. We are expected to lead, and to do that we must have honor.”

After being fitted for uniforms, the prospective plebes were guided into ranks and given a pair of instructions that will serve them well during the next year. First, they were taught to stand ramrod straight while holding “Reef Points” squarely in



▲ Midn. 4/C Ashley Bucholz is taught how to properly wear her cover. The cover should rest two fingers above the top of her nose.

front of their faces as they memorize the axioms of the Naval Academy's mission, history and traditions held within its pages. Secondly, they were given instruction on the most basic of military maneuvers: how to properly salute, pivot and move along smartly.

Some of the prospective plebes appeared overwhelmed by day's events, while others, perhaps naïve to the roadblocks ahead, took it in stride.

"I was ready to say goodbye to my parents and get started," said Midn. 4/C Robert Maiorano. "The hardest part is not laughing at all the stupid stuff they make you do."

As the sun began its slow, mid-summer fade on this year's I-Day, the plebes assembled at the Naval Academy's Tecumseh Court to take the Oath of Office in front of their friends, family and new classmates. The huge swells of emotion were now coming in waves

for the class of 2011 as they pledged to "well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which (they) are about to enter."

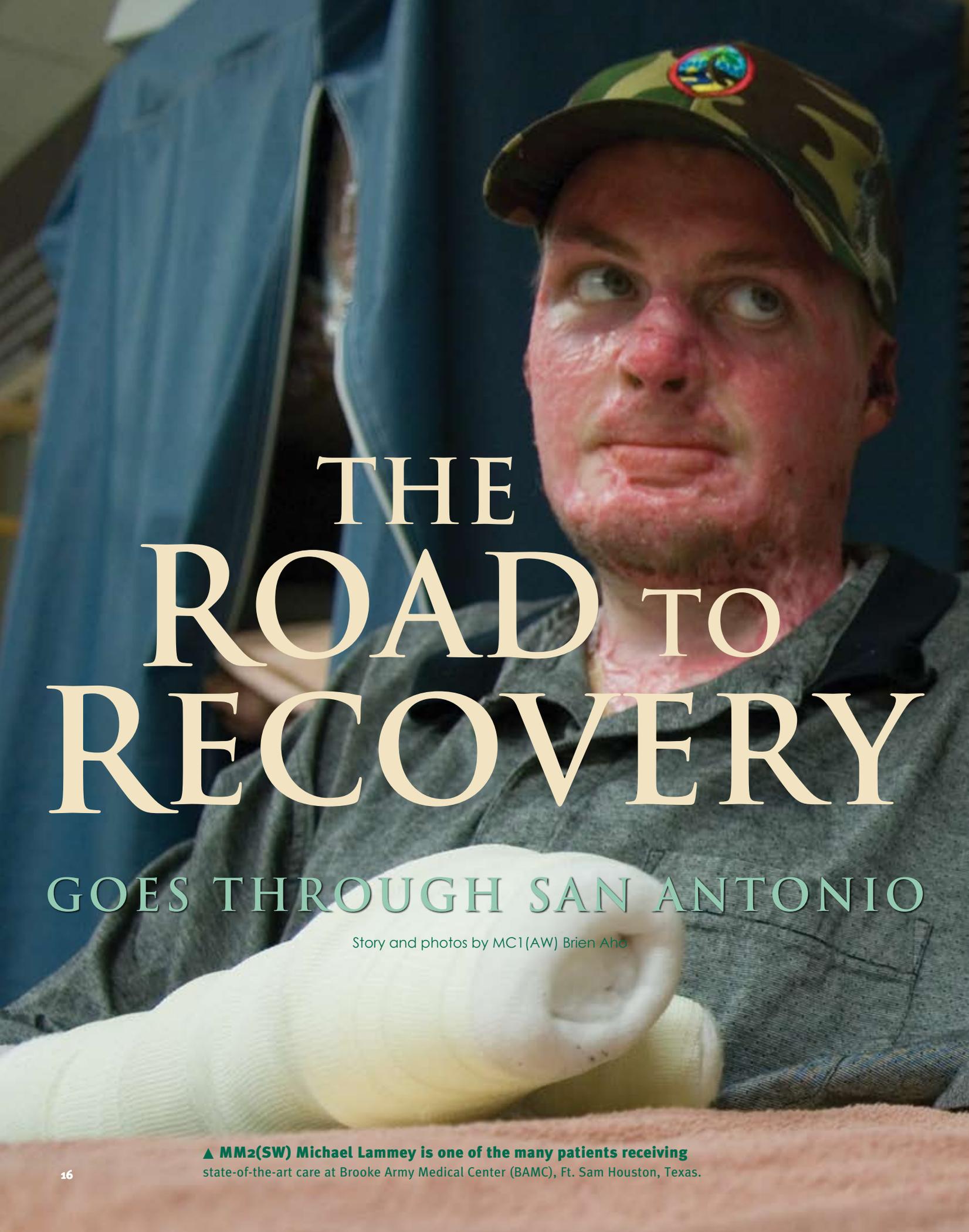
As I-Day drew to a close, words of past experiences were echoed by Naval Academy Midn. 4/C Katherine Lindbom.

"It's an overwhelming day," she said. "It doesn't seem real. Everything is just a blur."

McCammack is a photojournalist assigned to Naval Media Center, Washington, D.C.

Before taking their Oath of Office, ►
plebes learn the basics of marching at the Naval Academy's Tecumseh Court.





THE ROAD TO RECOVERY

GOES THROUGH SAN ANTONIO

Story and photos by MC1 (AW) Brien Aho

▲ **MM2(SW) Michael Lamme** is one of the many patients receiving state-of-the-art care at Brooke Army Medical Center (BAMC), Ft. Sam Houston, Texas.



The term hero is an understatement for our nation's wounded warriors, who have come home in a manner that can only be described as life-altering.

For our Sailors, Marines, Soldiers and Airmen who have been badly burned, the road to recovery usually leads to one facility in San Antonio.

Brooke Army Medical Center (BAMC), Ft. Sam Houston, Texas, has one of the nation's leading burn units and is home to our wounded heroes who are fighting daily to get their lives back to normal.



▲ **HMC Tim Alonzo briefs Sailors during the morning meeting about an upcoming Veterans Administration forum that will be held at BAMC.**

BAMC is a modern state-of-the-art, 450-bed health care facility that provides level-one trauma and graduate medical education. Included in the normal bed capacity, 48 are dedicated for ICU beds and 40 are dedicated to the Institute of Surgical Research Burn Unit.

The Trauma Division is the core of BAMC's ACS (American College of Surgeons) verified Level 1 Trauma Center. Only 97 trauma programs in the United States have received the ACS Level I rating, which is the highest rating a program can achieve. The Burn Center and Trauma and Critical Care Service make up the only Trauma Division in DOD. The Burn Center has eight Intensive Care and 12 Step-down beds, with the capability to expand to 40 beds.



▲ **BUSC (SCW/SW) Robert Westover holds in his hand a coin he received from Rear Adm. Christine Bruzek-Kohler, director Navy Nurse Corps/Chief of Staff Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, during the weekly meeting.**

It is the military's only burn center and is recognized worldwide for its contributions to improved burn survival. The center admits more than 300 patients a year with significant burns.

Senior Chief Hospital Corpsman Tim Alonzo and HMC Omar Carillo, BAMC naval liaisons, believe the physical therapy and state-of-the-art equipment coupled with the staff at BAMC are extremely effective ways to get the wounded warriors back on their feet.

"It is amazing to see the treatment of our wounded warriors. For people who have just arrived, we meet with them on a 24/7 basis trying to make it as comfortable and smooth as possible. Regardless of what time it is, we are here to make their medical treatment easier for them and their families," said Alonzo.

Because of the 24/7 rehabilitation, Alonzo had seen a transformation in the wounded warriors under their charge.

"The morale here is through the roof," said Alonzo. "I don't know how they do it. The only thing I can figure out is the reason they are here today, is because they were leading the fight to begin with, and they are the true leaders who are up front. That puts them in harm's way when you are out there doing your best. So these are the best of the best here and that's tremendous."

Another reason for the high morale is the recent establishment of weekly meetings with all the Navy personnel, allowing the Sailors to get to know one another and share their recovery.

"For me, the most rewarding part of being here is seeing the camaraderie between the Sailors at the morning meeting and when they stop by my office during the week," said Alonzo. "Watching their progress is tremendously rewarding for me."

Even though the morale is high at BAMC, Sailors know what the odds are and they are betting that the care they receive here at BAMC will make the road smooth along their journey.

"Due to the amputations, I'll never return to 100 percent," said Senior Chief Builder (SCW/SW) Robert Westover Jr. "But, I strive to get all I can out of what I have left. BAMC has been very supportive and I know with the care I have received here and by pushing myself I will be able to recover faster."

▼ MM₁ (SCW) Robert Bruce II undergoes his daily therapy with a BAMC nurse.



“A HERO IS AN ORDINARY INDIVIDUAL WHO FINDS THE STRENGTH TO PERSEVERE AND ENDURE IN SPITE OF OVERWHELMING OBSTACLES.”

- CHRISTOPHER REEVES

▼ **MM3 Matthew Bove agonizes in pain while his fingers are being stretched** during one of his many physical therapy sessions.



Many roads lead to BAMC, but for the few who have been fortunate enough to make it home alive, their fight has just begun.

It only takes a second for your life to change and for Sailors like Westover those few seconds between normal and life-changing takes only a blink of an eye.

On the Road, Ramadi, Iraq

One minute you are riding in a Humvee doing your job, staying alert, and the next minute you are in complete darkness with searing pain shooting through your body, the likes of which you have never imagined.

Your convoy has been hit by an improvised explosive device (IED). You are trying to get out of the vehicle but your legs are broken from the impact. The cabin is filled with smoke and you can't see anything. All you know is you're on fire and you need to get out.

Your eardrums have ruptured, but you still hear the hot rounds going off next to you because of the fire burning in the Humvee which is igniting the .50 caliber rounds used by the turret gunner.

You're burning. You have to find a way out. Your corneas have been knocked out of place but you see a blurry, small hint of blue light coming from the passenger side door. You go for it despite your injuries and the skin dripping off your arms.

Finally, clear air. As you succumb to the searing pain, you realize you are being transported somewhere. You hope it's to the nearest hospital to start on the road to recovery.

For Westover, this scenario was all too real. Unfortunately, he lived it. But, he's here today because of the combat-trained medics on the scene who were able to assist him right away.

The incident occurred outside a forward-operating base in Ramadi, just eight days before Westover was due to come home.

“I was attached to the 2/11th Marines and they needed a roadway specialist which is what I do on the outside in Pennsylvania,” said Westover. “I'm qualified to do road and bridge assessments and we were returning back to base when we came upon a suspicious box.”

Later, intelligence discovered that Westover's convoy, which was driving in a staggered formation, was hit by two 155mm rounds detonated by a cell phone just two

feet from the Humvee in which Westover was riding.

Westover credits his life to the medical professionals who rescued him and provided immediate first aid. His total time from treatment on the battle ground in Baghdad, to Landstuhl, Germany, and eventual transport to BAMC was within three days.

During his rehabilitation at BAMC, Westover has had to endure 22 surgeries which ranged from bone manipulation like the titanium rod that runs from his knee to his hip to re-breaking all the bones in his elbow to allow for full range of motion.

“The rehab here can be a grind at times, but I’m progressing well so now I try to encourage those who are new here to continue their treatment with a positive attitude. Those guys who may have just arrived may think that their life is over. However, I have traveled down that same road they are on and I have been in that same spot. You are only limited by your imagination and your motivation so if you have chosen survival now all you have to do is choose to live and that makes a huge difference,” said Westover.

Westover believes the advancements in technology are truly amazing.

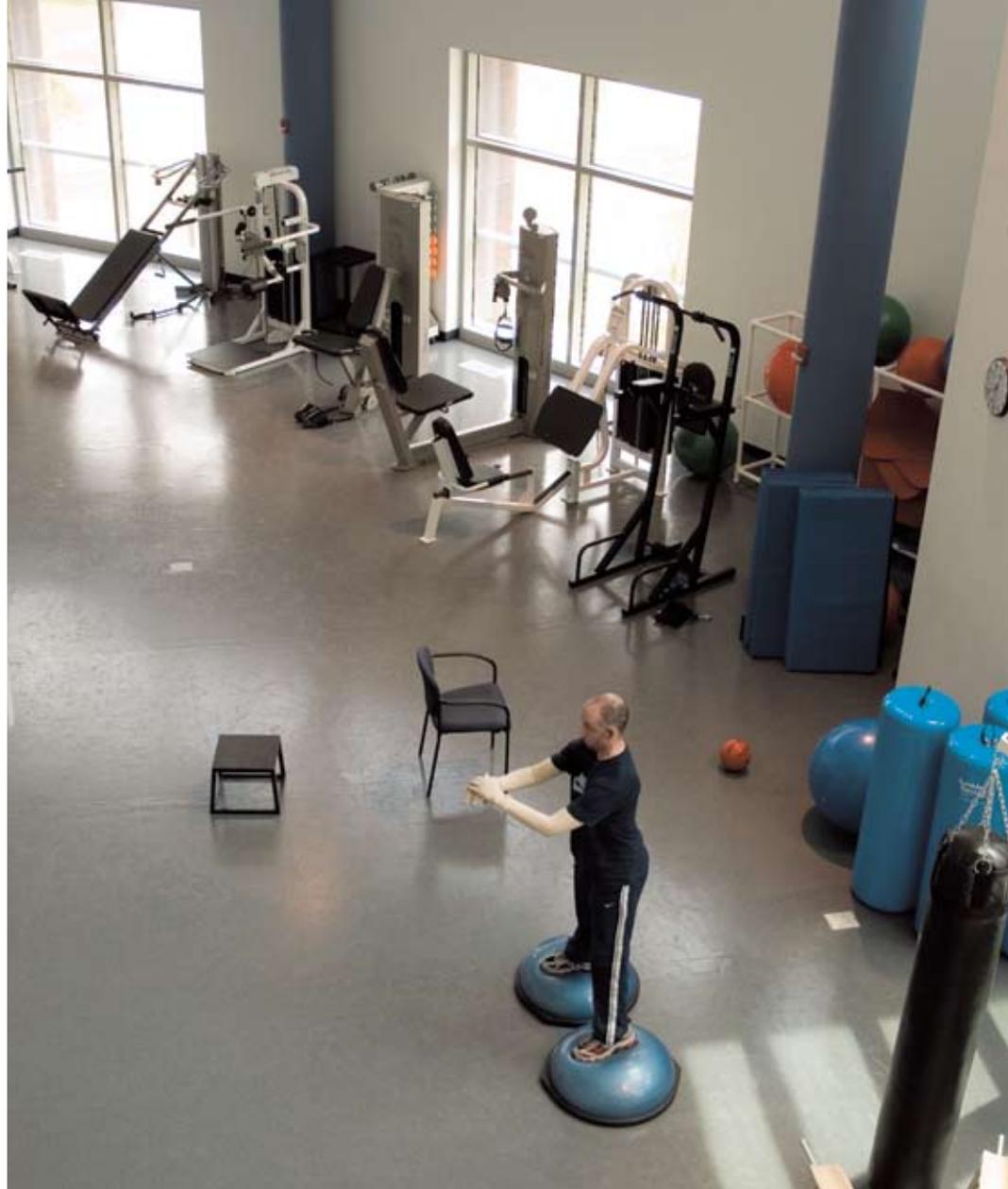
“The doctors have told me that if the technologies hadn’t advanced as much as they have, I wouldn’t have survived if I had been injured the same way in *Desert Storm* in 1991,” said Westover.

While Westover is focused on his personal struggle to overcome any obstacle before him, other Sailors are also on that same path of recovery. Two Sailors on board USS *Frank Cable* (AS 40), Machinist Mate 1st Class (SW) Robert Bruce II and MM2(SW) Michael Lammey, both agree with Westover that your life can change in a split second. But, how you react to that change can make all the difference between life and death.

On board USS *Frank Cable*

Ship maintenance happens every day around the fleet and you never think twice that something could go terribly wrong. But for Sailors aboard *Frank Cable* it will be a PMS check they and future Sailors will never forget.

You’re working in a boiler room preparing



▲ **EMC (SW/AW) Peter Johns performs rehab exercises in the state-of-the-art facility.**

to do a spot check on a piece of equipment that you have checked a hundred times when in a instant you hear a popping sound. You realize something is not right. As you take steps to shut down a potential melting pot, you feel something on the back of your neck. As you pull away from it you lean into the door with your shoulder and run through it.

You call to evacuate the space and proceed toward the exit, which are three decks above or 36 steps to safety. If you take a breath while in the space you will instantly burn everything from your mouth to your lungs.

You run up the stairs as fast as you can,

ignoring the fact that your skin feels like it’s melting off because your body is so pumped up with adrenaline. Just before you reach for the door to safety, your cheeks, tongue and throat swell up with pain from the boiling water you inhaled. You run through the door, pushing it open with your hand and leave skin stuck to the door.

Finally, you make it to fresh air on the flight deck only to be met with stares of shock and horror.

For Bruce and Lammey, the road to recovery started with that 36-step climb out of the boiler room.

“After hearing Bruce call to evacuate the



▲ HMC Tim Alonzo watches Maureen Watkins stretch her son, Chief Engineman (SCW/SW) Peter Johns' arms during rehab exercises in the state-of-the-art Center for the Intrepid.

space, I knew I had to get out immediately,” said Lammey. “I couldn’t feel the hand rails because I guess my hands were already burned, but I knew I only had the one breath and three flights of stairs to navigate to get to safety.

“I rounded the first ladder well; I felt this wall of heat. Then, as I was climbing I took a small breath. The burning sensation going through my teeth and down my throat was intense, but I looked up and realized I had only 12 steps left to safety. As I reached the top I put my hand against the door and saw the skin stick to the door. I pulled away from it, leaned into the door with my shoulder and ran through it.”

The investigation revealed that there were tubes that failed and a section of the boiler system split open, emptying steam into the fire room.

Fourteen Sailors acted quickly to secure the boiler, which saved the ship from any more damage, but in the process severely

burned six Sailors who had to be evacuated to BAMC.

“I was watching the boiler gauges reach between 730 and 740 degrees when I heard what sounded like a shotgun going off,” said Lammey.” “I started to secure the boiler when I felt hot rain on the back of my neck. I looked over to the back of the boiler and the space was filling with steam. That’s when Bruce called for the evacuation.”

Hours are all it took for the Sailors to be evacuated and brought to BAMC.

“They stabilized us in Guam, but within 52 hours from the time of the accident, we were in the ICU at BAMC,” said Bruce.

Two Sailors assigned to *Frank Cable* died from injuries they sustained when a steam pipe ruptured in the engineering spaces Dec. 1, 2006.

With the size of BAMC and the number of patients traveling the halls, having a shipmate to depend on through the recovery coupled

with the care received at BAMC has made all the difference to Bruce and Lammey.

“The nurses have helped greatly with the rehab process and they don’t look at it as a job,” said Bruce. “They look at it as if we are heroes. I didn’t expect that from a military hospital. The nurses are so helpful and personable and have really made a big difference with us taking that next step in our recovery process.”

As Alonzo noted, a good attitude is essential to recovery. The meetings once a week, building relationships between one another and having family here, seems to lessen the pain a little.

“Lammey and I try to have a good attitude,” said Bruce. “It’s contagious, but it’s hard because this is a life-changing event. We’re going to be changed for the rest of our lives and in some ways it’s been a good thing.”

All the Sailors being treated at BAMC are



▲ **BUSC (SCW/SW) Robert Westover and his wife Pamela depart the barracks after the morning meeting at BAMC.**

fortunate to have quality care and support.

“The medical facilities here are second to none,” said Alonzo. “The staff and doctors really take time to get to know the patients and I think you wouldn’t find that on the outside hospitals.”

“Recently the ‘Intrepid National Armed Forces Rehabilitation Center’ was opened. Funding of \$60 million was raised for the state-of-the-art physical rehabilitation center for our wounded warriors,” said Alonzo. “The

high-tech equipment allows the Sailors to better prepare for a life living with prosthetics.

“Currently we have 27 outpatients who are meet with our staff on a daily basis. We handle anything – pay issues, PCS orders here for extended time frames, community things like finding families member’s schools and housing,” said Alonzo.

“Regardless what time it is, we’re here because a lot of these guys are coming out of theater and are here in two or three days.

“Within a few days after they are stabilized, they are sent around the world. We’re here to make that transition smooth. Further down the line, we even look after their needs for their advancement exams,” added Alonzo.

For Alonzo, seeing the rehabilitation is hard, but he knows it’s a bridge the Sailors need to cross.

“The most difficult part of the job is seeing the patients struggle with the rehab. It’s very rewarding to watch them have their success because they make progress every day, but to see them have to go through it is very hard,” said Alonzo.

“The families are very emotional, as they should be, and dealing with that is a big part of the job,” said Alonzo. “But in a very short period of time, family members realize how great a place this is and it starts to alleviate their anxiety.”

Families play a major role in the recovery process, even adapting to the military standards as far as adhering to the regimental process of helping to remove bandages on a daily basis.

“I feel sorry for the guys who don’t have family support here,” said Maureen Watkin, mother of Chief Engineman (SCW/SW) Peter Johns who received electrical burns in an accident aboard USS *Nimitz* (CVN 68).

“They really get us involved from the start because we will eventually have to take care of them,” said Watkins. “They had me put aquifer lotion on him a couple times a day. I would be there from 6 a.m. until 8 p.m. I did things that I would have never thought I would do. Just being here is important and even though he’s a grown man and he wants to be independent he can’t be right now. And besides, he’s still my little boy.”

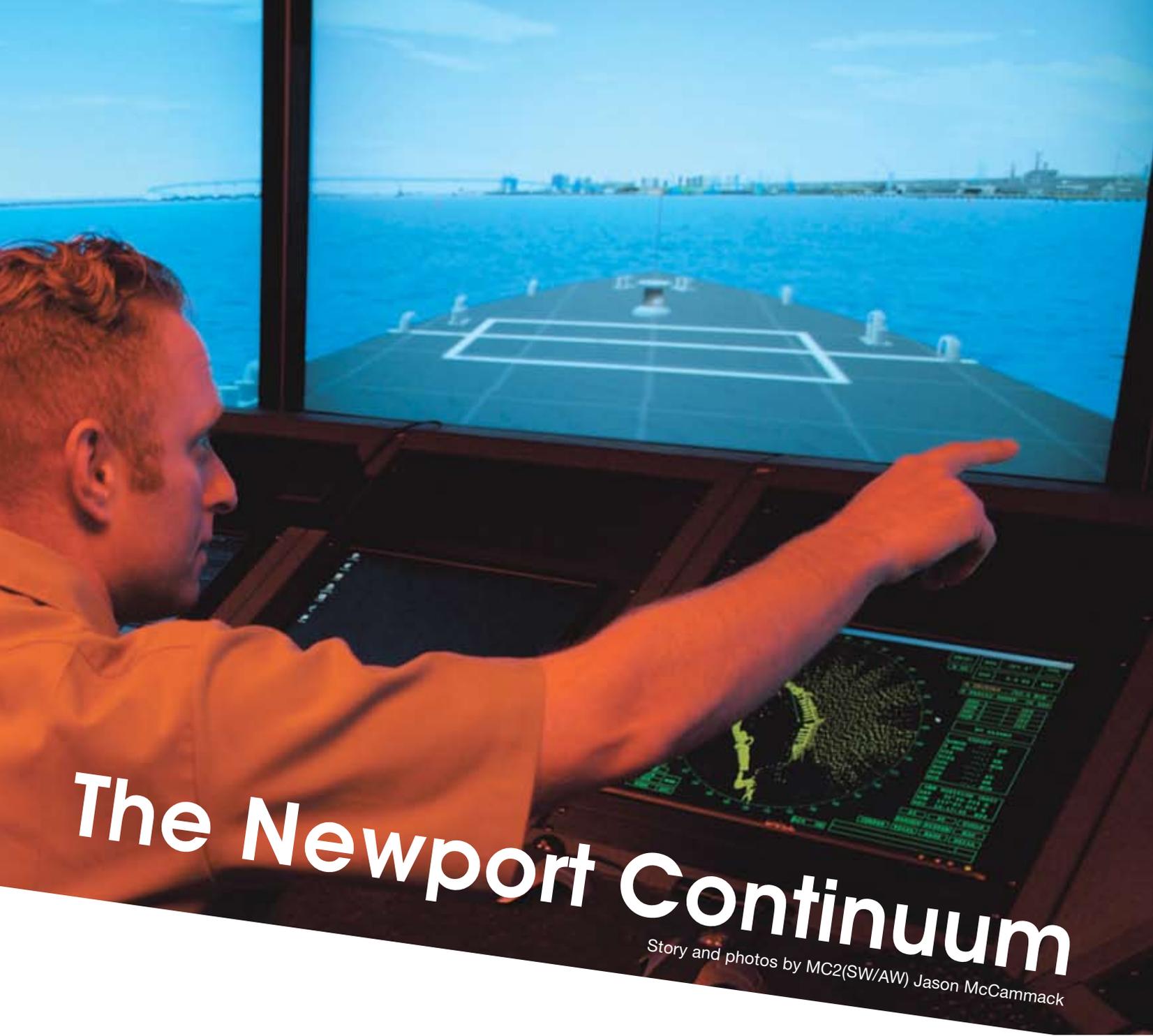
Despite the overwhelming obstacles these warriors have to overcome on the road to recovery, their paths will be less uncomfortable during their stay at BAMC.

“The injuries you see here are horrific and it will take years to recover from them,” said Westover. “I see miracles here every day. To see the care the nurses and doctors give and to watch them rebuild faces, bodies and limbs is truly amazing.”

Aho is a photojournalist assigned to Naval Media Center, Washington, D.C.



▲ **SWOS students navigate their virtual vessel through any number of simulated hazards in the school's Littoral Combat Ship trainer.**



The Newport Continuum

Story and photos by MC2(SW/AW) Jason McCammack

When they return to this charming, New England town, it is with little hesitation. The inviting summer breezes welcome visitors who flock to its mansions, built by the scions of the Gilded Age. This village, a unique mixture of the old and new world, plays host to world famous folk and jazz festivals (the former was the site of Bob Dylan's stunning first electric performance).

Newport, R.I., also hosted French soldiers as they aided the Colonial cause during the Revolutionary War, and fearsome pirates often found refuge here in the 17th and 18th centuries. Founded in 1639, Newport was witness to the birth of a nation and has played a vital role in America's development ever since.

It is to this historic backdrop that Navy surface warfare officers (SWO) make a regular pilgrimage. They come, wide-eyed, as junior officers, and return at many of the most critical points in their careers. Newport, and the Navy's Surface Warfare Officers School (SWOS), provides a reassuring beacon of light as these Sailors navigate the unnerving waters of naval service.

Former Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Arleigh Burke said, "A ship is built to fight. You better know how!" It is the mission of SWOS to meet this challenge by providing a program of education and training in support of surface Navy requirements to prepare officers to go to sea.

"A surface warfare officer will come to Newport, and specifically Surface Warfare Officers School, a number of times throughout their career," said Rear Adm. John Christenson, former SWOS Command commanding officer. "We have training going on here today for officers going to major command ... all the way down to our post graduation school students at the Division Officer Course who are preparing for their qualification as a surface warfare officer. It's a continuum of training that happens throughout a surface warfare officer's career."

For most junior officers, the Division Officer Course at SWOS is their

introduction to the school.

The course is a three-week "capstone" course. Students from different homeports, ship types and experience are grouped into wardrooms of 24 students. This atmosphere allows them to share their knowledge and experience in professional areas of strength, while gaining knowledge from others with different areas of expertise. Combat systems, maritime warfare, engineering, fleet support, damage control and ship-handling simulations are among the training curriculum.

"The Division Officer Course is not only about classroom instruction but also about the opportunity to build upon

▼ **Simulators have become a mainstay of training at SWOS. Relocating the machines to the school has allowed the students to receive additional training whenever their schedule allows for it.**





▲ Lt. Wayne Gehman examines the horizon as the watch team navigates a channel in the full-mission bridge virtual simulator.

the experiences and knowledge of my classmates from other platforms. This better prepares us for our next career milestone as well as our follow-on tours,” said Ensign Barry Cohen, USS *Robert G. Bradley* (FFG-49).

Several years later, surface warfare officers reappear in Newport as mid-grade SWOs for the Department Head Course which prepares them for a greater level of leadership as a department head.

“The department head training really builds on the experience we’ve had in the fleet,” said Lt. Jennifer Free, a Department Head Course student. “You have to come in with some prerequisite knowledge of being on a ship and being a division officer. This course takes it to the next level and teaches you how to manage a department.”

One key element of the Department Head Course, (as well as most of the other courses), is the use of computer simulated virtual reality equipment.

“Oh, it’s amazing,” said Free. “When I was here before for the Division Officer Course it was a lot of classroom instruction, a little bit of hands-on stuff here and there,



▲ No amount of classroom training can replace real-world experience, so SWOS students man fire hoses to learn the most effective ways to battle a shipboard fire.



but mostly classroom instruction. Now we are in the Multi Mission Team Trainer (MMTT) every day, or every other day. Then we do the full mission bridge, which is a wonderful virtual, 3-D environment for ship driving and we'll eventually go into the COVE (conning officer virtual environment), for warship handling, further along in our training.”

The simulators allow the students to have a hands-on learning experience and the level of realism is unmatched according to retired Capt. Bud Weeks, navigation, seamanship, and shipbuilding site manager at SWOS.

“Because of the fidelity of the models and how realistic they are, we’re able to take each student through a number of

▲ **Shipboard damage control is a fundamental course of instruction at SWOS.** The officers don protective firefighting gear before battling a blaze.



▲ **The “Buttercup” simulator, located at Naval Base Newport, allows students to gain first-hand knowledge about the dangers of flooding aboard a ship.** Teamwork and effective communication are critical to overcoming the mounting challenges during the exercise.

different scenarios and let them practice on the class of ship that they're going to, in the position they'll be holding on board, put that into play and practice here as SWOS, said Weeks. "With the availability of these simulators throughout the training pipeline, the students can come and get extra instruction as often as they want when there is extra time in their schedule. It maximizes their training while they're here."

Until four years ago, all of the simulators were managed by a contractor at a facility 5 miles from SWOS. The simulators were relocated on campus in recent years and the results have been overwhelmingly positive in a number of respects. Of primary importance is the fact that students can now train on the simulators whenever they have free time in their schedule. Second, moving the simulators on campus eliminated the fees associated with using them.

The level of simulated reality is unmatched and the school is committed to staying on the cutting edge.

"We're constantly working with the software people to upgrade the fidelity of the [simulated] ships," said Weeks. "Nothing takes the place of real-world experience, but this is the next best thing."

Through intense class work and long hours in the simulators, Department Head Course students gain an appreciation for the demands of their upcoming leadership role.

"After your first couple of weeks here you start to get an understanding of how important the job of a department head is on a ship – how close you are to the executive officer and the captain in all the major decisions that get made," said Lt. Eddie Bertucci, a Department Head Course student. "Six months seems like a long time, and it is, but you can really make of it what you want to. There are standards, of course, but I don't know of any other job in civilian life that allows you six months to prepare for the job, and that's a good thing, because we need to get out there and be ready."

By the time the officers emerge once again in Newport for the Prospective Executive Officer Course, the wide-eyes they displayed when they first arrived in Rhode Island years earlier, have been



▲ The Surface Warfare Officer pin, first proposed in 1972, is a badge of honor for the SWO community.

replaced by sharp professional resolve – and possibly, a few gray hairs.

The executive officer training prepares line officers eligible for command at sea to execute duties as second in command of surface ships. The training addresses the responsibilities of fighting the ship should they succeed to command. The course also prepares the officers for the rigors of supervising the administrative functions of a command.

"The world is changing," said SWOS Command Commanding Officer Capt. Thomas Rowden. "We must continually focus on those changes so our graduates are fully prepared for the challenges they will inevitably face."

Students attending the executive officer (XO) course also use a number of virtual reality simulators including the granddaddy of them all, the full-mission bridge.

"Full-mission bridge is a 360-degree virtual environment for a bridge watch team," said Lt. Wayne Gehman, SWOS course instructor and primary instructor for the full-mission bridge. "The simulator is used for the division officer, department head, XO and commanding officer courses. It's a cost-effective tool because we're able to provide scenarios that require a lot of man-hours and personnel to accomplish them in real life."

After completing their tours as second in command, officers return once again to Newport for the next course of instruction – the Prospective Commanding Officer

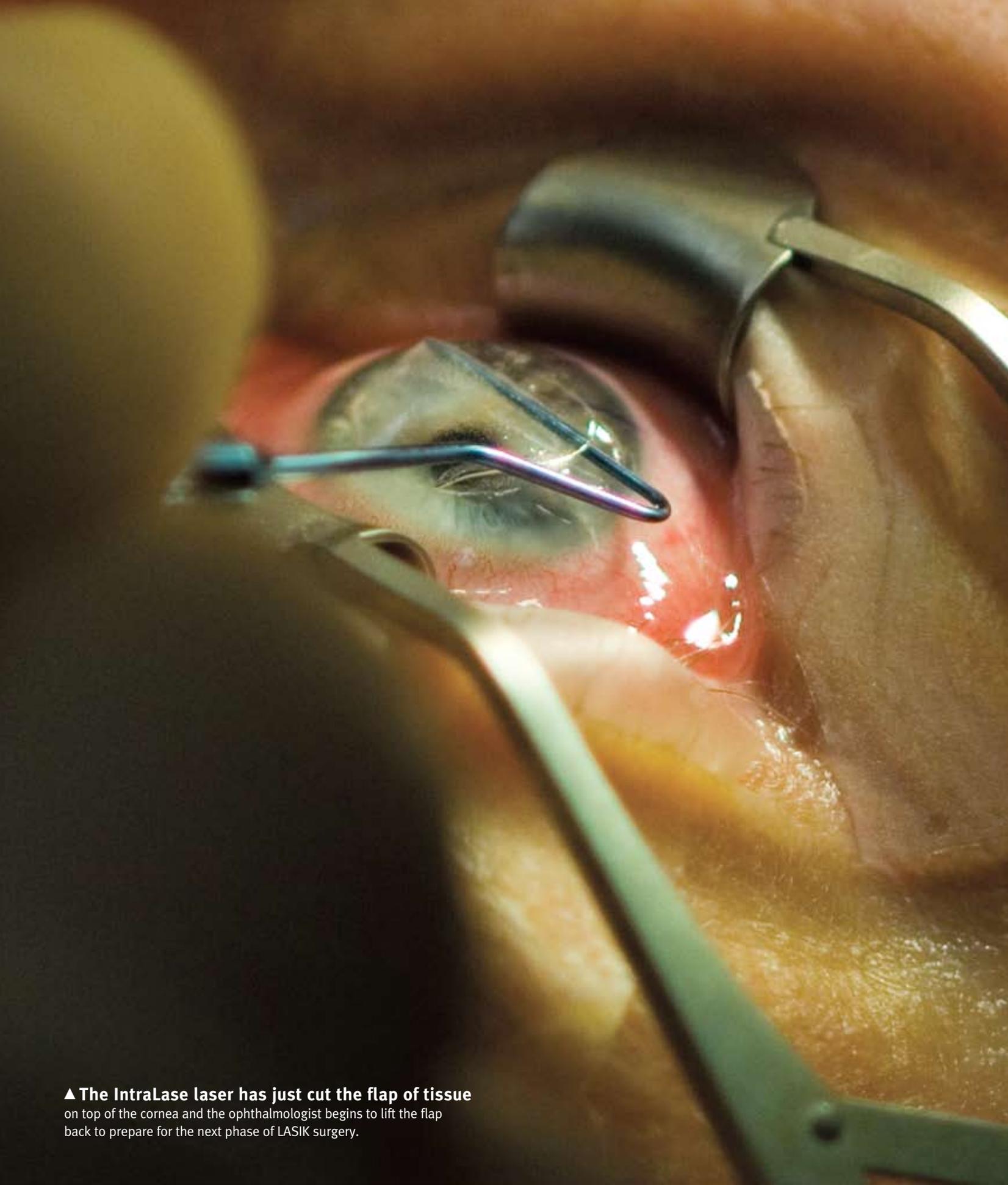
Course. Designed to prepare eligible line officers for the execution of command authority aboard surface ships, the course addresses command responsibilities, ship tactics, techniques for evaluation and control of ship systems and equipment, current fleet policies and practices and specialized information tailored to train the students of the specific ship type they will soon command.

The final professional trek to Newport for most SWOs is the SWOS Major Command Course. Major command training welcomes a wider audience than the other SWOS courses as it trains the Navy's senior leaders in the surface, aviation and submarine communities.

The officers who have risen to this level of career achievement are provided platform-specific training combined with executive level overviews across the full spectrum of current fleet operational issues. The course also provides refresher training in operations, combat systems, tactics and specific systems of their future ships/squadrons.

SWOS in historic Newport is truly a career-long rite of passage for the Navy's surface warfare officer community. Unlike many of the Sailors, music lovers and tourists who flock to this traditional New England settlement, these naval leaders can take comfort in knowing their current visit will most likely not be their last. ❧

McCammack is a photojournalist assigned to Naval Media Center, Washington, D.C.



▲ **The IntraLase laser has just cut the flap of tissue** on top of the cornea and the ophthalmologist begins to lift the flap back to prepare for the next phase of LASIK surgery.



NAVY OFFERS NEWEST TECHNOLOGY

LASER EYE SURGERY KEEPS SAILORS MISSION READY

Story by MC2(SW) Rebekah Blowers, photos by MC1(AW) Brien Aho

For Sailors and Marines who wear glasses or contacts, the thought of waking up in the middle of the night and fumbling around on the night stand or in their rack for their glasses to see the alarm clock is a nuisance. So is not being able to qualify on mission-essential weapons without squinting through the sites. Most people would like to be able to be rid of their impaired vision.

Sailors and Marines may now have that opportunity thanks to the Navy offering the newest technology in laser eye surgery through a new piece of equipment called IntraLase.

The new procedure offers the Navy many benefits — the most important being that Navy personnel can now be fully operational faster. According to Capt. Joseph Pasternak, a surgeon at National Naval Medical Center (NNMC), Bethesda, Md., Photo-Refractive Keratectomy (PRK) takes up to three months to heal. With IntraLase, only takes a few days.

“Instead of three months out of work, it

could mean two weeks. Our goal is to try to make our warfighters operational that much quicker,” said Pasternak.

Refractive surgery reduces dependence on glasses and contact lenses. Light must be focused precisely on the retina of the eye for an image to be seen clearly. The light is focused by the eye through a process called refraction or bending of light. When someone is “nearsighted,” the light is focused in front of the retina and the person can see objects close up but not far away.

Laser surgery uses an Excimer Laser and shaves down microns of the cornea to flatten

the shape of the eye and thereby improve someone’s vision.

“[There is a] clear dome of collagen above the cornea. The combination of your corneal curvature and your eye length determines whether you are nearsighted or farsighted,” said Pasternak. “Think of the cornea bending the light too much so the image is focused in front of your retina. If we do something to change that shape, we can do something to change the bending of the light coming onto the retina. We not only flatten the cornea, but make it rounder.

“The Excimer Laser is high-tech sand paper. It’s basically removing a little piece of corneal tissue each laser pulse. Each time that laser pulses and hits your cornea, it’s going to remove a micron of tissue,” Pasternak added.

If they were using PRK, the laser sculpts the surface of the cornea beginning at the clear dome of collagen above the cornea and works its way down to alter the refractive state of the eye. PRK is not the same thing as LASIK. According to Pasternak, LASIK cuts a flap in the clear dome of protein tissue around the eye with a blade and then shapes the cornea, while IntraLase cuts that flap with a laser.

“IntraLase creates little gas pockets within the cornea and splits the tissue by creating gas bubbles. That’s what’s doing the corneal separation rather than a mechanical shearing. It’s the most predictable, safest way to create the flap,” said Pasternak.

The procedure goes by pretty fast according to Kevin Gray, manager of the Laser Vision Center, NNMC Bethesda.

“The procedure usually takes about 20 minutes. Most of it is prepping the patient. Actually cutting the flap only takes about 20 seconds. And depending upon how much treatment they get under the IntraLase laser that’s anywhere from 20 to 60 seconds,” Gray said.

Pasternak said that during the procedure, the patient’s eyes are kept open with a lid spreader and are treated with a blink suppressor, a numbing agent and a suction ring that Pasternak compared to a vice grip for an eyeball so it doesn’t move during the surgery.

“The flap is going to be to a micron



▲ An ophthalmology technician prepares a patient at NNMC

Bethesda to receive LASIK IntraLase surgery. The actual procedure can take only seconds, while most of the patient’s time is in preparing for the procedure.



▲ **Capt. Joseph Pasternak, an ophthalmology surgeon at National Naval Medical Center Bethesda,** speaks with soon-to-be LASIK IntraLase patients and their spouses to make sure they know what to expect under the laser and during their short healing time.

level of proficiency, so we get exactly what we're looking for. After the laser is used on the cornea, we put the flap back down and ideally there are no wrinkles or layers in it. The precision is still based on the Excimer laser taking away the exact amount of tissue we're trying to get rid of," Pasternak said.

According to the ophthalmology team at NNMC Bethesda, there are many benefits of IntraLase versus other kinds of refractive surgeries. The biggest two are faster vision recovery and less discomfort for the patient.

"There's a much quicker visual impact. You don't lose as much time away from your operational duties or from work. The decreased pain is what really sells it. The reason it's less painful is because when we

make that cut, those nerve endings are less disturbed. It's a little like having a paper cut. It takes about four hours for your eye to seal that cut edge," said Pasternak.

Gray said that just about everyone who has been eligible for PRK is eligible for IntraLase LASIK.

"Sailors can go see their local optometrist and get an eye exam. Then they can receive a refractory surgery consult which will get faxed to us or any of the other laser vision centers. Then, depending on their priority, they are seen. If they are a high priority, we get them in as soon as we can," said Gray.

As with any surgery there are some risks associated with IntraLase. The main one being that wrinkles can develop on the

flap when it's healing back onto the eye or inflammation can occur under the flap, creating ridges or bumps.

"The first two days after surgery is critical. If you poke yourself in the eye putting your drops in, you can pull your flap right off, so you have to be very, very careful around your eye. When we're done with the surgery, I rinse out the layer and try to wash everything out of it so we don't get any lint under the tissue.

"We take great pains to flatten the flap out and smooth it so you don't get wrinkles in it. But my experience has been that the higher your prescription, the more likely wrinkles occur because we're taking away a lot of tissue. That flap has got a little bit



▲ **Capt. Joseph Pasternak, an ophthalmology surgeon at National Naval**

Medical Center Bethesda puts an eye-numbing drop into Marine Corps Lt. Col. Lawrence Ryder's eye before using the IntraLase laser to cut a flap on the tissue above the cornea during LASIK surgery.

larger diameter than the tissue it's lying back into so it's got to crinkle back into place. We try to keep that so those little crinkles, if we see them, are out around the edges and not in the middle where they can hurt your vision," said Pasternak.

"Operational safety is also a consideration, which is why the Navy is moving to IntraLase because of the safety profile and the visual outcomes."

Pasternak said that right now the Navy is in the infancy of IntraLase. IntraLase has been going on in San Diego for about three years, and NNMC is the first center other than San Diego to offer the treatment.

"What we're gradually moving to is having aviation-approved LASIK and unless you're in a status, like a SEAL or something where you're constantly at risk of having eye trauma, we'll do LASIK on everyone who wants it because it will get everyone back to work that much sooner," said Pasternak.

Cmdr. Norman Charbonneau, a perioperative nurse at NNMC said he was one of the first people to receive IntraLase at NNMC Bethesda.

"I thought it was great. I had never had laser surgery before and I don't have anything to compare it to. This was a breeze. The results are good and it's all laser. I feel it's a better surgery just from the cleaner laser cut," said Charbonneau.

He added that he felt little pain during and immediately after the procedure.

"It was uncomfortable during one part of the procedure when they put pressure on the eye. It was no more than someone taking their thumb and putting it on your eye and holding it there, so it wasn't unbearable. The first couple hours after the surgery, it felt scratchy and uncomfortable, so I just went to bed, woke up and felt fine. Not like the three or four days that PRK had, this was just mild. I took some light medication and went to bed. It didn't require the narcotics that you take for PRK," said Charbonneau.

He said he would recommend this surgery to anyone, especially after seeing a Sailor aboard ship struggle with an eye infection.

"On the ship we had a guy who didn't bring any glasses and all he had was his contacts," continued Charbonneau. He

got an infection in his eyes and had to lose his contacts so he was led around the ship because he couldn't see. His vision was that bad that we couldn't make glasses on the ship that would bring him close to normal. We had to have a seeing-eye person lead him around till we could get him off to shore."

Charbonneau noted that the surgery makes it much easier for him to perform day-to-day tasks, along with his job.

"It does help me do my job better because I don't have to put my glasses on," said Charbonneau. "It's just easier to get around. We still wear eye protection in surgery, but now I don't have the dual glasses or the dual shielding that I normally had to wear," he said.

Charbonneau and other patients who receive LASIK get follow up appointments every month, three months, six months and a year after the surgery. He said so far, at his one month appointment, the results have been great for him.

"My first day results were 20/15, 20/20 so the results were phenomenal in the first day. My last exam was 20/25 and 20/15 in the other eye. It's still great," he said.

Lt. Michael Moore, a submarine officer currently stationed at a training facility in Troy, N.Y., said besides the operational benefits of having the surgery, he's looking forward to some personal benefits as well.

"It's the little things – waking up in the middle of the night and being able to see the alarm clock and tell what time it is, or not having to worry about playing with my son and knocking my glasses off or anything. Being able to see in the water and not have to worry if the water is going to wash away my contacts or doing anything like that. Not being limited with glasses or contacts will be a great benefit," said Moore minutes before going into LASIK IntraLase surgery.

The operational benefits are vast for him as well.

"I think of the many benefits as a submarine officer, one being on the periscope while underway. It's a lot easier without having to worry about having glasses on, you get a much better field of view on the periscope without having the glasses on. The periscope doesn't have the range adjustment that all eyes need, it's only for a small amount," Moore said.



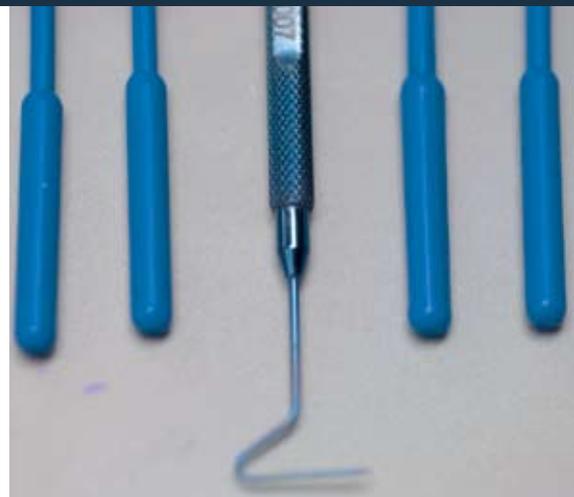
▲ The ophthalmologist and his technicians at NNMCM Bethesda line up the

IntraLase laser based on the patient's exact eye measurements before the start of LASIK eye surgery. The new IntraLase procedure only takes days for service member's to recover from, versus months like the old PRK procedure.

"Not having to put contacts on right after I wake up to take the watch or especially in a casualty situation where the submarine is using a [breathing apparatus] not having glasses underneath those where they could get shifted around or move on you and then you would have slightly worse vision than with the glasses, certainly will make it a lot easier to see constantly. [After this surgery], you're always ready, you don't have to make any adjustments midway."

Pasternak said that LASIK IntraLase surgery should be available in more and more places around the fleet in the upcoming months. Sailors should contact their local optometrist for more information. 

Blowers and Aho are photojournalists assigned to Naval Media Center, Washington, D.C.



▲ Tools like these are used

during LASIK IntraLase at NNMCM Bethesda to move the flap of tissue on and off the cornea during the procedure.

NUTRITION ON THE

GO Things Every Sailor Should Know

Story by MC2(SW) Rebekah Blowers

Regardless of what time of year it is, the Physical Fitness Assessment (PFA) is always right around the corner, and Sailors are told to prepare for it all year round. Being prepared doesn't mean only running, swimming and other physical exercise the week before the PFA, or starvation dieting to lose that extra five pounds. Sailors should be eating right, balancing a healthy diet and exercise to always be mission ready.

Lt. Cmdr. Linda S. Hite, department head, National Naval Medical Center Bethesda Nutrition Management, said that stress and eating on the go can affect Sailor's eating habits and deter them from meeting their fitness goals.

"The best way to eat healthy and to lose weight is to eat more fruits and vegetables – the more colorful the fruit or vegetable, the better. Strive to eat a wide variety each day, including red, green, blue/purple, yellow/orange, red and white foods," Hite said.

Sailor's lifestyles can be stressful, whether underway or on shore, balancing family, friends, work, education and whatever else comes their way. Hite said that stress is handled differently by everyone. Some people overeat while others drastically reduce their food intake.

"The best defense is for the person to understand what

their response to stress is and then begin strategies to better manage it," she said.

If a Sailor overeats, Hite suggests the individual have plenty of low-calorie, low-fat foods available. Things such as raw vegetables and fruits, low-fat popcorn, pretzels, flavored water, sugarless gum and hard candies can be used.

"This [type of] person needs to watch out for high fat, high sugar items. If [foods such as] candy, chips, cookies, nuts, seeds and regular soda are conveniently located, typically that person will consume large quantities when stressed without even realizing the number of calories consumed," Hite said.

For Sailors who tend to stop or reduce food intake when stressed, Hite said the strategy is to have easy to consume and easy on the stomach food available.

"For example, nutritional drinks, either canned or those designed to be mixed with milk, can be helpful. This type of eater often experiences stomach fullness and bloating when stressed. Thus the goal is to minimize the volume of food and reduce fiber intake until the stress subsides. Liquids are often more easily tolerated," she said.

She suggested Sailors stay away from diet and other low calorie drinks because while the

liquid will fill up the stomach, it doesn't provide needed calories. Hite also suggested Sailors should try a variety of nutritional drinks when not stressed and choose the ones that are tolerated the best.

Hite also had some helpful tips for Sailors who are on the go and trying to eat right. If Sailors

"Since 3,500 calories equates to one pound of fat, reducing calories by 500 per day results in a one-pound weight loss per week. But, this doesn't mean you have to cut out 500 calories of food. You can combine exercise and food intake"



have time to plan, fruits and vegetables are light weight and easy to pack. Snack mixtures such as trail mix with nuts and seeds are loaded with nutrients, but are rich in calories, so Hite advises Sailors to eat them sparingly if they are watching their weight.

When grabbing food from fast food restaurants or from convenience stores, Hite said to consider these tips: Choose grilled, broiled or steamed food over fried items; order regular or child size portions versus super-sized servings; boost calcium intake with a low-fat milkshake or skim milk as a beverage; replace French fries with a side salad; share an order with a friend and eliminate half the calories; enhance a sandwich's nutrients with veggies – tomatoes, peppers, lettuce and more; choose submarine sandwiches made with lean turkey, beef or ham and use more mustard and veggies – limit mayonnaise and serve on whole wheat bread; choose salad bars whenever possible and load up on the colorful veggies

such as dark lettuce, spinach, carrots, broccoli and peppers.

Balancing food and exercise is vital to Sailors who are trying to lose weight. For Sailors trying to maintain a healthy weight, calories consumed must balance calories expended during exercise. To lose weight, calories expended must exceed calories consumed. But, Hite said this doesn't mean Sailors have to starve themselves.

"Since 3,500 calories equates to one pound of fat, reducing calories by 500 per day results in a one-pound weight loss per week. But, this doesn't mean you have to cut out 500 calories of food. You can combine exercise and food intake," Hite said. "For example, if you increase your exercise by 200 calories, such as running two miles at a brisk pace, and reduce food calories by 300, the total calorie reduction is 500 for the day."

Hite stressed that Sailors can do little things like substitute a grilled chicken sandwich for a double-decker hamburger. This can easily reduce their calorie

intake by 300 to 400 calories. The high fat content of the double burger is the culprit.

"The single most important change to reduce food calories is to reduce fat intake. Fat has more calories per weight than any other nutrient. So by simply reducing fat, calories are reduced as well," Hite said.

Hite said that Sailors should also stay away from fad diets. According to the American Dietetic Association (ADA), the most effective long-term way to achieve a healthy lifestyle is to be 100 percent fad free. The ADA suggests people develop an eating plan for lifelong health, choose foods sensibly by looking at the big picture. Learn how to spot a food fad and be careful not to be misinformed about food and nutrition. For more tips from the ADA, Sailors can visit www.eatright.org.

Blowers is assigned to Naval Media Center, Washington, D.C.

TRAINING THE NEXT GENERATION

Story by MC2(SW/AW) Jason McCammack

Training the Navy's next generation of leaders is not a job that the United States Naval Academy's Senior Enlisted Leader (SEL), Senior Chief Machinist Mate (SW/AW) Jason Enge, takes lightly. An SEL is in charge of a company of approximately 150 midshipmen. There are 30 Navy & Marine Corps SELs within the brigade of midshipmen.

"It means a great deal to me to have this responsibility," said Enge. "I've seen the negative results of complacent leadership and how that affects the mission. In my current position, I get to watch the midshipmen develop and assist them as they train to be effective leaders."

Enge's role is to monitor the midshipmen's progress, both personally and professionally. If he sees someone struggling, it is his responsibility to make sure they get proper counseling and mentorship.

"The goal is to try to let the division and company run itself," he said. "We (the SELs) don't want to be the first level of interaction, but if it's necessary we will step in and mentor."

Enge said being stationed at the Academy is a once in a lifetime opportunity.

"It's been amazing here," he said. "There is so much history to take in and a lot of fringe benefits. The

midshipmen qualify on weapons. They do confidence courses, rappelling and sailing, among other things - and I get to qualify and take part in a lot of that as well."

Enge said it's his mission to make sure the midshipmen under his command are prepared to serve when they get to the fleet.

"You can't throw a switch when you graduate and all of a sudden you're a leader," he said. "You have to develop that here at the Academy so when you reach the fleet you can hit the deck running." ❧

McCammack is a photojournalist assigned to Naval Media Center, Washington, D.C.

Focus on
Service



History

Early History of the United States Naval Academy

Story compiled by Lt. j.g. Marie Tillery

One president, two Nobel Prize recipients, 26 Chiefs of Naval Operations, 52 astronauts and 73 Medal of Honor awardees – for 162 years, the United States Naval Academy has aimed to produce the highest calibre of men and women ever to wear the uniform.

Formal academic training for naval officers was essentially nonexistent in the years leading up to and during the American Revolution. Therefore, on Oct. 10, 1845, then-Secretary of Navy George Bancroft established the Naval School at Annapolis, Md., with 50 students and seven professors.

The school enacted a five-year course of study to include three years at sea. In 1850, the name changed to the United States Naval Academy and the Academy refined the curriculum to four consecutive years at the school. At that time, the Academy accepted midshipmen as young as 14 years old.

The Civil War broke out on April 12, 1861, the midshipmen were briefly relocated to Newport, R.I., and returned to Annapolis in 1865 at the conclusion of the war. During the Civil War, 400 Academy graduates served in the Union.

In 1878, the Academy was recognized as the “best system in education in the United States” during the Paris Universal Exposition. Supporting the distinction, Academy graduate Albert A. Michelson was the first to accurately measure the speed of light in the same year.

The Navy’s football team met the United States Military Academy for the first time in 1890, winning the game 24-0. Three years later, the Academy introduced Bill the Goat as the school’s mascot.

The dawn of the 20th century, specifically 1906, was an exciting year at the Academy. The Navy relocated the body of John Paul Jones to the Academy grounds where he was honored during a speech by then-President Theodore Roosevelt.



Photo courtesy of Special Collections & Archives, Nimitz Library, USNA

Two midshipmen work hard during study hours in the rather spartan conditions of their living quarters, 1897. Long hours of study remain a mainstay in the lives of today’s midshipmen.

Academy bandmaster Lt. Charles A. Zimmerman introduced the song “Anchors Aweigh.” Originally written as a dedication for the graduating class of 1907, the song became wildly popular and still resonates on every Navy installation around the world 100 years later.

The Academy remains a rich source of Navy traditions, academic excellence and heroic military service. Once a small school with young teenaged students, it has risen to become one of the finest academic institutions in the country with a current student body of more than 4,000 midshipmen. All eyes are on this year’s class of plebes to serve with no less distinction than those who came before them. **SS**

For more information visit <http://www.usna.edu>
Information courtesy of the U.S. Naval Academy.

[USNA Graduate Scorecard]

1 President	21 Members of Congress	9 Commandants of the Marine Corps
2 Nobel Prize Recipients	5 State Governors	44 Rhodes Scholar
26 Chiefs of Naval Operations	5 Secretaries of the Navy	16 Marshall Scholars
52 Astronauts	1 Secretary of the Air Force	93 Olmsted Scholars
73 Medal of Honor Awardees	4 Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff	25 Fitzgerald Scholars
2 Cabinet Members		830 Burke Scholars
6 Ambassadors		

STRETCH

STRETCH



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...AND ENJOY THE GAME



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