

FROM COOK TO *Chef*: SAILORS' DREAMS COME TRUE

SEPTEMBER 2008

ALL HANDS

MAGAZINE OF THE U.S. NAVY

Executing our Maritime Strategy:
All in a Day's Work



[On the Front Cover]

ABAN Christopher Duguay assists in the movement of aircraft on the flight deck aboard USS *Abraham Lincoln* (CVN 72). *Lincoln* is currently deployed to the 5th Fleet area of responsibility in support of maritime security operations.

Photo by MC2 James R. Evans

[Next Month]

Watch for the Any Day in the Navy issue. This year we'll highlight the Maritime Strategy through the camera's eye.

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Across the globe, Sailors were at the forefront of world events again this summer, demonstrating all six core capabilities of the Maritime Strategy: Deterrence; forward presence; maritime security; power projection; humanitarian assistance and disaster response; and sea control.

Photo by MC1 Dave Gordon

20 You Call It, They Haul It

The men and women of Fleet Logistics Support Squadron 53 (VR-53), one of only five C-130 squadrons in the Navy, work around the clock to make sure Sailors and Marines worldwide have the provisions and supplies they need, whether they're at the tip of spear or at the pier.

Photo by MC1 Dave Gordon



28 From Cook to Chef

In galleys around the fleet, culinary specialists (CSs) may cook three to four meals a day for up to 5,000 Sailors at a time, but it's all part of their daily life. A few CSs throughout the Navy have taken the opportunity to become certified chefs – truly a recipe for success.

Photo by MC1 Joe Garza



Speaking with Sailors

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

I made a recent one-day trip to Tampa, Fla., and the few hours I spent there served as a stark reminder of the level of sacrifice made by our men and women in uniform and their families.

I went there because a Sailor named HM3 Anthony Thompson was being advanced to petty officer second class. In many respects, it was like any other promotion ceremony. His family was there. His shipmates and his chain of command were, too. I pinned a second-class crow on his collar and did so proudly.

What made this ceremony unique, though, was that “Doc” Thompson never left his wheelchair and didn’t say a word. He’s a patient at the James A. Haley Veteran’s Hospital. He was injured in Iraq in 2007 and now faces a new battle, one that he may have to fight for the rest of his life.

We have service members just like HM2 Thompson in treatment facilities all over the country, men and women who have met the full measure of responsibility to this nation. The question we must ask ourselves is whether we are meeting our full responsibility to them.

Many young Americans joined our Navy out of a strong sense of patriotism, never expecting to hear shots fired in anger. But when they found themselves in places like Iraq or Afghanistan, they showed the kind of bravery and commitment that our forefathers would look to with great pride.

I visited with Petty Officer Thompson’s family. I met the Sailor who saved his life, and I visited with other wounded warriors. I left Tampa a better American and a better Sailor for the experience. I left there feeling humbled by the people I met and inspired by the care provided them by a dedicated staff of doctors and nurses.

These veterans did their part, as you all do. They served this nation when we needed them to, and now many are recovering from injuries sustained in battle. It’s up to you, as their shipmates, to keep them in your thoughts and prayers and never forget them. Our entire nation



Photo by Karmyn Jarosewski

▲ **Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON) Joe R. Campa Jr.** pins petty officer second class crow on HM2 Anthony “Doc” Thompson at James A. Haley Veterans Hospital. Thompson is recovering from injuries received during his second combat tour in Iraq. He suffered a traumatic brain injury April 20, 2007, when a suicide bomber’s improvised explosive device detonated under an overpass where he was standing post.

owes these wounded warriors a debt of gratitude. So many of them have injuries that will last a lifetime, so must our relationship with them.

Navy leadership is making sure these Sailors and their families are well provided for and that their sacrifices have not been made in vain. We will continue to do that by working with Congress and by providing all the support we can to programs like Safe Harbor, an organization dedicated to supporting injured Sailors.

The character of this nation can be defined by how we care for all our returning war veterans. Several months ago a World War II veteran told me, “You don’t have to bleed to be wounded.” We are just beginning to grapple with the reality that many Sailors return from war with injuries not apparent to the untrained eye.

We’ve come a long way in our ability to treat all manner of injuries. But some of the best medicine we can provide is a continued and strong relationship with them and their families.

They’ve met their responsibility to this nation. We must never forget our responsibility to them.

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LAYOUT & WEB DESIGN

Slice
Design + Project Management
Richard Rabil
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Diana Flores, Tory Hobson

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911
we will always remember



Standing up for Freedom

In today's Navy, Sailors aren't just stationed on ships, patrolling the seas. More and more, they're serving as individual augmentees (IA) and Global War on Terrorism Support Assignment (GSA) Sailors, becoming part of the boots on the ground and doing jobs that may not be part of their Navy ratings.

Machinist's Mate Fireman Atif T. Omer is one of those Sailors. He served as an IA at the Joint Intelligence Group, Joint Task Force, Guantanamo (GTMO) Bay, Cuba, from August 2007 to March 2008. Omer, worked as an interrogation and document translation supervisor and was the lead linguist for three detainee movement operations during his IA duty.

"I assisted with translating during interrogation and translated various documents from English to Arabic and Arabic to English," said Omer. "I'm a native Arabic speaker, and I speak it in six different dialects. I also speak five more Middle Eastern tribal languages, which allowed [me] to communicate with a wide-range of detainees."

Omer's linguistic skills, used during his IA time, were learned when he was raised in Saudi Arabia by his Sudanese father and Egyptian mother. It was during his childhood that he experienced some of the events that would eventually lead to him joining the U.S. Navy and going IA.

"When I was seven years old, I saw my friends dying as victims of terrorist attacks in the city of Khobar. I saw [terrorists] destroying the park I used to play soccer at. I saw many families, including my own, losing sons and daughters ..." said Omer.

"When I was 10 years old, I saw USS *John F. Kennedy* (CV 67) on CNN news, sailing in the Mediterranean Sea, heading toward Bosnia and Herzegovina to stop the extremist Serbians from exterminating Muslims. Right then and there, I realized how great and fair the U.S. Constitution is."

When Omer was 16, his family won a visa lottery and moved to the United States. Eventually he joined the Navy and boarded his first ship, *John F. Kennedy*.

After *Kennedy* decommissioned, Omer received orders to USS *Bataan* (LHD 5), where he served as part of a four-month deployment before deploying as an IA to GTMO. He served there for eight months.

"Fighting terrorism is the reason I joined the U.S. Armed Forces. The life of a Sailor is dedicated to fighting terrorism. Yet, on IA, one gets a more challenging task, being on the front lines," said Omer. "It was the most exciting and challenging duty I've ever experienced, not only in the Navy, but in my whole life."

Once his time as an IA was up, Omer returned to *Bataan*, and with the extra pay he received from hardship duty, hostile duty and per diem, he immediately took leave and married his fiancée.

"I feel like I've made a difference," said Omer. "Even though I held the rank of E-3, I had great responsibilities and vital tasks. Every day was a new challenge – new applications, new information – and it all contributed to a safer America." ❧

Story by MC2(SW) David Beyea,
Naval Media Center, Washington.

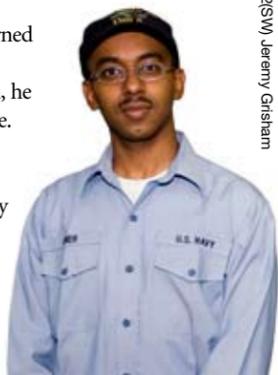


Photo by MC2(SW) Jeremy Grisham

New Multimedia Testing for Advancement

As part of the March 2009 exam cycle, the Navy Advancement Center (NAC) at the Naval Education and Training Professional Development and Technology Center (NETPDTC) in Pensacola, Fla., will implement a new hybrid advancement examination.

The first rating to use this technology will be first class petty officers in the musician (MU) rating. The latest multimedia exam will include sections using an Apple iPod to facilitate the audio and visual skills that the musician rating requires to be tested for advancement.

The Navy Advancement Center is exploring ways to improve how the Navy delivers advancement exams to Sailors while remaining current, secure and timely. This new method of testing material will be used in conjunction with the original paper and pencil exams and will alleviate the need to ship laptops and thumb drives across the fleet for ratings that require multimedia testing ability.

"You can imagine the technical problems associated with trying to conduct these types of exams, on different computers, with varied broadband connections, at numerous places throughout the world," said Lt. Cmdr. Dwaine Whitham, Navy Music Program.

Including audiovisual portions of the musician's advancement exam allows the community to be tested on specific knowledge necessary

for advancement.

"MUs will be able to test their ear training ability by listening to and evaluating musical examples and be able to evaluate conducting examples using the video features of the iPod," said Senior Chief Musician Keith Gill, assistant director, Navy Band Mid-South.

Security of the new hybrid process played a key factor in development. The new method not only eliminates lost answers but also removes the possibility of losing an exam due to poor Internet connection or computer malfunction. The iPod cannot store answers, so the exam cannot be compromised.

"This is definitely a great move for the Navy and our Sailors," said Whitham. "The use of these devices puts 100 percent of the testing material and process back into the exam centers' hands."

The MU rate will be the first to take part in exams that incorporate the iPod; however, NAC hopes to expand the multimedia testing to ratings which may also benefit from a multimedia outlet as soon as possible. ❧

Story by Lt. J.g. Lauren Gammache,
Naval Education and Training
Professional Development and
Technology Center, Pensacola, Fla.

Naval Special Warfare Development Group Seeks Sailors

Recruiters from the Naval Special Warfare Development Group (DEVGRU) recently visited Naval Support Activity

Naples, Italy, looking for Sailors interested in supporting special warfare commands.

Dozens of area Sailors attended a brief at the base theater to learn about opportunities they might not otherwise hear about through normal channels.

"At the Naval Special Warfare Development Group, we do our own recruiting," said Master Chief Information Systems Technician Richard McGurr, a DEVGRU recruiter.

"Our billets don't show up on job advertising and selection systems or [the] job career management system, so it's up to us to get out there and get the word out to the fleet that we have a command here that supports special warfare, and we're out there to try to find the best and the brightest young Sailors in myriad ratings."

According to McGurr, those selected for orders are given opportunities they might not have at other commands.

"A lot of our Sailors get jump-qualified; they can get coxswain qualified – qualifications that aren't typical to the normal Navy job.

"It's just something a little bit out of the norm, something out of their normal sea-shore rotation," McGurr said.

"Whatever their rating specialty is, they'll be doing that type of work in support of [SPECWAR]. There's a lot of limelight on the special warfare community, [so Sailors can do their part through] SEAL supports, and emergency ordnance disposal support." ❧

Story by MC2(SW) Michael Campbell,
Naval Special Warfare, Naples, Italy.

NPC Helps Educate Fleet on Proper Wear of New Service Uniform

Sailors transitioning to the new service uniform can get smart about its proper wear at Navy Personnel Command's (NPC) homepage, www.npc.navy.mil. NPC recently added a training video to its homepage to help educate the fleet about the Navy's newest uniform.

"We are in the initial process of the new E-1 to E-6 service uniform rollout. These videos are designed to ensure Sailors and leadership know the standards associated with the service uniform. This is great for training and getting Sailors ready to wear the new uniform," said Force Master Chief (AW/SW) Daryl Charles, assigned to NPC.

Additional guidance on wear of the service uniform can be found in NAVADMIN 190/08, also available on the NPC Web site.

Service uniform sales began this summer at Navy Exchange uniform shops in Great Lakes and California. Sailors stationed in these regions may also order the new service uniform by calling the toll-free uniform support line at 1-800-368-4088.

"I like it a lot. People tell me it looks sharp. It feels cooler than the whites," said Operations Specialist 2nd Class (SW) Heather Smith, assigned to Naval Base Coronado.

Smith purchased her service uniform the first day it was available and guessed on the placement of her ribbons and

Chief Aviation Support Equipment Technician (ASC) Giovanni Balingit, was recently selected to receive the 2007 Spirit of Hope Award for his unrelenting contributions to military and civilian community service.

Balingit, a native of Angeles City, Republic of the Philippines, is currently the leading chief petty officer assigned to Fleet Readiness Center Southwest Support Equipment Rework Facility, San Diego.

The award was established in 1997 by The Bob Hope Family Foundation and recognizes one member of the Navy who not only captures the values and integrity of the service but who also exemplifies the patriotism and dedication to the armed forces some say were characteristics of the late comedian.

FRCSW Commanding Officer, Capt. Michael Kelly, cited Balingit's leadership and motivational skills.

"His leadership by example and motivation given to FRCSW Sailors generated 257 volunteers who provided 1,395 hours of service to different communities throughout San Diego in 2007," wrote Kelly.

Story by Jim Markle, Fleet Readiness Center Southwest, San Diego.



name tag based on the placement from her summer whites.

"My master chief and I reviewed the video, and my guess was pretty close. I just needed to adjust my ribbons a little bit," said Smith.

Sailors have up to 24 months to purchase the new uniform, depending on their duty station location. The mandatory wear date for all E-1 to E-6 personnel is July 2010. Clothing replacement allowances for FY08 and FY09 were increased to cover the purchasing of two sets of new uniforms by July 2010.

The service uniform will be available for purchase via Navy Exchange uniform centers as follows:

- October 2008, Northwest and Hawaii
- January 2009, Gulf region and Millington, Tenn.
- April 2009, Naval District Washington
- July 2009, Tidewater
- October 2009, Southeast
- January 2010, Northeast
- April 2010, Europe/Japan Guam

For more information on uniforms and uniforms policy, visit the uniform matters Web site at www.npc.navy.mil/commandsupport/usnavyuniforms/. ❧

Story courtesy of Navy Personnel Command, Millington, Tenn.



▲ **ND1 Johnelisha Andrews**, assigned to **Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit (MDSU) 2**, walks across the seabed with a pipe wrench during a dive supporting Navy Dive Global Fleet Station 2008 off the coast of St. Kitts.

Photo by MCCS Andrew McKaskle

► **MMFN Samuel Duodu**, assigned to **Riverine Squadron (RIVRON) 3**, posts a security watch as he and his fellow riverine Sailors prepare to be extracted from the Watah Peninsula, near Rawah, Iraq, on a riverine patrol boat. Riverine units are actively engaged in waterborne operations in Anbar Province to update census details, improve security and deter insurgent activity.

Photo by U.S. Marine Corps Cpl. Seth Maggard



▲ **SA Giovanni Magallon** pulls himself along a rope while participating in an obstacle course at the Naval Special Warfare Center aboard Naval Amphibious Base, Coronado, Calif. Magallon is a Special Warfare Combatant-craft Crewman (SWCC) student in the second week of Basic Crewman Training (BCT). BCT is the first phase of SWCC training.

Photo by MC2 Dominique M. Lasco

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

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Virginia-class Boats Sailing Into Action

Four *Virginia*-class submarines recently conducted exercises and tests off the Atlantic coast.

USS *Virginia* (SSN 774), USS *Texas* (SSN 775), USS *North Carolina* (SSN 777) and Pre-Commissioning Unit (PCU) *New Hampshire* (SSN 778), the Navy's newest submarines are already demonstrating the capabilities they bring to the fleet and the Maritime Strategy.

USS *Hawaii* (SSN 776), the first *Virginia*-class boat to deploy, is currently at General Dynamics Electric Boat conducting a post-shakedown availability, which is an industrial activity availability assigned to correct deficiencies found during the shakedown cruise or to accomplish other authorized improvements.

"Having three of the four operational *Virginia*-class boats and PCU *New Hampshire* at sea is a reflection of the hard work, dedication and teamwork that is our submarine force," said Capt. Robert Clark, Submarine Squadron (SUBRON) 4 commodore. "This will become a common occurrence in the future, but today it's the crowning achievement of a huge cast of people who made it possible."

SUBRON 4 has become known as the "*Virginia*-class Center of Excellence." They are the parent squadron for every *Virginia*-class boat transitioning to become an operational fleet unit.

"It's a real feather in the cap of the submarine force to be able to take a new design from concept through real employment in such a short time and in such an efficient

and effective manner," said Clark.

Virginia-class attack submarines provide the Navy with the capabilities required to maintain the nation's undersea supremacy well into the 21st century. They will have improved stealth, sophisticated surveillance capabilities and special warfare enhancements that will enable them to meet the Navy's multi-mission requirements. **NS**

Story by Lt. James Stockman, Commander, Submarine Force, Groton, Conn.

Kearsarge, Continuing Promise Begin Onboard Surgeries

The first surgical patient from Nicaragua recently embarked USS *Kearsarge* (LHD 3) to undergo a life-changing procedure to remove an abnormal growth in his right eye as part of *Continuing Promise (CP) 2008*.

CP is a humanitarian civic assistance (HCA) mission enabling both U.S. and partner-nation medical staffs to collectively address regional medical concerns and develop effective, economical solutions that can be used through the region.

Ches Lacallo, 11, a native of Puerto Cabezas, Nicaragua, has had an abnormal growth in his right eye for seven years. It has made it very difficult for him to see, and friends and family members often shy away from looking at him. With this surgery, Ches and his family feel he is being given a chance at a better life.

"This is the first time that anyone from any other country has come

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Around the Fleet

► **USNS Mercy (T-AH 19)** anchored off the coast of East Timor supporting *Pacific Partnership* 2008 provides humanitarian assistance in cooperation with the government of East Timor. *Pacific Partnership* includes representatives from Australia, India, Indonesia, Portugal, Canada and the Republic of Korea.

Photo by MC2 Joseph Seavey



▲ **SW3 Timothy Hemphill**, assigned to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 74, removes air bubbles from the form of a concrete foundation at the Hamramba Primary School in Moroni, Comoros. NMCB-74 is building the six-classroom schoolhouse as part of Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa project.

Photo by MC2 John Hulle

► **A spectator watches as USS Freedom (LCS 1)** approaches the Menekaunee draw bridge in Marinette, Wis., as the ship goes to sea to begin acceptance trials. The Navy's Board of Inspection and Survey team conducted the acceptance trials in Lake Michigan during August.

Photo by MC3 Jhi L. Scott



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and done this type of work before, nobody has ever done this before," said Victor Lacallo, Ches' father. "It was very difficult for me to see my son in this condition. Since I do not have too much money, I could not afford to get it done."

Fleet Surgical Team 4, along with their partner-nation colleagues, perform several surgeries per day aboard *Kearsarge*, while also providing medical treatment, bio-medical repair, medical education and veterinary assistance to various locations ashore.

Kearsarge serves as an enabling platform through which military and nongovernmental organizations can coordinate and carry out humanitarian efforts. *Kearsarge's* flexibility and configuration make it an extraordinarily effective ship for performing humanitarian assistance missions.

Kearsarge has a robust on-board medical capability to include four fully-functional operating rooms.

"It was the perfect kind of surgery for this mission," said Cmdr. Brian Alexander, an optometrist from Portsmouth Naval Hospital, Norfolk.

"Even though it's a simple surgery, it will have a big impact on this child's life. His appearance is completely different now. He's going to be a much happier person, and his life is going to drastically improve."

The *CP* mission exemplifies the U.S. Maritime Strategy which emphasizes deploying forces to build confidence and trust among nations to improve health, promote training and enhance prosperity.

"Continuing Promise 2008 is an excellent opportunity to display our friendship and cooperation with the

other countries in the Americas," said Alexander. "Not only that, but to provide care on an individual basis to people who really need it is very rewarding."

After the surgery, Ches gave medical personnel a huge smile and told them he looked forward to the future.

"I can now read my text books," said Ches. "I want to read, so I can finish school and become a teacher one day and then the principal of my school. I am very happy this happened to me."

Kearsarge's mission is to conduct civil-military operations including humanitarian and civic assistance as well as veterinary, medical, dental and civil engineering support to six partner nations and to send a strong message of U.S. compassion, support and commitment to Central and South America and the Caribbean.

USS *Kearsarge* is under the operational control of U.S. 4th Fleet. Headquartered in Mayport, Fla., the 4th Fleet directs U.S. naval forces operating in the Caribbean, and Central and South American regions and interacts with partner nation navies to shape maritime environment.

The *CP* Caribbean Phase is the second of two HCA deployments to the Southern Command area of focus for 2008. The first *CP* deployment was conducted earlier this year by USS *Boxer* (LHD 4) in the Pacific. **S**

Story by MC2 Erik Barker, aboard USS Kearsarge (LHD 3).



▲ **CT1 Casey Tibbs** trains with a teammate to prepare himself for his Paralympics events during the Beijing Olympics. Tibbs represented the United States in several events including shotput, discus and long jump during the 2008 Olympic games.

Photo by MC3 David A. Brandenburg

► *USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) and Carrier Air Wing 14 (CVW 14) begin their transit into Apra Harbor for a port call on Guam after working off the coast of the Republic of the Philippines in the wake of Typhoon Fengshen.*

Photo by MCCS Spike Call

Executing our Maritime Strategy: **All in a Day's Work**

Story compiled by MC2(SW/AW) Jason McCammack

All over the world, the summer months are a time for family holidays and taking a break from the daily grind of work and school – but not for the men and women of the U.S. Navy. In fact the hottest months of 2008 were a time of incredible productivity, even by their own high standards. For Sailors constantly on the move, summer 2008 was spent just how they like it – in the fast lane.

Across the globe, Sailors were again at the forefront of world events this summer, demonstrating all six of the core capabilities of the Maritime Strategy: Deterrence; forward presence; maritime security; power projection; humanitarian assistance and disaster response; and sea control.



► Crew members assigned to the coastal patrol boat USS *Typhoon* (PC 5) transfer an injured Iraqi fisherman to the Iraqi Khawr Al Amaya Oil Terminal to be treated by HM1 Luis Ginton, assigned to Maritime Expeditionary Security Detachment (MESD) 431. The fisherman was treated for his injuries and released. *Typhoon* and MESD-431 are part of Combined Task Force (CTF) 158, which is responsible for ensuring the security of Iraq's oil terminals.

Photo by Lt. Cmdr. James Remington

The Maritime Strategy, officially known as “The Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower,” was signed by the chiefs of all the sea services – the Navy, Coast Guard and the Marine Corps. The unique talents of the men and women of each service are necessary to put the Maritime Strategy into action.

Among the most important objectives of the Maritime Strategy are three themes that dominated “Conversations with the Country,” a series of public forums between the sea services and the American people. Those themes are: Remaining strong; protecting American citizens and the homeland; and working with partners around the world to prevent war.

The following is a small sampling of the work accomplished by the Navy in the last four months and highlights a few examples of

the expansive efforts of Sailors, Marines and Coast Guardsmen as they put the Maritime Strategy into action.

Central Command (CENTCOM)

With much of the world's attention tuned into the daily events taking place in the CENTCOM area of responsibility, the Navy's contributions in this part of the world were diverse this past summer.

In Spring, mine countermeasure forces from coalition navies conducted operations to survey and clear mine danger areas (MDAs) from the Northern Persian Gulf (NPG).

The U.S. Navy and the Royal Navy worked together with regional navies to ensure sea lanes were clear for mariners.

“Our work directly supports the future success of [their countries] by improving

access to their ports and sea-lanes,” said Cmdr. David Hunkin, commander of the Royal Navy's Mine Warfare Battlestaff. “The navies of Kuwait, Iraq, the United States and the United Kingdom have worked hard together [during] the past few months, and we have built very close working relationships. Each nation has brought their own expertise and equipment, and we have melded them together into an effective coalition mine countermeasures task group.”

The ultimate aim of the operation is to redesignate the MDAs as formerly-mined areas, making them safer for the maritime community.

“This has been a terrific operation and a great example of coalition effort, of nations working together for a common cause,” said Deputy Task Group Commander, Cmdr. Scott

Evertson. “This operation is leading to a greater sense of security in the region, for merchant seamen and fishermen alike. Ultimately, this work forms part of the comprehensive economic regeneration for Iraq in particular and the Northern Arabian Gulf in general.”

The areas searched during this operation were the remnants of the MDAs created in 1991 and 2003 where Iraq laid, or was suspected of laying, anti-invasion minefields. A considerable mine clearance effort was previously conducted during which 1,300 mines were destroyed. But, very shallow areas remained inaccessible for the past 17 years. Using the very latest in mine warfare technology, coalition forces have searched these remaining areas in an effort to declare them former mined areas.

At any given time, there were also several coalition ships providing security around two Iraqi oil platforms.

USS *Ashland* (LSD 48) conducted maritime security operations as part of Combined Task Force (CTF) 158 in the Northern Persian Gulf.

CTF 158's mission is to maintain maritime security in and around the al Basra Oil Terminal (ABOT) and the Khawr al Amaya Oil Terminal (KAAOT) in support of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1790. The task force also helps train Iraqi marines.

“These oil platforms, which produce about 90 percent of Iraq's annual revenue, are critical assets for the economy and future of Iraq,” said Lt. John Erickson, *Ashland's* operations officer. “The coalition's commitment to the future of Iraq is evident by the security operations we conduct to ensure the safety and security of ABOT and KAAOT now and into the future.”

While operating in the NPG, *Ashland* served as the CTF 158 Afloat Staging Base (AFSB).

“One of our main missions was to train Iraqi VBSS [visit, board, search and seizure] teams,” said Machinery Repairman 2nd



▲ CTTSA Brandon Barney (left), CTT1 Francisco Villa and OS2 Paul Burnett unload a super rapid blooming off-board chaff launcher aboard USS *Ashland* (LSD 48). *Ashland* is one of six vessels in the *Nassau* Strike Group deployed to the U.S. 5th Fleet area of responsibility.

Photo by MC3 Mandy Hunsucker

Class Victor Natividad, assigned to the Naval Training Team (NaTT), CTF 158. “*Ashland* served as a platform to practice these types of operations and gave us the opportunity to greatly enhance training.”

Part of this training consisted of Iraqi VBSS teams performing security missions. Several times a week, teams departed *Ashland* via Iraqi aluminum fast boats and proceeded to large oil tankers to perform security sweeps of tankers waiting to come alongside ABOT or KAAOT to receive oil.

VBSS team inspections included visiting small dhows in the area. These interaction patrols, or IPATS, are an element of maritime security operations (MSO). The patrols help generate support and awareness among commercial vessels sailing in the region of the coalition's efforts to ensure a safe and secure maritime environment. Coalition forces also conduct MSOs under international maritime conventions to ensure security in international waters, so commercial shipping and fishing can occur safely in the region.

“This training is a success story in Iraq,” said Royal Navy Lt. James Walton, officer in charge of the embarked naval training team. “The Iraqi Navy is increasing their ability to provide security for the oil platforms 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.”

Ashland's ability to serve as a logistics hub helps to keep the operation running smoothly.

“It is a very dynamic environment up here,” said Cmdr. Jeffrey Ward, *Ashland's* commanding officer. “We are taking part in a very important mission, and the crew is excited about doing our part toward enhancing training and security in the region.”

The scope of naval service is always expanding, and that is certainly the case in CENTCOM's area of operations.

In western Iraq, Riverine Squadron 2 turned over with Riverine Squadron 3 after wrapping up its eight-month maiden deployment during which the squadron completed more than 600 combat missions.

Reserve Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 17 built combat outposts, conducted camp maintenance, made bridge repairs, conducted safety upgrades to permanent facilities and executed force protection projects in Iraq and Afghanistan this past summer in support of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force and Navy special operations forces.

In Garissa, Kenya, Sailors and Soldiers, deployed in support of Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa, helped municipality leaders begin a new garbage disposal program.

European Command (EUCOM)

In July, navies from 16 countries, including the United States, took part in *Sea Breeze*, a joint invitational and combined maritime exercise held annually in the Baltic Sea.

"During the exercise, Sailors and Marines work side-by-side with other personnel from partner ships while they are underway and ashore and become familiar with the other militaries' operating procedures and consistent practices," said Capt. John Moore, exercise deputy commander and commodore of Combined Joint Task Force 367.

The exercise included 14 ships, 17 aircraft and more than 2,200 personnel.

"The exercise is a key part of the U.S. Navy's strategy to enrich our partnerships in the region and work together to improve maritime safety and security," said Cmdr. Tim Schorr, commanding officer USS *McFaul* (DDG 74).

Another example of the maritime strategy in action this summer was the continuation of Africa Partnership Station (APS).

APS is a U.S. Naval Forces Europe-led, long-term initiative with a goal of enabling maritime safety and security in West and Central Africa. The program operates with the cooperative support of a variety of military, governmental and non-governmental organizations from the United States, Africa and Europe.

Earlier this year was the first time High-Speed Vessel *Swift* (HSV 2) operated in the Gulf of Guinea. Its mission of maritime partnership fostered safety and security, while bringing humanitarian aid to the region.

Following *Swift*, U.S. Coast Guard Cutter *Dallas* (WHEC 716) conducted a three-day visit to the West African nation of Equatorial Guinea July 11 after concluding an at-sea exercise involving five Equatorial Guinean naval vessels. The exercise was in support of U.S. Naval Forces Europe's APS initiative. The at-sea exercises, which included both counterterrorism and search-and-rescue drills, reinforced shore-side training.

During *Dallas*' visit, several crew members teamed up with Equatorial Guinean naval officers to train in VBSS tactics as well as search and rescue (SAR) procedures.

The visit marked the first collaborative at-sea tactical exercise between naval assets of the United States and Equatorial Guinea in decades.

EUCOM Sailors were also busy on the cool,

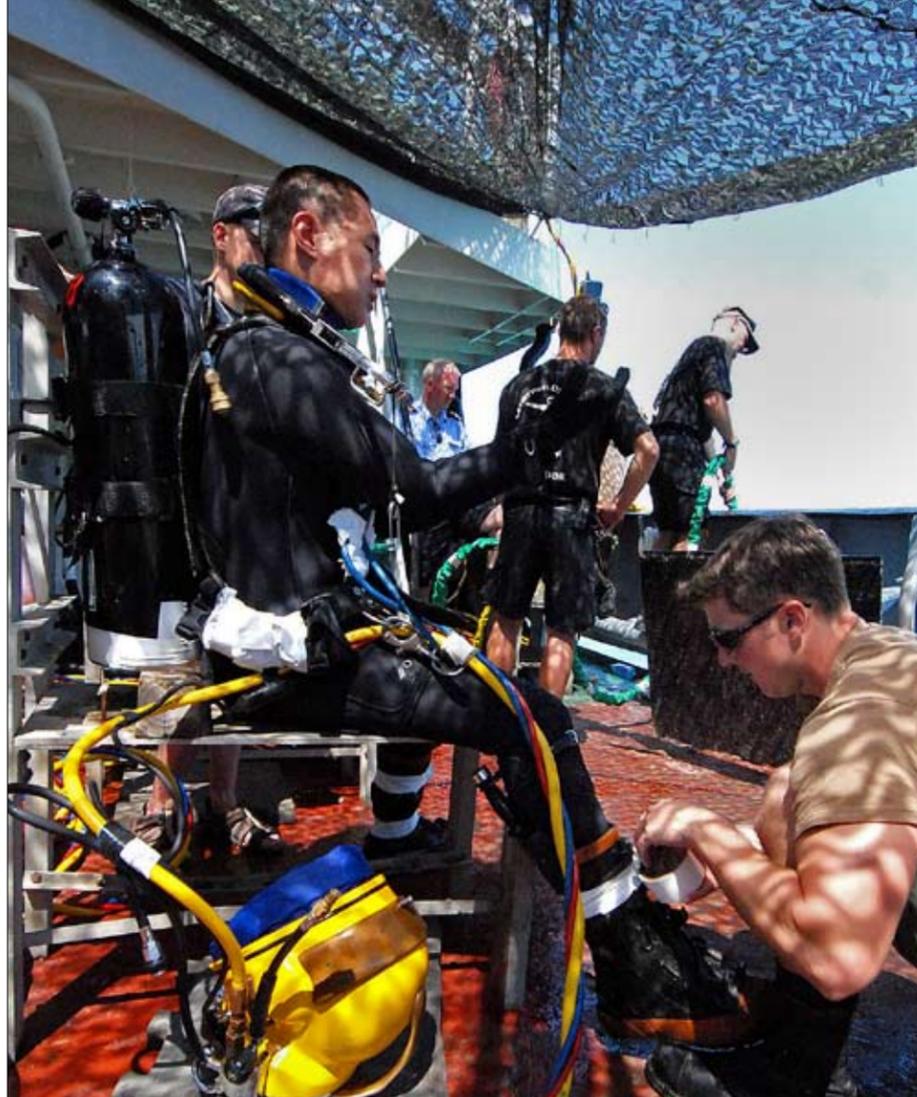


Photo by MC3 Eddie Harrison

▲ BU1 Jon Karulf (right) prepares Lt. Li Ping Sung, executive officer of Underwater Construction Team (UCT) 1 and Commander, Task Group 367.1.3, to enter the water during underwater lifting training aboard Ukrainian search and rescue tug UPN *Krements* as part of *Sea Breeze* 2008. Sixteen nations participated in the exercise including the Ukrainian hosts and Armenia, Azerbaijan, Canada, Denmark, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Latvia, Macedonia, Norway, Romania, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States.

northern seas within their area of operations.

USS *Elrod* (FFG 55), the Russian anti-submarine ship *Severomorsk* and the Norwegian Coast Guard cutter *Senja* (W 321) worked together to simulate tracking and destroying a decoy submarine late July, as part of Exercise *Northern Eagle* 2008.

The exercise, held in the Norwegian and Barents Seas, focused on maritime interdiction operations, SAR and tactical interoperability to improve maritime safety and security in Northern Europe.

"The exercise tested all of our crew's abilities to work together in a coordinated environment, using our anti-submarine warfare skills to achieve a common goal," said

Navy Lt. j.g. Kevin Shannon, *Elrod*'s assistant operations officer.

Pacific Command (PACOM)

There were many exercises and humanitarian efforts in PACOM's area of operations this summer, but for one Sailor the Navy's actions in the wake of Typhoon Fengshen hit very close to home.

USS *Ronald Reagan*'s (CVN 76) Storekeeper Seaman Grace Geroche, a native of Iloilo City, Republic of the Philippines, returned to her hometown as part of the Navy's humanitarian efforts to assist victims of the massive typhoon.

Geroche's mother and five-year-old brother

were among the affected when the typhoon caused water levels in the city to increase by several feet in the span of a few hours.

"We almost lost our lives," said Edna Geroche, the seaman's mother. "The water was up to our necks. We had to sleep in the rafters under our ceiling. We were lucky to survive ..."

Geroche is a member of *Reagan*'s supply department, which provided more than 28,000 bottles of water and 9,060 lbs. of rice to the residents of Panay, an island in the central portion of the Philippines. Flown to her hometown aboard a C-2 *Greyhound* aircraft filled with non-perishable food items, Geroche had an emotional reunion with her family before assisting Navy personnel and Philippine Army soldiers unload relief supplies.

"I'm so grateful to be assigned to USS *Ronald Reagan* right now. I'm so thankful that we're here assisting the people of my hometown. When President Bush sent us here, I was happy. I was hoping I'd get this chance to see my family. It felt good to hug my mom and tell her everything will be OK, now," Geroche said.

U.S. naval forces were also poised to respond in the wake of Cyclone Nargis. USS *Essex* and the U.S. Marine 31st Expeditionary Unit were positioned off the coast of Burma,

► SK2 Marcus Harvey, assigned to Explosive Ordnance Disposal Operation Support Unit 7, records notes on a simulated explosive device during a training evolution aboard Naval Station Pearl Harbor during *Rim of the Pacific* 2008.

ready and able to deliver urgently needed humanitarian assistance.

"During the past three weeks we have made at least 15 attempts to convince the Burmese government to allow our ships, helicopters and landing craft to provide additional disaster relief for the people of Burma..." said Commander, U.S. Pacific Command, Adm. Timothy J. Keating, in the wake of the event.

Other maritime strategy-related events this summer included: *Rim of the Pacific* 2008, the world's largest biennial maritime exercise; *Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training* 2008, an annual series of bilateral military training exercises conducted by the United States, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Brunei and the Republic of the Philippines.

Also, USNS *Mercy* (T-AH 19) deployed



Photo by MC1 Brandon Ralle

on a humanitarian and civic-assistance mission in the Western Pacific. Medical, construction and public health experts from the U.S. military, partner nations and non-governmental organizations are aboard, joining Navy efforts to lend assistance in the region. During visits to Vietnam, Timor-Leste and Papua New Guinea, *Mercy*'s crew hosted medical and dental clinics, refurbished clinics and schools and worked alongside local healthcare professionals.

While visiting Vietnam, medical teams marked the first time since 1975 a U.S. military humanitarian assistance mission was permitted to perform surgeries. It was also the first time a foreign military vessel has been permitted to visit Nha Trang, Vietnam.

"As we work side-by-side, we build a new generation of friendships between our citizens," said Capt. William A. Kearns, *Pacific Partnership*'s mission commander.

Southern Command (SOUTHCOM)

Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Gary Roughead officially re-established U.S. 4th



Photo by MC2 Joseph M. Bullavac

▲ SKSN Grace Geroche, a native of Iloilo, Republic of the Philippines, a Sailor assigned to USS *Ronald Reagan* (CVN 76), embraces family members upon arriving in her hometown as part of U.S. Navy relief operations. Her family nearly lost their lives in flooding caused by Typhoon Fengshen.



Photo by Coast Guard PA2 Eric J. Chandler

▲ Medicines and first aid treatment supplies line the table of a temporary pharmacy set-up at the Kebangsaan School, Kemaman, Malaysia, during a *Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training* 2008 exercise. Medical specialists from the Coast Guard, Navy and Malaysian Armed Forces examined and issued these supplies to citizens of the Kemaman District.



▲ Australian and Indian engineers assigned to USNS *Mercy* (T-AH 19) shovel gravel and debris during a *Pacific Partnership* engineering civic action project at Bario Pite Elementary School, in Dili, East Timor.

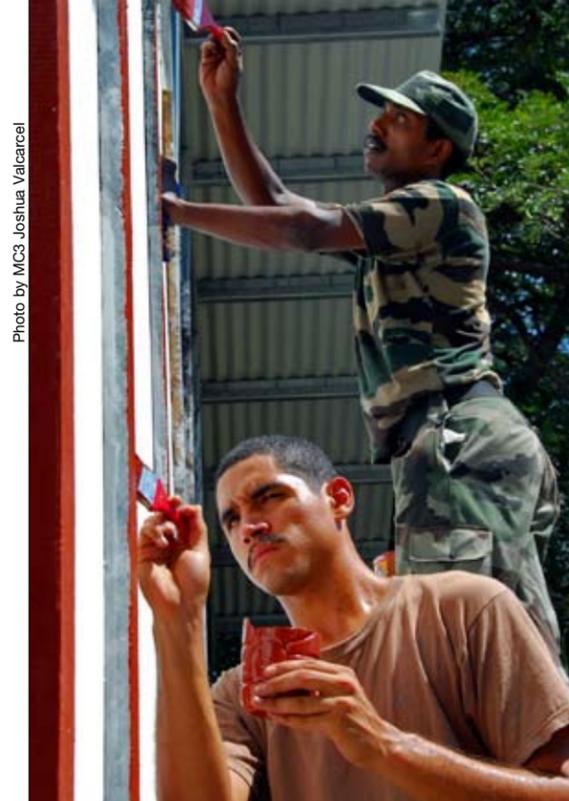


Photo by MC3 Joshua Valcarcel

◀ SW3 Jonah Soto, (foreground), a Seabee assigned to Amphibious Construction Battalion 1, and Indian Army Cpl. Kallaseril Vinu paint window frames during a *Pacific Partnership* engineering civic action project in Mentinaro, East Timor.

confidence and trust among nations through collective maritime security efforts that focus on common threats and mutual interest.

“CP has highlighted the importance and value of providing assistance and training to our friends and neighbors in Latin America,” said CP Mission Commander, Capt. Peter K. Dallman.

allows interoperability of our units. In the event of an actual mission we can be ready to succeed in any challenge that we may encounter.”

Another SOUTHCOM summer highlight was *Continuing Promise* (CP) 2008, a collaborative effort between the United States and partner militaries, non-governmental organizations and partner-nation support organizations. CP exemplifies their U.S. Maritime Strategy by deploying forces to build

USS *Kearsarge* (LHD 3) recently departed Norfolk, and headed to Nicaragua to take part in the Caribbean phase of CP. During the deployment, *Kearsarge* will also visit Colombia, Panama, Dominican Republic, Trinidad, Tobago and Guyana.

SOUTHCOM also sponsored *Partnership of the Americas* 2008, an exercise designed to strengthen regional partnerships and improve multinational interoperability, while enhancing operation readiness of all units assigned to participate.

“Only by working and communicating

Fleet and named Rear Adm. Joseph D. Kernan as its commander during a ceremony at Naval Station Mayport, Fla., July 12, 2008.

“Re-establishing the 4th Fleet affirms our support for, and our desire to, enhance cooperative relationships with the navies and maritime services in the Caribbean and Central and South America,” said Roughead. “It recognizes the immense importance of maritime security in the region.”

Also on the SOUTHCOM summer schedule was *UNITAS* 2008, a multinational exercise which brings together nations with common interests in the Americas. Participating navies included Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and the United States. Mexico participated in this year’s Atlantic phase as an observer.

UNITAS is the U.S. Navy’s longest-running, annual, multilateral exercise and has been building ties with partner nations since 1960.

During the exercise, more than 3,500 U.S. Sailors and thousands of host nation citizens exchanged experiences and gained new knowledge about each other’s culture and people.

“One of the most important objectives during *UNITAS* is regional cooperation,” said Rear Adm. Raul Vasquez, Commander Surface Force of the Peruvian Navy. “This exercise



Photo by Cmdr. Daryl Borgquist

▲ Malaysian Army Rangers and Marines assigned to Combat Assault Co., 3rd Marine Regiment, wade ashore from Landing Craft Unit 1634 during a Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) 2008 amphibious assault exercise in Bukit Tioman Darat, Malaysia.



Photo by MC2 William Pals

◀ A landing craft air cushioned assigned to Beach Master Unit 1 arrives at Waimanolo, Hawaii, to offload vehicles supporting a mock embassy evacuation during *Rim of the Pacific* 2008.



Photo by Army Pfc. Gisell Martinez

◀ **Seabees from Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit 303** embarked aboard *USS Boxer* (LHD 4) install a new roof over the Guillermo Enrique Billinghurst School in Barranca, Peru, during *Continuing Promise* 2008.

with our partner navies can we hope to have the relationships we need in the event of a crisis requiring a multinational effort,” said Capt. Rudy Laco, Destroyer Squadron 40’s commodore, whose assets in *Partnership of the Americas* included *USS Kauffman* (FFG 59) and *USS Farragut* (DDG 99).

A Global Fleet

In every hemisphere, Sailors were carrying out the Navy’s mission and making an impact. *USS Cleveland* (LPD 7) followed *USS Tarawa* (LHA 1) in departing Australia after participating in commemoration ceremonies for the 66th anniversary of the Battle of the Coral Sea. *USS Stethem* (DDG 63) and her crew participated in the 69th annual Black Ship Festival, which promotes the theme of peaceful relations between the Japanese and American people.

Naval Experimental Diving Unit evaluated prototype rigs to help define the boundaries of human performance to enable better life support equipment design. *USS Peleliu* Expeditionary Strike Group made a port visit to Singapore where Sailors and Marines participated in three volunteer projects for local communities. Seabees from 22 Naval Construction Regiment, NMCB 3, NMCB 17 and NMCB 74 are supporting conventional and special operations forces in Iraq, Afganistan and Horn of Africa.

The Maritime Strategy is fully deployed, executed by Sailors around the world in a vast array of missions and exercises. The expertise of the modern Sailor is being put to use in combat operations, humanitarian missions and international partnerships, among others. The future is now for the Navy and its Sailors, and 2008 was just the beginning. **S**

McCammack is assigned to Naval Media Center, Washington.

Photo by MC2 Joshua Jarvis



▲ **Lt. Megan Rieman**, embarked aboard *USS Boxer* (LHD 4), examines a patient’s eyes at the Huacho Salon Parochial medical site, Huacho, Peru, during *Continuing Promise* 2008.

Photo by MCSN Omar A. Dominquez



▲ **Edgardo Mendez** (left), a Colombian sailor, and AD2 **Scott Schinke** carry supplies during a community relations project in Pachacutec, Peru, during *UNITAS 49-08*. The annual exercise is designed to increase cooperation and interoperability between the U.S. and South American navies.

Photo by MCSN Omar A. Dominquez



► **USS Forrest Sherman** (DDG 98) fires a *Standard Missile* (SM 2) at a drone during the Pacific phase of *UNITAS 49-08*.

You Call It, They Haul It

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

The logistical challenges behind the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are staggering in scale. Hundreds of thousands of Sailors, Soldiers, Airmen and Marines must be delivered to combat zones and returned home to their families at the end of their deployments. Even more astonishing are the millions of tons of tents, vehicles, electrical equipment, food, weaponry, ammunition and countless other items necessary to fight a war in the 21st century.

► AM2 Frank Medina communicates with the pilot of a C-130T Hercules assigned to Fleet Logistics Support Squadron 53 during maintenance turns in Sigonella, Italy. The Hercules is a versatile tactical transport aircraft supporting electronic surveillance, search and rescue operations, helicopter refueling and cargo delivery. Naval Air Station (NAS) Sigonella provides logistical support for 6th Fleet and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) forces in the Mediterranean area.



◀ VR-53 maintenance Sailors receive constant training opportunities to provide them with comprehensive knowledge of the C-130 aircraft.

support], or active-duty. They keep things going on a day-to-day basis, but we really rely heavily on our selected Reservists, especially our air crew. Two-thirds of our pilots are Reservists who come in and fly as many missions as possible,” Kulinski added.

The integration between active-duty Sailors and Reservists at VR-53 is apparent at every level. Reservists contribute on maintenance teams, as pilots and in every other command function.

“It’s pretty seamless,” said Kulinski. “You can’t tell just by looking at someone who is active and who is a Reservist – especially on the air crew side of the house. We all have the same currency, the same proficiency levels. The Reservists really do fly about as much as the active duty.”

“On the maintenance side of the house, it’s a little harder to get the Reservists up to speed because there is so much to learn about fixing these planes, maintaining them and repairing engines. Once we get them up to speed, they’re very well integrated, and when we deploy we can just as easily send a Reserve mechanic as an active-duty mechanic.”

VR-53 is taking the lead with the Navy’s mission to produce “hybrid Sailors.” As a way of reshaping how the Navy mans ships and squadrons, hybrid Sailors are trained in a variety of skill sets, enabling commands to

The men and women of Fleet Logistics Support Squadron 53 (VR-53) work around the clock to make sure Sailors and Marines worldwide have the provisions and supplies they need, whether they’re at the tip of spear or at the pier in the States.

“VR-53 is one of only five C-130 squadrons in the Navy,” said VR-53 Commanding

Officer Cmdr. Karin Kulinski. “We fly the biggest thing the Navy has to offer. If somebody needs a vehicle, an F-18 engine, a rotor blade, we’re the only platform that can deliver an item of that size.”

VR-53 is comprised of 265 active-duty and Reserve Sailors, according to Kulinski.

“Just one-third of our team is [full-time



▲ The VR-53 air crew inspects every inch of the aircraft prior to their mission.

► VR 53’s loadmasters make sure everything is loaded correctly, center-of-gravity requirements are within range, and hazardous cargo is accounted for in addition to taking care of loading and unloading all passengers and cargo.

function efficiently with less manpower.

“The hybrid Sailor program allows us to maximize our resources here at the squadron and gives us the ability to deploy or detach a small staff forward with the aircraft instead of having to send a gaggle of people,” said VR-53 Maintenance Officer, Lt. Rob Stanley. “Our end goal is to take a Sailor straight from his or her “A” school, within four years make them a journeyman under the Quality Proficient Technician program, which means they’re

basically qualified to work on any piece of the aircraft.”

VR-53 maintenance Sailors receive constant training opportunities to provide them with comprehensive knowledge of the C-130.

“Instead of knowing just one specialty, now you are required to really get to know the aircraft from top to bottom,” said Aviation Machinist’s Mate 2nd Class Franklin Cox.

“I began working with engines and props, and as I’ve gained qualifications, I’ve



“The hybrid Sailor program allows us to maximize our resources here at the squadron ...”

— Lt. Rob Stanley, VR-53 maintenance officer



▲ VR-53 flight engineers are experts on C-130 systems and keep a close eye on engine and performance data during flight.

expanded into airframes and hydraulics,” said Flight Engineer AD2(AW) Jason Smith. “It’s a never-ending challenge, because as soon as you reach the next step, you’re looking ahead at your next [qualification].”

The mission plan at VR-53 is constantly evolving as they respond to the logistical needs of the fleet 24 hours a day. The crews are flexible and expect to be available on very short notice to respond to contingencies around the world.

The minimum crew has two pilots. They also have a flight engineer who is the expert on all the aircraft’s systems and who also keeps a close eye on the engines during a flight and calculates the performance data. They have at least one loadmaster and sometimes a second to keep them honest on all the cargo. The loadmasters make sure everything is loaded correctly, the aircraft is within center-of-gravity limits, that hazardous cargo is accounted for, all the paperwork is correct and they take care of all the loading and unloading of passengers and cargo.

“There is no such thing as ‘routine’ in the C-130 world in that we have so much variety,”

said Kulinski. “I’d say, on average, our missions are scheduled about a week-and-a-half out, but it’s certainly not uncommon that we get a phone call saying, ‘Can ya’ fly this tomorrow?’ We have missions worldwide; it really runs the gamut.”

VR-53 regularly moves the SEALs, because they just can’t travel commercially with the pallets of classified gear and ammunition they bring with them.

“We’ve moved a lot of Marine security teams back and forth. Also, any supplies that ships need in the Persian Gulf, our job is to get those supplies, especially the bigger ones, as close to the ships as possible,” said Kulinski.

Providing the agility and capacity to move support where it is needed takes a dedicated, capable team with the tools to meet their mission. The men and women of VR-53 are happy to bear that responsibility – literally. **S**

McCammack is assigned to Naval Media Center, Washington.



▲ The four-engine aircraft gives the Navy the lift and capacity required to support forces anywhere.

► Passengers aboard a VR-53 C-130 sit “knees-to-knees” on a full flight to Key West, Fla.

▼ Sailors disembark a VR-53 C-130 upon arrival at Naval Air Station Key West, Fla.



FROM COOK TO

Chef

Story and photos by MC3(AW/SW) Jhi L. Scott

In galleys around the fleet, culinary specialists (CSs) may cook three to four meals a day for up to 5,000 Sailors at a time, but it's all part of their daily life. Thanks to Navy Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (COOL), CSs throughout the fleet have the opportunity to become certified chefs and make their dreams come true.

◀ Chef Brett Harris speaks with students on the final day of the chef certification course.



▲ CS2(SW/AW) Kalicia Butler, a native of Philadelphia, received the title of *chef de cuisine* upon graduating from the American Culinary Federation.

Navy COOL credentialing programs allow Sailors to obtain civilian licenses and certifications relevant to their ratings.

"Sailors can use Navy COOL to quickly find credentials of interest to them and what ratings they apply to," said Navy COOL program manager Keith Boring at the Center for Information Dominance Corry Station, Pensacola, Fla. "Senior enlisted personnel can also use Navy COOL to help advise junior personnel in their career options."

Thirteen Navy culinary specialists recently took advantage of COOL to go from Navy cooks to chefs. To get the certification, they had to take a two-week course presented by the American Culinary Federation and First Coast Technical College.

"The certification process is a two-week course which focuses on sanitation, organizational skills, nutrition and supervisory development just to name a few," said Chef David Bearl, lead instructor and an approved certified evaluator.

"The course was very hard, and I thought that the [instructors] were going to kill us, but

it was something that I always wanted to do," said Culinary Specialist 2nd Class (SW/AW) Kalicia Butler. "Everyone in the culinary field should go because it is a great learning experience."

"The course is very fast paced and very grueling," said CS2(SW/AW) Patrick Picker, certified *chef de cuisine*. "We start at 7 a.m., and we focused a lot on sanitation and nutrition. Then we did product testing in the kitchen, cooking and learning skills. On an average, it was about a 10-hour work day."

The CSs who attended this course ranged from second class petty officers to chief petty officers, some with 18 years of experience. After cooking for Sailors in the fleet, as well as being in charge of a galley of more than 20 people, the CSs attending this course felt they have a general understanding of the normal demands a chef faces.

Going through this course and seeing how professional chefs perform in the kitchen, has motivated one Sailor to be the best CS and *chef de cuisine* she can possibly be.

"I started cooking when I was eight years



Photo by MCI Joe Garza

▲ Culinary Federation student CS1 Joaquin Ramirez (center) organizes the kitchen, while preparing for his final exams.

old. I had jobs before the Navy that involved cooking, and [I] have cooked all the while I have been in the Navy," said Butler. "This course has given me a better understanding of my craft and has brought skills out of me that I never knew I had. The course has made me realize that cooking is an art. I've done things in two weeks here that I would have never done prior to coming here, and it has made me a better cook, well, I can say chef now, can't I?"



▲ A student prepares a meal for judging during final evaluation.

After leaving the course with the title "chef," the students can go back to their respective duty stations with their heads held high, ready to teach their shipmates everything that they have learned during their time.

"It helps you to be more creative and lets you show your talents to the crew," said CS1(SW/AW) Alton Coleman, certified *sous chef*. "The course has reinforced and enhanced what I have already learned. It showed me how my civilian counterparts prepare and present their menus."

"I think Petty Officer Picker's attention to detail since finishing the course and his presentation has improved significantly," said Lt. Cmdr. Jeff Gaydash, flag aide for Commander, Naval Installations Command, Vice Adm. Bob Conway. "His impact on the fleet could be huge with the knowledge that he was taught from this course. He [should]



▲ Chef David Bearl speaks to students on the eve of their exam.

take this back to the fleet and teach his junior Sailors, whether on a carrier or on a sub. He should not only instruct them, but tell them about the opportunities he's been given.

"Throughout the Navy he should let people know that, 'hey, there are opportunities out there and I can go and get the certification, so I can make my mess better, and I could also prepare myself for the transition back to being a civilian and have all of the tools I need to succeed in the Navy and out there as well.'"

In the Navy, 1,456 Sailors have earned culinary certifications and are now serving in a variety of duty stations from submarines to aircraft carriers.

The CSs, who take advantage of this opportunity learn and receive constructive feedback from chefs all while trying to become certified in one of the three different levels.

"The levels of certification these cooks are trying to reach are the *sous chef*, the *chef de cuisine* and the executive chef," said Bearl.

"The *sous chef* is the lowest level and is in charge of production throughout the kitchen. The *chef de cuisine* can actually run a kitchen, but is second in charge. The executive chef is the person in charge. This person

▲ Chef David Bearl grades a dish prepared by a Navy student.

has many responsibilities that include putting together the menu, providing the staff with recipes, in some cases, this person is in charge of salaries and sometimes does actually cook."

"The difference between the military training and this training is that it was a lot of professional, on-the-job training as far as the knowledge the chefs brought to the class," said Picker. "The knowledge poured into this class from these two chefs was incredible, and it has made me a better chef because of it."

Before coming to the class, the students must have a basic knowledge of their rate and hold some knowledge of the three major subjects the course focuses on to become qualified as a chef.

"[Getting certified] has become the normal thing to do. If this is what you want, then you have to take the steps to improve yourself and succeed in this field. I think it is the greatest thing in the world, and it is the right thing to do if you are a cook," said Bearl.

The certification process has changed over the years, and through Navy COOL the military is a recent addition to the federation's plan.

"We started offering this course to the military 10 years ago, and it is offered bi-monthly now," said Bearl. "We originally started with the Navy food management team, trying to get those guys certified. In the 10 years we have offered it to the military, I have fallen in love with them. The military personnel generally have a higher degree of discipline and a better level of sanitation; their uniforms are sharp and crisp, and the people are ready on time. That is always a great thing."

Instructors test the students from the first day they walk into the class. They observe every move and every decision, from making

► Students prepare a meal while Chef Brett Harris grades them on sanitation and nutrition.



and preparing their menus to the academic portion of the course.

“The students get a refresher in the courses that are given and are focused on [the test] while they are here,” said Bearl. “In preparation for their test, the students get eight hours of lessons in [their core courses], and we also have a link on the Web where they can take a practice exam as many times as they need to. Every time they take the exam, it automatically resets and gives them a new set of questions which increases their chances of passing the final exam.”

Despite the difficulty and fast pace of the class, successful graduation percentages soar.

“We rarely graduate 100 percent of the class, but it is very possible, and the students have to really apply themselves and not get distracted for two weeks,” said Bearl. “You have to get a 70 percent on the written exam and a 75 percent on the cooking portion. The written exam includes sections on sanitation, professional cooking and professional baking. If a student fails the written, they can always retake their exam as many times until they pass it.”

It’s not only about cooking for the students, it’s also about loving what you do and taking pride in your craft.

“If someone can take pride in what they do then they are going to do it to the best of their ability,” said Picker. “I know cooking for a lot

of people isn’t really fun or exciting. I think this course would really put some passion back into the food in the Navy and make being out to sea a little easier for the rest of the crew.”

Once certified, the real work of maintaining the accreditation starts in earnest for these newly-appointed chefs. Making sure it stays valid becomes another objective.

“The Navy students have to maintain this certification and revalidate it every five years and also continue their education units,” said Bearl. “All certified chefs must have a 30-hour class in nutrition, sanitation and culinary supervisory management prior to their initial certification at any level. It isn’t just a ‘one-and-done’ thing, they should always want to advance and become better at their craft. All of the students who come through here should put it up on their walls or in their galleys and be very proud of it because it was hard to get.”

Going through the course and

honing culinary skills not only affects that individual Sailor but it also affects the Sailors and Marines receiving the meal.

“One of the main things our Sailors and Marines look forward to when getting underway is getting a hot, delicious and attractive meal,” said Coleman. “Presentation is everything, for we eat with our eyes first.”

Although the course is taught at a grueling pace, it reinforces teamwork.

“For two weeks, you are around these people in close quarters, and you become close with everyone in your class,” said Butler. “Toward the end of the class, we became somewhat of a family, and I started depending on them, and I hope they felt the same way,”

At the end of the course, the students get their certificates passed out to them and a few final words from their instructors. Having finally completed one of the hardest courses they’ve had in their military careers, emotions hit them as if they just graduated high school again Bearl stated.

“This has been a experience I don’t think I will ever forget,” said Butler. “Overall, I think the course was phenomenal. It helps bring out the cooking skills you thought you never had. Honestly, words cannot describe what they taught me and the way I felt when I graduated.”

Scott and Garza are assigned to Naval Media Center, Washington.



▲ A lobster dish is served up for a final grade.

Credentialing Opportunities

Story by MC3(SW/AW) Jhi L. Scott and Gary Nichols

Navy Credentialing Opportunities Online (COOL) helps develop the personal and professional capability of Sailors.

Credentialing offers new non-traditional blended training solutions to enhance individual capability and improve force readiness. This discretionary program was developed primarily for enlisted active and Reserve component military members and provides for the payment of credentialing examinations associated with professional licensing, certifications and renewals consistent with established policy.

“Sailors can use Navy COOL to quickly find credentials of interest to them and what ratings they apply to,” said Keith Boring, Navy COOL program manager. “Senior enlisted personnel can also use Navy COOL to help advise junior personnel in their career options and help those Sailors who are interested and eligible for in-rate conversions.”

Most importantly, Navy COOL allows Sailors to quickly identify what certifications or licenses are offered to them and which ratings qualify for industry-recognized certifications and licenses.

This can also be helpful for Sailors looking to change ratings due to overmanned ratings or slow advancement trends. Sailors can identify their interests in careers or certifications to find the best fit for them when selecting another rating.

Navy COOL is part of the Enlisted Learning and Development Strategy (ELDS), which does not necessarily create new programs, but provides visibility to current Navy programs. ELDS is an umbrella that covers all learning and development programs enlisted Sailors need for a successful career.

Credentialing translates to greater rating knowledge, skills and competency as well as personal fulfillment.

The rewards of professional credentialing have never been more important than they are today. Through Navy COOL, active-duty

and Reserve enlisted Sailors take advantage of funded certification and licensing exams to enhance their military careers while possibly creating future opportunities in the civilian employment sector. These are the same credentials civilians earn and are measures of the professionalism and expertise of Sailors.

The Navy is the only service funding credentialing exams for the entire enlisted workforce.

Professional certifications and credentials are recognized by industry and can be key to a successful transition to civilian employment.

For Sailors interested in taking advantage of COOL opportunities, Navy COOL recently updated its Web site to include three new search capabilities making it easier for Sailors to learn more about the program and how it applies to them.

Sailors now have the ability to look up their ratings, jobs or occupations and to search for civilian equivalents to their own as well. In addition, they can view civilian certifications closely aligned to their ratings.

Now, Sailors and prospective Sailors can perform a reverse search during which they can look up a civilian career area or certification and find what the Navy has to offer.

“This new capability is a significant resource for the Navy’s recruiting mission, as it shows applicants how the Navy can fulfill their career desires,” said Boring.

“Navy COOL provides great career opportunities for Sailors and will continue to evolve to meet the needs of Sailors now and in the future,” Boring concluded.

Scott is assigned to Naval Media Center, Washington, and Nichols is assigned to the Center for Information Dominance, Corry Station, Pensacola, Fla.



Getting There

These searches were developed at the request of active duty, Reserve and civilian users. These new searches can play a significant role in identifying career areas the Navy can offer to Navy applicants as well as a quick means to see if a particular certification or license is offered on Navy COOL.

The main search page is accessed by simply clicking on the “Search for Credentials” button on the left side of the screen.

The three new search categories near the bottom of the page include the civilian career area, credential name and credential agency.

SEARCH BY CIVILIAN CAREER AREA

If a user searches for a specific civilian job title, equivalent Navy ratings are listed. A clickable link will lead back to available certifications and equivalent civilian occupations.

SEARCH BY CIVILIAN CERTIFICATION

If a user searches for a specific credential or occupation, a clickable link will lead back to the Navy ratings that qualify the user for that certification.

SEARCH BY AGENCY CERTIFICATION

If a user searches for an agency, clickable links for specific credentials will lead back to the Navy ratings that qualify the user for those certifications.

For more about Navy COOL, visit <http://www.coolnavy.mil/>.

USNS *Mercy* (T-AH 19) Team Treats More Than 25,000 Patients in Papua New Guinea

USNS *Mercy* (T-AH 19) recently completed her two-week humanitarian and civic assistance mission in Papua New Guinea.

Since leaving San Diego in May, *Mercy* has traveled to the Republic of the Philippines, Vietnam and Timor-Leste to provide humanitarian assistance as part of *Pacific Partnership 2008*. While in these countries *Mercy* provided medical, dental, engineering and veterinarian assistance.

The *Pacific Partnership* medical teams provided a variety of services in Papua

New Guinea, treating 25,179 patients and performing 346 medical procedures for the people of the region.

The mission lasted 14 days, and according to the Honorable Powes Parkop, Governor of the National District, the *Pacific Partnership* team accomplished “miracles.”

“I never thought I would witness such quality service in my lifetime,” said Parkop.

Sailors from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 133, of Gulfport, Miss., and Naval Amphibious Construction Battalion 1, San Diego, completed nine repair and

construction projects at Popondetta and Port Moresby. The U.S. Pacific Fleet band also performed concerts during the visit.

For Chief Equipment Operator (SCW) James Brock, there’s a sure way to tell the difference the project has made, thanks to the combined efforts of the multinational team and host nation participants.

“Just come and look at the kids’ faces when they’re able to receive healthcare treatment at their newly restored clinic,” he said. **SE**

Story by MC3 Michael C. Barton, Pacific Partnership Public Affairs, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea.

Sixth Fleet Deploys Ships in Support of Humanitarian Assistance Mission

Two U.S. Navy ships and a U.S. Coast Guard cutter responded to deliver humanitarian relief supplies to the Republic of Georgia. These deployments are part of the larger United States response to the government of Georgia request for humanitarian assistance.

USS *McFaul* (DDG 74) and U.S. Coast Guard Cutter *Dallas* (WMEC 716) departed from Souda Bay, Crete, loaded with thousands of blankets, hygiene kits, baby food and infant care supplies to save lives and alleviate human suffering. These surface ships represent the first from the United States to participate in the delivery of humanitarian assistance to Georgia.

Both *McFaul* and *Dallas* are on regularly scheduled deployments in the 6th Fleet area of responsibility.

USS *Mount Whitney* (LCC/JCC 20) is



▲ Bottled water is loaded aboard USS *McFaul* (DDG 74) in Souda Bay, Crete. Nearly 55 tons of supplies were loaded as part of the humanitarian assistance for the Republic of Georgia, following the conflict between Russian and Georgian forces.

currently on-loading humanitarian relief materials in her homeport of Gaeta, Italy, and will proceed to Georgia at a later date. **SE**

Story courtesy of Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Commander, U.S. 6th Fleet, Naples, Italy.

Photo by MC3 Joshua Valcarcel



◀ *Operation Smile* volunteers Dr. Robert Russell, a plastic surgeon from Springfield, Ill., and his assistant Maria Velasquez, perform reconstructive surgery on 21-year-old Solomon Maitava aboard USNS *Mercy* (T-AH 19) while in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea. The operation, performed during *Pacific Partnership 2008*, is a first for *Operation Smile* in Papua New Guinea.

USS *George Washington* (CVN 73) Departs for Japan

With her crew of approximately 5,500 Sailors, USS *George Washington* (CVN 73) recently departed San Diego, and headed to Yokosuka, Japan, where she will replace USS *Kitty Hawk* (CV 63) as the United States’ only permanently forward-deployed aircraft carrier.

Commanded by Capt. John R. Haley, *George Washington* became the flagship for the Commander, Task Force 70 (CTF 70), Rear Adm. Richard B. Wren last week after he and his staff moved to *George Washington* from *Kitty Hawk*.

“The transition had been tremendously smooth, and it’s clear that we’re passing an enormous milestone toward reaching USS *George Washington*’s ultimate forward deployment assignment to the Western Pacific and Indian Oceans,” said Wren. “We are particularly excited to foster a new era in our long-standing relationship with our host nation of Japan and the city of Yokosuka.”

This will be the first time *George Washington* gets underway with CTF 70, Carrier Air Wing 5 (CVW 5) and Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 15. The carrier will be the permanent flagship for CTF 70 while GW is forward deployed to Yokosuka, Japan.

Task Force 70 is the Carrier Strike Group component of Battle Force 7th Fleet, also led by Wren. In the past, the task force has been centered on USS *Kitty Hawk* (CV 63), which will soon head to Bremerton, Wash., to decommission from naval service next year after 48 years on active duty.

The security environment in the Western Pacific region requires the United States to station the most capable ships forward for deterrence and the best possible response times for maritime and joint force operations. The forward deployment of GW ensures the ability of Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet, to fulfill the U.S. Government’s commitment to the defense of Japan, and the maintenance of international peace and security in the Far East in support of mutual cooperation and security. This posture also brings the U.S.



▲ Sailors man the rails of USS *George Washington* (CVN 73) as it departs Naval Air Station North Island, San Diego.

Navy’s most capable ships with the greatest amount of striking power and operational capability in the timeliest manner.

George Washington’s replacement of *Kitty Hawk* is part of the Navy’s long-range effort to routinely replace older ships assigned to the Navy’s forward-deployed forces with newer or more capable platforms. **SE**

Story courtesy of USS George Washington (CVN 73), San Diego.

Navy College Program can boost Sailors' advancement exam scores

Story by Susan Lawson, Public Affairs Officer, Center for Personal and Professional Development (CPPD)

Sailors can now apply education points toward their Final Multiple Score (FMS) calculations for the fall advancement cycle.

For E-4 to E-6, two points will be awarded for an associate's degree, and four points will be awarded for a bachelor's degree or higher. For those Sailors up for the E-7 to E-9 boards, points will not be awarded, but there will be clear guidance to selection board members to emphasize and positively note advanced degrees.

"This is a significant milestone in the progression of junior Sailors becoming senior leaders. We are doing it the right way, starting with the junior enlisted community and providing a wealth of tools to get them started," said Center for Personal and Professional Development (CPPD) Master Chief Navy Counselor (SW/SS) Jeff Kennamore.

"Naval Education and Training Command (NETC) has developed degree roadmaps available on the Navy College Site, and it is important to encourage all Sailors to check it out. Now is the best time ever to be in the Navy.

Between Navy College Program for Afloat College Education (NCPACE), Navy Tuition Assistance (TA), College Level Examination Program (CLEP), and a host of other tools, there is absolutely no reason every Sailor can't start, or finish, their degree right now."

The Navy College Program (NCP) supports the Enlisted Learning and Development Strategy (ELDS). ELDS does not necessarily create new programs, but provides visibility to current Navy programs, such as NCP. ELDS is an umbrella under which are the learning and development programs enlisted Sailors need access to for a successful

career. ELDS includes everything from basic training, through rate training basic and advanced schools, and includes Enlisted Navy Professional Military Education (ENPME), Enlisted Leadership, Enlisted Joint Professional Military Education (EJPME), professional certifications through Navy Credentialing Opportunities Online (Navy COOL) and advanced education.

The staff at CPPD and the Navy College Program are responsible for a variety of Sailor-education programs, including but not limited to the administration of the 52 Navy College offices located around the world, as well as the operations of the NCPACE, TA, Academic Skills Testing (AST) and the United States Military Apprenticeship Program (USMAP).

"NCPACE provides shipboard personnel the educational opportunities comparable to those available to personnel assigned to shore duty," said CPPD's Voluntary Education Director, Dr. Mary Redd-Clary.

"All NCPACE college courses are provided by accredited colleges and universities, and both undergraduate and graduate level courses

are available. NCPACE institutions are accredited, and the course instruction is offered through distance learning and classroom teaching. However, it is important to keep in mind that while NCPACE courses are tuition-free, students must pay for textbooks and other educational material."

The Navy's TA program provides active duty personnel funding for tuition costs for courses taken in an off-duty status at a college, university or vocational or technical institution, whose regional or national accreditation is recognized by the Department of Education.

Navy TA pays the tuition and fees for academic course enrollment up front. TA also pays 100 percent of tuition costs for courses related to the completion of a high school diploma or equivalency certificate. For other education levels, there is a fiscal year credit limit of 16 semester hours, 24 quarter hours or 240 clock hours per individual.

"CLEP is another resource that can be a useful for Sailors pursuing a college degree. Sailors who have a solid foundation in certain subject areas and wish to "test out" of a particular course are able to through CLEP testing," explained Redd-Clary. "Through the Navy College Office (NCO), Sailors can make arrangements to complete CLEP course examinations on an array of subjects."

Another academic resource for Sailors is the Navy College Program Distance Learning Partnership (NCPDLP). The NCPDLP is administered by CPPD, which also serves as the administrator for all Navy College Offices.

"The goal of the NCPDLP is to support both the Sailor's mobile lifestyle, as well as their educational goals with a myriad of degree programs. Courses are offered in a variety of formats, such as CD-ROM, videotape, paper, or over the Internet," said Redd-Clary.

The NCPDLP recently expanded its membership from 17 to 30 schools. NCPDLP colleges and universities offer Sailors degree programs via distance learning regardless of their duty stations. These degree programs are designed to use nontraditional credits from a Sailor's rating as well as other schools they may have attended.

"NCPDLP's degree programs play an important role in Sailors' academic pursuits, particularly with the addition of degree points being available toward their FMS," said Redd-Clary. "All of NCPDLP's degree programs are mapped to ratings; however, all degree programs are open to all rates. The number of credits afforded a Sailor will obviously depend on their individual training.

"NCPDLP is just another great way to take advantage of the education programs the Navy has available for Sailors."

Sailors interested in starting on a degree or taking advantage of any of these educational and advancement opportunities can start by visiting their local Navy College Office or the Navy College Web site <https://www.navycollege.navy.mil>. 



Sailor On Ice

Story by MC2(SW) Elizabeth Vlahos, photo by MC1(AW) Brien Aho

Aerographer's Mate 1st Class Gene Michael Swope has a job unlike any other in the Navy. He gets paid to look at ice — the ice around the polar ice caps, that is.

Swope has worked for the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) for five years as an ice analyst. He, along with eight to 15 other ice analysts in the Navy, work with other governmental agencies to produce various products on a daily to biweekly basis.

Since NOAA is the only agency that specializes in ice analysis, the environment makes for a unique duty experience.

"Once you leave this place, you're not going to do the same type of work that you would do somewhere else," said Swope. "You're flying over and watching what you're analyzing. You're experiencing it hands on."

"A lot of the imagery and interpretation we do around here [is] left up to interpretation. Just like we analyze different weather charts, it's always going to be a different analysis. There's never [one] right way to do things all the time. It's just left up to the individual, and [it] can change at all times."

The art of ice analysis is a combination of technology and exploration.

"We'll concentrate on specific regions, and we have anywhere from two to three days to put forth a reliable product that's compiling four days worth of imagery," said Swope. "Once we've got the product finished, we submit it to a production

center. They'll produce the color version of that product; so it comes back to us and gets [quality checked] before it's published on the Web, so that there are no mistakes.

"We try to use the best imagery available to us to put out the most accurate product. We change the software all the time. It's not like you could use the same ice analysis software that you used five years ago. We've been through three or four software upgrades since I've been here."

The opportunity to get out and explore varies by season, but more often than not, Swope and his shipmates get the opportunity to explore the places they analyze.

"When I went across the North Pole back in 2005, [we saw a] polar bear actually eating this seal," Swope recalled. "That was definitely the coolest thing I saw up there, the polar bears in nature doing their thing."

As obscure as the art of ice analysis may seem, Swope's work is inherently important to Sailors on the deck plates, especially when it comes to navigation.

"Probably the most important thing [we're doing] is letting them know where the ice is [located]. Depending on the size of the ship, that could be pretty important information for them. [They need to] know ahead of time where ice conditions exist, to better prepare them and to keep them safe. Safe navigation is the big key for us here. It's the thing we focus on the most." ❧

Vlahos is assigned to Naval Media Center, Washington.

Focus on
Service

Blimps Offer a Different View

Story compiled by MC2 David Beyea

For six weeks this summer, Naval Air Station Key West, Fla., was home to a Skyship 600 blimp. The Navy, working with the U.S. Coast Guard, tested the use of airships there. The tests evaluated whether to use helium-filled blimps to search the Florida Straits for smugglers and boats in distress.

This is not the first time the Navy has employed dirigibles for scouting missions.

In September 1923, the Navy launched USS *Shenandoah* (ZR 1), the first American-built military dirigible. *Shenandoah* and future Navy airships were brought to the fleet to develop the potential of airships as a naval weapon system.

Shenandoah spent her first year flying around the eastern United States, giving the American people a look at the rigid airship and providing training for her crew. In August 1924, *Shenandoah* performed the first mooring to a ship, the converted oiler USS *Patoka* (AO 9).

In October, *Shenandoah* was grounded, as she began to share her helium with the new airship, USS *Los Angeles*.

Built in Friedrichshafen, Germany, *Los Angeles* made a three-day trans-Atlantic flight to Naval Air Station Lakehurst, N.J., where her flammable hydrogen gas was replaced with helium, making the dirigible safer, but decreasing her payload and range. For the next year *Los Angeles* and *Shenandoah* would share the expensive helium gas.

On Sept. 3, 1925, while flying over Ohio, *Shenandoah* encountered a violent storm. The airship crew lost control, and



USS *Shenandoah* (ZR 1) is attached to her mast at Naval Air Station Lakehurst, N.J., circa November 1923 to January 1924.

Shenandoah rapidly exceeded her pressure height, overstressing the hull structure. *Shenandoah* broke apart and crashed, killing 14 of the 43-man crew. As a result, the Navy designed new airships to be stronger than *Shenandoah*.

In 1927, *Los Angeles* began operations to develop techniques for basing airplanes aboard the airship, expanding the dirigible's ability for fleet scouting. In 1932 *Los Angeles* was decommissioned and put into storage.

As *Los Angeles* was being retired, USS *Akron* (ZRS 4) and USS *Macon* (ZRS 5) were commissioned.

In 1932, *Akron* operated in fleet exercises, performing successful search missions and refining her airplane support and search capabilities. On her way to New England, April 4, 1933, *Akron* crashed over the New Jersey coast after encountering a violent storm. Only three of the 76 men aboard survived the accident.

Just a few weeks after *Akron's* loss, *Macon* made her first flight. From 1933 to 1935 *Macon* and her embarked airplanes

participated in naval exercises, demonstrating her ability to conduct searches over the vast distances of the Pacific, but the dirigible was vulnerable to enemy airplanes when scouting close to the fleet.

On Feb. 12, 1935, the Navy's dirigible program effectively ended when a storm tore off *Macon's* upper fin, causing the airship to go down into the sea. All but two crew members were rescued before the dirigible sank. ☞

Beyea is assigned to Naval Media Center, Washington.

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FORGED FROM THE DECKPLATES



Design by: MC2 (SW) Joshua J. Wahl

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