

Home to **America's
Embrace**



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All HANDS

MAGAZINE OF THE U.S. NAVY

FEBRUARY 2002

**Plane Captain
at War**

All HANDS February

Number 1018



Features

16 Home to America's Embrace

USS *Enterprise* (CVN 65) was on her way home from a six-month cruise when terrorists attacked the United States Sept. 11, 2001. The cruise was extended and the crew answered their nation's call, which made homecoming just a little sweeter.



Photo by JO1 Craig Strawser

22 "It's My Plane" A Brown Shirt at War

When Airman Michael Holmes finally crawls into his rack and takes a minute to relax, he thinks about his family and the crew members he works with aboard USS *Carl Vinson* (CVN 70). He also thinks about working on one of the most dangerous places in the world, the flight deck of an aircraft carrier. But, most of all, he thinks about his plane.

30 The Parted Curtain

It has only been during the last decade that the U.S. Navy has been able to conduct port visits in the Black Sea. But even now, since the Iron Curtain was pushed aside, there is only a small percentage of Sailors who can see the world through the Parted Curtain.

36 Turn Over a New Leaf

Did you over-do the holidays? Did you buy a new car and decided you couldn't live without the new stereo system and DVD, too? Are your credit card bills making you crazy? Then take a good, hard look and find out how to get out from under all those bills and simplify your life.

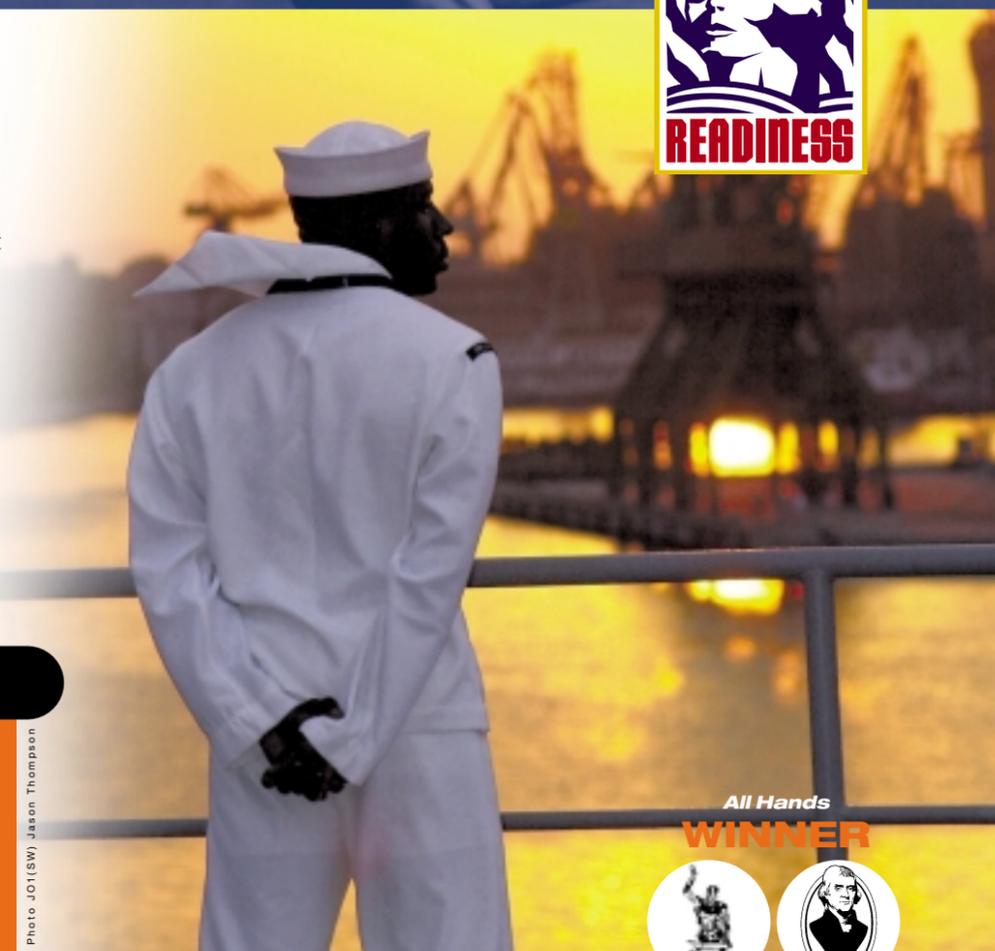


Photo JO1(SW) Jason Thompson

Departments

- 6 Around the Fleet
- 42 Twenty 4 Seven
- 44 Eye on the Fleet
- 46 Eye on History
- 48 The Final Word

All Hands
WINNER



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Excellence



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JO1 Joseph Gunder III
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Digital Prepress Coordinator
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PRINTING

GPO Printing Specialist
John Kennedy

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On the Front Cover

Take a look at a plane captain on board USS *Carl Vinson* during Operation *Enduring Freedom*.

Photo by PH3 Paul Ingle
Illustration by Seth Sirbaugh

Next Month

On the 60th anniversary of the Seabees, we take a look at how they train, and we see how new recruits prepare to serve their country in a time of war.

Check us out Online at:

www.news.navy.mil

As the Olympic torch passed through Washington, D.C., on its way to Salt Lake City, ITC(SW/PJ) Bernard Brown carried it through an honor cordon in memory of his 11-year-old son, Bernard Jr., who was aboard the jet that crashed into the Pentagon. The Salt Lake City Organizing Committee for the 2002 Olympic Games hosted the ceremony for the heroes and victims at the Pentagon River Parade Field.

Photo by JO1 Joseph Gunder





USS *Kitty Hawk* (CV 63) crewmembers enjoy a rare opportunity to jump off aircraft elevator 1 during a swim call. *Kitty Hawk* celebrated its 58th day at sea in support of Operation *Enduring Freedom* by having a steel beach picnic, which included food, games on the flight deck and a dip in the warm waters.

Photo by PH3 Christopher Borgren II

Around the Fleet

Editor,

I am a Sailor deployed in USS *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71) in support of Operation *Enduring Freedom*. ... I just read your article about the Sailors of the Year 2001 and saw a picture of the man who put me in the Navy. ATC Dan Williams was very helpful in [getting] me ready for my transition into Navy life in the summer of 1998. ... I really owe him a lot and would like to express that to him. As my recruiter, he was very trusted and became a good friend.

ET2 Jarod B. Littell
USS *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71)

Editor,

I have been in the Navy for three years now and I finally picked up BM3 off this last test. I just wanted to tell you that your magazine is the best out there to keep us Sailors, who are away from home, updated on what's going on in the world. I would also like to suggest you feature a magazine article on Operation *Enduring Freedom*. Thanks for your time.

BM3 Elizabeth Rodgers
USS *Frank Cable* (AS 40)



Editor's Note:
Congratulations BM3! Hopefully, soon after advancement

results were announced, you and your shipmates received a copy of our November 2001 issue, which was printed late due to our retooling of the issue so we could present the events of

September 11, and Operation *Enduring Freedom*. The war on terrorism will continue to remain prominent in the pages of future *All Hands*, with such coverage specially noted by our "War and Readiness" logo.

SHIPMATES



FIREMAN APPRENTICE RICHARD WILLIAMS of USS *Dwight D. Eisenhower* (CVN 69) was recognized recently for heroic actions while commuting home on I-64 in Virginia. Williams and other Sailors assisted in pulling a woman from a flaming vehicle that had hit a road divider, flipped and landed on the shoulder. He and another service member used a fire extinguisher to beat back the flames, allowing another group of Sailors and Marines to free the woman and pull her to a safe distance.



HOSPITAL CORPSMAN JASON DAGLIO was recently nominated for Bluejacket Sailor of the third quarter at U.S. Naval Hospital Guam. He was recognized for various off-duty accomplishments including, teaching "Community First Aid" to the Guam National Weather Bureau, serving as a Boy Scout volunteer and a Special Olympics swimming coach.



DISBURSING CLERK 3RD CLASS LONNELLE CALLOWAY was recently recognized for his work in the disbursing department aboard USS *Nimitz* (CVN 68). Calloway manages more than 500 enlisted and officer pay accounts. He also conducts regular training for the ship's 3,200 crew members on how to read their Leave and Earning Statements.



MESS MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST 2ND CLASS (SS) RICHARD P. GOLD was recently selected as Submarine Group 7's Senior Sailor of the Quarter for the third quarter of 2001. Gold served as the staff Auxiliary Security Force coordinator, augmenting requirements for the Security Department at Yokosuka Naval Base. He also provided five-star culinary service for various flag functions, retirements and submarine receptions.

BY THE Numbers

62,000

Approximate number of nautical miles traveled by USS *Enterprise* (CVN 65) during her extended deployment. (Story on Page 16)

400

The number of the CAG's plane on board USS *Carl Vinson* during Operation *Enduring Freedom*. (Story on Page 22)

125

Number of months needed to pay off a balance of \$1,000 at an interest rate of 24 percent (calculated using the simple interest method). (Story on Page 36)

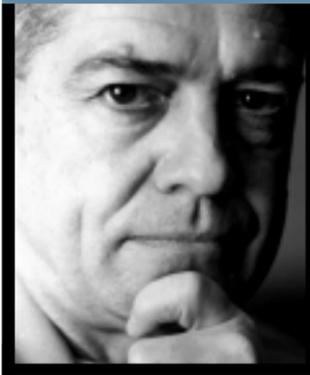
5

Countries visited by USS *La Salle* (AGF 3) during a 17-day cruise to the Black Sea. (Story on Page 30)

CARELESS TALK COSTS LIVES

Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy
MCPON (SS/SW/AW) Jim Herdt

Photo by JOC Robert Benson



Speaking with Sailors

These questions are from a recent MCPON all hands call:

Q: What is the Career Status Bonus (CSB) and how do I know if it's right for me?

A: The decision to take the Career Status Bonus (CSB) option or remain with the High-3 retired pay system is a major choice for Sailors and their families. This decision should not be made lightly, and should not be based on short-term needs. Although the CSB payment of \$30,000 is attractive and immediate, it may not be beneficial for every Sailor in the long run.

Under the High-3 retirement system, a retiree with 20 years of service receives 50 percent of the highest three-year pay average, with 2.5 percent added for each additional year of service up to 75 percent. Retirees under this system also receive annual cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) at the rate of inflation based on the consumer price index (CPI).

The REDUX retirement system, which you would opt for by choosing CSB, offers 40 percent of the high three-year pay average for 20 years with 3.5 percent for each additional year up to 75 percent. The COLA rate paid under REDUX is 1 percent less than the CPI.

This should be a joint decision between the Sailor and spouse making sure they are equally informed on the details of electing REDUX retirement or remaining with the High-3 retirement plan. Command financial specialists are available to talk to Sailors and their families about these two options. A slide presentation is also available online at www.staynavy.navy.mil which illustrates the projected differences in retirement pay for High-3 and CSB.

Q: What is a SMART transcript and how can I get one?

A: Individual Sailor/Marine American Council on Education Registry Transcripts (SMARTs) are available to every member of the Navy and Marine Corps on the Internet via the Navy College Program (NCP) Web site. Sailors and Marines can get a copy of their individual SMART transcript to see what college credits their military training has earned them by going to the SMART access page at <http://smart.cnet.navy.mil>.

The SMART documents recommend college credit for a Sailor's military training and occupational experience. Your official SMART transcript can be sent directly to an academic institution of your choice, and must be requested from the Navy College Center or by visiting your local Navy College Office. **NS**

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

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Task Force EXCEL Introduces "Sailor Continuum"

The Task Force for Excellence through Commitment to Education and Learning (EXCEL) is fleet-testing its "Sailor Continuum." The Sailor Continuum is the tool the Navy will use to identify the knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) that Sailors need to be successful at their jobs.

It is the vehicle that will drive all training, education and proficiency requirements for every enlisted rate and officer community.

The continuum has five areas of concentration, which are separated into levels of expertise.

At any moment in their career, Sailors can view their personal continuum and see what courses they need to take, what qualifications they are required to have, and what opportunities exist for them to excel at any given task.

RADM Harry Ulrich, director of Task Force EXCEL, speaking at a recent 3rd Fleet commanders conference, explained that the training model will revolutionize the way the Navy trains and promotes Sailors.

"The Sailor Continuum is all about increasing war-fighting capabilities through revolutionizing the training and education process," said Ulrich. "We are going to test and refine this process, and when we prove to the fleet that it works, we are going to implement it throughout the Navy."

Eventually, a Sailor Continuum for every enlisted rate and officer community will be developed. Task Force EXCEL will initially test this model on the Information Systems Technician (IT), Master-at-Arms (MA) and Mess Management Specialist (MS) rates.

Currently, Task Force EXCEL implementation cells in Norfolk; San Diego; and Orlando, Fla., are working with the fleet on these pilot projects.

The Sailor Continuum addresses five distinct areas, or "vectors:" professional development; personal development; professional military education and leadership; certifications and qualifications; and performance parameters.

The professional development "vector" addresses rating and community training. Wherever possible, the Navy will closely correlate training to private sector standards.

"We are not going to recreate what already exists and what already works," stressed Ulrich. "We are going to adopt and adapt the best that business offers."

Personal development involves such areas as general military training (GMT) and financial planning and management. Also included in this category are college-level courses, such as history and English, which allow Sailors to complete degree programs.

The professional military education and leadership vector will focus on providing Sailors

with the tools and critical thinking skills they will need as leaders. Whether the Sailor is a seaman apprentice or a master chief, the leadership program will be based on relevant real-world situations.

Certifications and qualifications focus on unit-level

requirements and related industry certifications that directly relate to job proficiencies. For example, an IT will be able to acquire a Microsoft network certification.

"We want to put initials after Sailors' names as well as before," said Ulrich. "We want



to make sure people get credit — not just Navy credit, but college credit and professional certifications. We must make sure that our people are not only employed but employable."

The performance area takes into account all developmental issues, and assesses Sailors' overall abilities. When the Sailor Continuum is established for all enlisted rates and officer communities, proficiency levels associated with each pay grade will be identified. This will allow Sailors to know what performance expectations are, and what promotion milestones must be achieved.

"This process is going to be linked to advancement," said Ulrich. "We are going to promote people based on performance, on what they've accomplished, and on what they learn. The Sailor Continuum is going to give us clearly defined career paths with milestones. When Sailors achieve milestones and their overall performance measures up, they will get promoted."

"The Sailor Continuum is all about eliminating career roadblocks. This system gives Sailors the tools and opportunities they need to grow professionally and personally. This is 'covenant leadership,'" Ulrich added.

Task Force EXCEL is one of Chief of Naval Operations ADM Vern Clark's top action items for this year. Task Force EXCEL's goal is to revolutionize and revitalize Navy training to provide Sailors the opportunity to succeed and prosper in their professional and personal lives.

This revolution will challenge old assumptions, implement new processes, and create new tools that will make a real difference in the lives of Sailors and our Navy's war fighting capabilities. For more information on the Chief of Naval Education and Training, go to

www.cnet.navy.mil. For information on the Chief of Naval Operations, go to www.chinfo.navy.mil/navpalib/cno. 

Story by LCDR Gary Kirchner, Task Force EXCEL Public Affairs.

DOD Asks Vigilance in "Cyber Domain"

The World War II-era adage "Loose Lips Sink Ships" underlined the peril of uttering privileged defense information in public — possibly within earshot of enemy spies.

The United States today is engaged in a war against global terrorism and the need to safeguard classified — and even

unclassified — information is especially acute over the World Wide Web, the Defense Department's senior information security official noted recently.

"I think every American today is being asked to be more vigilant," said J. William Leonard, deputy assistant secretary of defense for security and information operations. "That

vigilance needs to exist not only in the physical domain, but in the 'cyber domain' as well."

DOD has myriad systems in place to mitigate possible probing of information-rich conduits such as e-mail traffic, Leonard remarked in a recent interview. Nevertheless, he said, information security is everyone's responsibility. "The best eyes and ears we have out there are our service men and women, civilians and family members," he said. For example, military members, government civilians, contractors and family members should be suspicious of e-mail that requests information about DOD operations, Leonard said. All personnel, he added, should be aware of the security impact of information in their business



People who suspect a breach

of information security through DOD e-mail traffic or Internet sites "should immediately bring it to the attention of the appropriate person in their command, to make sure it is looked at in that context," he said.

Even unclassified information can be gathered and used by America's enemies, Leonard noted. "We're in an 'Information Age.' Information is an asset in and of itself," he noted. "Whether it is classified or unclassified is immaterial."

Defense Department leaders and rank-and-file employees alike have a responsibility to safeguard information, Leonard said, just as DOD safeguards its technology, people and equipment.

"The more eyes and ears we have out there exercising vigilance — to include in the cyber area — the safer the environment for all of us," he concluded. For more information about DOD today, go to www.defenselink.mil/today. 

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

New Improvements Get Ronald Reagan Crew Ready For Action

Pre-Commissioning Unit (PCU) *Ronald Reagan*, the ninth *Nimitz*-class nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, is currently under construction at Newport News Shipbuilding, Newport News, Va., and due to be delivered to the fleet in 2003 with the latest technological advances in design and

combat systems. These advances include flight-deck configuration, primary flight control, aircraft arresting gear, jet-blast deflectors, aircraft fueling and integrated communications and advanced network systems.

A change that will set *Ronald Reagan* apart from other carriers is the flight deck configuration. The new design has shifted the angle of the landing area slightly to the port side. "It gives the carrier the ability to launch F-14 *Tomcats* from catapult No. 2, while simultaneously 'trapping' on the angle just a few feet away," said Chief Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Handling)(AW) Jonathan Reed, *Ronald Reagan*'s leading aircraft director. "This will be the only carrier in the fleet that can do it. It's incredible."

Innovations with the carrier's arresting gear will also make it unique. *Ronald Reagan* will operate with three arresting wires instead of four. The ship actually has four wires; however, only three are in operation at any one time. The new three-wire arresting gear design can withstand more aircraft landings than the old design due to stronger wire sheaves.



According to the carrier's Catapult and Arresting Gear Maintenance Officer, LT Charles Huntington, "Having one arresting wire down helps reduce the impact due to main-

TIME CAPSULE

This month we look back in the *All Hands* archive to see what was going on in the Navy 52, 23 and nine years ago.



52 Years Ago – January 1950

We showed how a refrigerator ship, or reefer, keeps provisions fresh and Sailors happy with what's on their plate. We also spent some time with Sailors from U.S. Naval Forces Germany as they toured Berlin. We highlighted Volunteer Naval Reservists and how they are "staying savvy" through regular

training, while not receiving any pay (a true volunteer force). We also posted a list of 77 ships slated for deactivation.



23 Years Ago – April 1969

In this month's edition, we looked at a daring rescue mission piloted by LTJG Clyde E. Lassen deep into North Vietnam. He flew his UH-2 *Seasprite* into enemy territory and, even after taking heavy fire to his aircraft, managed to recover two downed aviators and make it to USS *Preble* (DLG 15) with only five minutes of fuel remaining. (USS *Lassen*

[DDG 82] is named for him.) We looked at the different aviation ratings involved in keeping A-6A *Intruders* flying at Whidbey Island Naval Air Station, Wash., and we introduced readers to the new Combat Action Ribbon, recently authorized by the Secretary of the Navy "in recognition of Navy men who actively participated in ground or surface combat."



Nine Years Ago – July 1992

In this issue of *All Hands*, we covered a reenactment of the Doolittle Raid with the launching of two privately owned B-25 bombers from the flight deck of USS *Ranger* (CV 61). We showed how recruiters find new Sailors in places as diverse as New York City and Rapid City, N.D. We also showed

what happens to the rating exam after the Sailor fills in the little circles with the No. 2 pencil, and the scanning and scoring process that goes into identifying who made it and who didn't.

tenance time. We can work on one arresting wire machinery while the other three wires are safely recovering aircraft."

"This new design will reduce our maintenance requirements by half, by increasing the time interval between inspections and overhauls, and will also reduce costs" said ABEC(AW) Jeffery Potoczek who had the opportunity to perform maintenance on the prototype system at Naval AirEngineering Station Lakehurst, N.J.

Another benefit of this system, according to Reed, will be that the arresting gear engines will be more accessible to flight line crews.

The ship also has the Improved Fresnel Lens Optical Landing System, IFLOLS. This system is designed to increase sensitivity in visible glideslope deviations for pilots and improve stabilization, reliability and maintenance rates.

New jet blast deflectors with a one-panel design will also improve safety on the flight deck. The deflectors, which now have a side-panel cooling loop, will better prevent hot exhaust gases from harming personnel, equipment or other aircraft on the flight deck.

In addition, a new fiber optic integrated communications and advanced network (ICAN) control system will operate *Ronald Reagan's* jet fuel system. This means instant information will be available on the fuel system status and fuel quantity indicators while logged into the system.

Ronald Reagan also has a redesigned state-of-the-art primary flight control station, giving a 270-degree view of all aircraft in the carrier's airspace.

This larger, expanded panorama ensures better visibility of operations and control of the precise actions on the

flight deck. That, in turn, gives way to a safer working environment for *Ronald Reagan's* crew.

These innovations will not only provide a safer working environment and take advantage of the most recent advances in carrier design, but will also make *Ronald Reagan* the most technologically advanced aircraft carrier in the world.

Photographs of *Ronald Reagan's* construction can be found at www.reagan.navy.mil/construction.htm. For more information on the ship, go to www.reagan.navy.mil. 

Story by PCU Ronald Reagan
Public Affairs Office.

"Ike" Wins 2001 Phoenix Trophy

USS *Dwight D. Eisenhower* (CVN 69) was recently presented the Secretary of Defense Phoenix Trophy in a ceremony honoring the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier as the best maintenance unit in DOD.

Previously, *Eisenhower* was awarded a 2001 DOD Maintenance Award for large units — 1,000 or more personnel — which placed the carrier in the finals for the award.

The award is named in recognition of the mythological phoenix, a bird that lived five centuries, died and was reborn from its own ashes.

The Phoenix Award and DOD Maintenance Awards are granted in recognition of the long life given to equipment by sustained quality maintenance and the rejuvenation of equipment through well-established maintenance programs.

Eisenhower's impressive maintenance program from last year earned them this year's award recognition. The six-



month deployment to the Mediterranean and Persian Gulf in 2000 saw *Eisenhower* conducting combat operations, delivering ordnance for the first time in hostile territory.

This elevated them above the other five DOD Maintenance Award finalists. The outstanding programs on the carrier saved U.S. taxpayers millions of dollars.

Savings to the Navy varied from \$72,800 for refurbishing 182 non-tight doors aboard the ship, to \$190,000 re-building and maintaining 17 magazine sprinkler valves and 33 sprinkler systems.

Assisted by Naval Air Systems Command, *Eisenhower's* weapons department deferred or avoided \$1,125,400 in maintenance costs.

The crew regularly maintained its equipment and made

repairs normally done "at the factory." For instance, the aircraft intermediate maintenance department performed mission-essential repairs to an F/A-18 aircraft, including the first shipboard replacement of vertical stabilizer strain gauges, a mammoth job.

Their efforts returned a vitally important asset to full mission capability in minimal time, without off-ship technical assistance.

Innovative approaches to mundane problems also set *Eisenhower's* program apart from the rest. Though not an astronomical figure, the ship saved an average of \$3,717 each month in disposal fees, by burning oily rags rather than off-loading them for disposal ashore.

Aviation Shop 8 rewrote repair procedures for the "identification friend or foe" radiator network on F-14 AWG-9 radar antennas. These changes were later approved for fleetwide incorporation, which improved Navywide operation of this critical system.

Eisenhower's maintenance program has continued to be

outstanding to this day, and will see the crew through its three-year refueling and complex overhaul.

For information on USS *Dwight D. Eisenhower*, go to www.navy.mil/homepages/cvn69. 

Story by
USS Dwight D. Eisenhower
Public Affairs.

Operation Corporate Troops: Keeping the Community Strong

Members of the Jacksonville, Fla., Navy and corporate communities recently launched Operation *Corporate Troops*.

A joint community effort, Operation *Corporate Troops* is designed to keep the northeast Florida community strong in the event military personnel are deployed to support the war on terrorism.

Navy leadership spear-heading community effort include: RADM Jan C. Gaudio, commander, Navy Region Southeast; CAPT Mark S.

Boensel, commanding officer, Naval Air Station Jacksonville, Fla.; and CAPT Matt E. Schellhorn, commanding officer, Naval Station Mayport, Fla.

The project recruits civilians to help non-profit organizations in the place of uniformed personnel unable to volunteer because of military obligations.



According to Carolyn Ettlinger, executive director of the Jacksonville Housing Partnership, "Our men and women in uniform give community non-profit organizations 650,000 hours of volunteer service each year.

"They rehab, build and paint houses, mentor children in our schools and work major community events." She added, "If it happens that even 10

Ricky's Tour

By JO2 Mike Jones

mikejones43@hotmail.com



percent of them can't get out into the community because they are deployed, or because of increased security, we want to keep our community strong while they are protecting America.

"I am not surprised that the northeast Florida business and corporate community has stepped up to the plate to make sure our non-profit organizations receive the continued volunteer support they require," said Gaudio at the kick-off event. "This endeavor is another great example of the strong ties between the Navy and civilian community, ties of which we are proud."

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida, the first to enlist in the effort to mobilize volunteers, called the effort a natural extension of its own employee volunteer program.

"Our employees reach out into our communities across the state, providing volunteer support to hundreds of organizations alongside our military volunteers," said Joyce Kramzer, group vice president, North Geographic Business Unit.

"This is an excellent opportunity for us, as a company and as individuals, to contribute to the war effort in a meaningful way. We're enlisting as reinforcements on the home front, while our uniformed men and women fight for our freedom, at home and abroad."

Gaudio added, "The Navy has a proud tradition of neighbor helping neighbor, and today this volunteer spirit is need more than ever before.

I encourage everyone to donate time to help build a stronger community."

Kramzer challenged businesses, both large and small, throughout the Jacksonville area and the state, to enlist in Operation *Corporate Troops*.

For additional information about Operation *Corporate*

Troops, visit www.jacksonville.volunteergateway.org. Military personnel interested in volunteering should contact their command volunteer coordinator or the local Family Service Center. For more information on Navy Region Southeast, go to www.comnavregse.navy.mil. **SN**

Story By Bob Nelson,
Navy Region Southeast
Public Affairs.

USS Theodore Roosevelt's Crew Making U.S. History, Says Myers

The U.S. military's senior officer praised the USS *Theodore Roosevelt's* (CVN 71) crew members Dec. 21, noting that their efforts are helping to win the war against global terrorism.

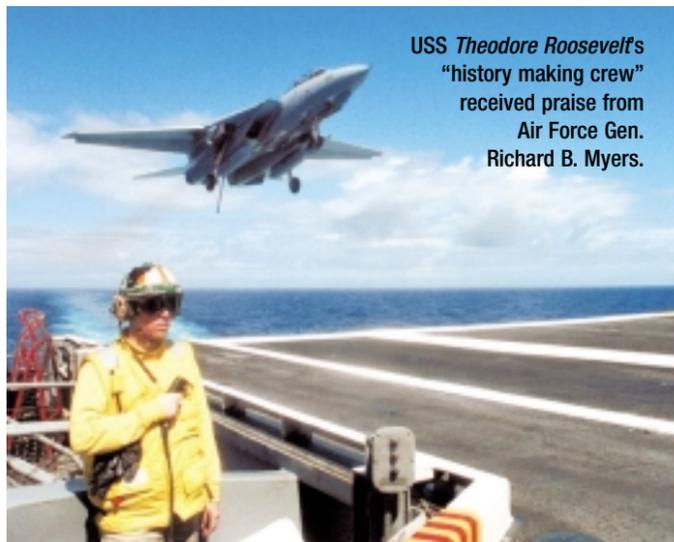
Above decks, as thundering Navy F/A-18 *Hornets* and F-14 *Tomcats* departed and returned, Air Force Gen. Richard B. Myers, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told assembled Sailors they "are making United States history."

The aircraft carrier, deployed in the Arabian Sea since early October, has been using its strike aircraft to hammer Al Qaeda and Taliban targets in Afghanistan.

The war against terrorism is a different kind of war, Myers told the crew, adding, "You've all been part of that."

The carrier's aviators "are flying their tails off," hitting terrorist positions in Afghanistan, Myers said. The strikes, he added, "have been very, very successful."

The Taliban "are no longer in control in Afghanistan, and to a large extent, you all are responsible for that — I mean



USS *Theodore Roosevelt's* "history making crew" received praise from Air Force Gen. Richard B. Myers.

Photo by PHANZ Jason Scarborough

every one of you," Myers told the crew. "I couldn't be prouder of you."

The Taliban had supported Osama bin Laden, the now fugitive leader of the Al Qaeda terrorist network. Bin Laden is believed to have masterminded the Sept. 11 attacks on the New York World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

The war against global terrorism may go on for years, Myers told the crew. But, he added, such an extended war might be prosecuted by other than just military means, to include financial stratagems to dry up terrorists' funding.

Theodore Roosevelt boasts a crew of about 5,500. Many expressed gratitude for the opportunity to see and talk to the Joint Chiefs chairman.

"It's good to know our leaders in Washington take the time to visit us, especially during this holiday time of year," said Petty Officer 3rd Class David, one of the crew who flew Myers out to the carrier on a Navy twin-turbo-prop C-2A plane. Only the ranks and first names of interviewed service members deployed to support Operation *Enduring Freedom* are used in this story due to security reasons.

After completing his visit to *Theodore Roosevelt*, Myers toured two more U.S. military facilities that day.

At one site, Air Force Airman Aja, a food service specialist, had her picture taken with Myers. She said her meeting with the general "was a great honor," adding that her mother back home is proud of her military service.

The war against global terrorism, Aja emphasized, is worth fighting. "We need a world that is safe to live in, and we shouldn't have to worry about things going on, like the Sept. 11 attacks," she said.

More information about USS *Theodore Roosevelt* is available at www.spear.navy.mil/tr. **SN**

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

Bataan Hoists World Trade Center Ground Zero Flag

One week after observing a moment of silence to reflect and remember the three-month anniversary of Sept. 11 with one flag raising

ceremony, USS *Bataan* (LHD 5) held another one. But this time, the ceremony honored the first flag flown at "Ground Zero" amid what was once the World Trade Center.

The "WTC flag" was raised in the middle of the rubble by New York City firefighters, and has since been flown by the aircraft carrier USS *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71) and other U.S. Navy ships deployed in support of Operation *Enduring Freedom*.

"I was very honored to have been able to fly that flag on *Bataan*," said the ship's commanding officer, Capt. Martin R. Allard. "This was done as a tribute to all those heroes who died attempting to save others. I'm ready, and my ship and Sailors are ready, to stay at sea until the job is done."

The first flag flown at "Ground Zero" has drawn comparisons with the one Marines raised at Iwo Jima during World War II.

New York Governor George Pataki and New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani originally presented the flag to ADM Robert J. Natter, commander in chief, U.S. Atlantic Fleet. Both the governor and mayor felt that the flag should be sent out to USS *Theodore Roosevelt* in honor of the ship's namesake, who was himself, from Manhattan.

The WTC flag will go from *Bataan* to the ships that make up its amphibious ready group, USS *Shreveport* (LPD 12) and USS *Whidbey Island* (LSD 41), before being passed to the other ships in the *Roosevelt* Battle Group.

Bataan held its flag-raising ceremony for the WTC flag, just one week after observing a moment of silence and raising a different flag, a 12-by-18 foot American flag, which was sent

to the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operation Capable)(MEU(SOC)) by the New York City Police Emergency Squad. The Marines of the 26th MEU(SOC) are embarked in the *Bataan* Amphibious Ready Group.

The flag from the NYPD Emergency Squad, in conjunction with the Marine public affairs office in Manhattan, was flown aboard USS *Bataan* on Dec. 11. That particular flag had hundreds of tributes and inspirational messages written in honor of the fallen NYC police officers who perished Sept. 11. It was the flag that draped World Financial Center II, near the World Trade Center for two weeks after the attack. It was draped beneath a giant banner that read "United We Stand."

Bataan's ceremony included the passing of the WTC flag from Command Master Chief (SW/AW) Michael Tsikouris to Sergeant Major William McKnight of the 26th MEU, to a line of Sailors and Marines who passed it from one to another until it finally reached Yeoman 2nd Class (SW) Esther Marte. She is a native of New York, and was home on leave in New York City on Sept. 11. Her hands were the last ones to receive the WTC flag in that long procession of Sailors and Marines.

Once firmly in her grip, Marte took the flag and delivered it to *Bataan's* commanding officer on the ship's signal bridge. The captain then presented it to two members of *Bataan's* Color Guard, Disbursing Clerk 2nd Class Thomas Jack and Information Systems Technician 3rd Class John Gray, who raised it while the sounds of the National Anthem filled the air. A few moments after the last note of the Star Spangled Banner played, Taps was played in

remembrance of all who died Sept. 11.

According to Marte, being the person who was chosen to take the flag to the ship's commanding officer was an unforgettable experience. "It was such an honor," said the three-year Navy veteran. "I felt so proud."

Marte, who recently was meritoriously advanced a paygrade to second class petty officer, said that even though she wasn't born in the United States, she's considered New York City to be her home since moving there from the Dominican Republic in 1991, at 14, with her family. "I received my citizenship and education there. I owe New York City most of what I have earned in my life. So, being chosen for this honor meant a lot to me."

Marte continued, "I know that there are a lot of other Sailors and Marines aboard *Bataan* from New York City, so it was a very special event for me. When I was carrying that flag, I felt that I was carrying it for everyone in New York City." **SN**

Story by
USS *Bataan* Public Affairs.

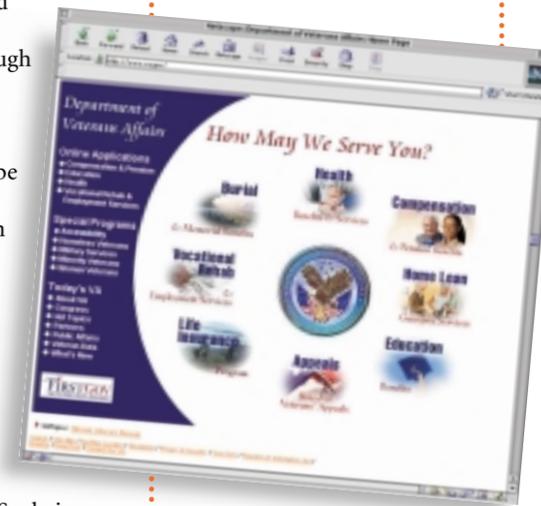
New VA Web Site Promotes Vets-in-Schools Program

In support of President Bush's Veterans Day initiative to unite schools with America's military veterans, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

has started a Web site, "The Veterans' Experience."

"The new VA Web site will provide information that helps teachers and veterans inform students about contributions veterans have made to the American way of life.

The online educational materials are designed to help the President's new campaign, "America's Lessons in Liberty,"



which strives to bring a veteran to every school for Veteran's Day.

The new site, hosted on VA's main site at www.va.gov/veteran.edu, will link to sites operated by veterans' service organizations, civic education organizations and the VA's own Veteran's Day section.

"No one can tell the story of our nation's struggles against the foes of freedom better than our veterans," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Anthony J. Principi.

He added that veterans' organizations already encourage members to reach out to schools with stories about military experiences, and the VA's new Web site will support their educational programs.

Principi emphasized that the President's call to veterans to offer themselves as guest speakers at schools goes beyond

Veteran's Day and is a call also to students to recognize America's veterans.

The Web site will include examples of sacrifices by well-known veterans, information on the country's freedoms and explanations of popular American symbols of patriotism.

For more information on the Department of Veterans Affairs, go to www.va.gov. ❧

Story by VA Public Affairs.

Admiral Praises Saipan's Warrior Spirit

You are warriors first," and "you're the best." That's the message USS *Saipan* (LHA 2) crewmembers received during an address from RADM J. Kevin Moran, commander of Amphibious Group 2, during a recent visit aboard the general-purpose assault ship. *Saipan* is undergoing a complex overhaul at the Norfolk Naval Shipyard, Portsmouth, Va.

After receiving a brief on the overhaul's progress, the highlight of Moran's visit was an "all-hands" assembly. Before speaking to the crew, he presented the enlisted surface warfare specialist pin to three *Saipan* Sailors, and used the

occasion to introduce his next award presentation — the 2000 Battle Efficiency Award.

"This is a significant accomplishment," Moran said, congratulating the crew. "You beat all the competition."

During its Mediterranean deployment last year, *Saipan* conducted operations off the Adriatic coast in support of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia elections and participated in a series of ground-breaking exercises with Croatia.

While praising *Saipan* for its achievements, the admiral warned the crew about the military's worst enemy — complacency.

"We are the greatest Navy in the world. When you're the best," Moran said, "there's only one way to go, and that's down. The challenge is to stay on top."

To meet that challenge, Moran said the military will have to focus more on anti-terrorism and force protection than in the past. The solution to the terrorist threat against the Navy, he said, is the individual Sailor.

"Every Sailor is an important part of anti-terrorism and force protection. We have made many improvements in these areas in recent years, but there is still much more work ahead," Moran said.

Moran's final message to *Saipan* dealt with quality of life and personnel readiness issues. "I know many of you joined up for the college benefits and travel. Those and the other military benefits are great and I expect all of you to take advantage of them."

However, he stressed, every Sailor is a warrior first. "There are not enough people in the fleet, and there never will be, so we've got to work more effectively and efficiently," Moran said. "We are in the warrior profession. We are here to be warriors and fight our country's battles."

Saipan has been in the Norfolk Naval Shipyard since February and is well on its way toward completing the complex overhaul.

The ship is expected to return to its Naval Station Norfolk homeport this spring. For more information about the ships of Naval Surface Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet, go to www.cnsl.spear.navy.mil. ❧

Story by JO2 Eric S. Dehm and JOC Michael R. Marsh, USS Saipan Public Affairs.

Shipboard Sailors Now Informed with CHINFO Clips via DTS

The war against terrorism is changing by the minute. In this volatile time, a shipboard Sailor needs up-to-the-minute information, including news developments concerning the Navy.

An important source from news about the Navy is the Chief of Naval Information (CHINFO) Clips. Produced each weekday, the clips are a



compilation of news articles appearing in daily newspapers, national and local. The compilation of Navy news is now piped to ships by way of the Data Channel, part of the Television Direct-to-Sailor (TV-DTS) satellite service.

DTS also offers Sailors radio and television news, sports and entertainment programming around the clock. While underway, Sailors can get up-to-the-minute news, all day, every day. This channel offers 24-hour news coverage and analysis from major networks and military news sources.

Along with the clips, the Data Channel carries the DTS Program Guide, the Early Bird, Stars and Stripes Lite, and Times Fax — a condensed version of the New York Times specifically done for the Navy. Data Channel products often are placed on the ship's local area network (LAN), making access easy for everyone aboard.

To see the latest schedule of DTS radio and television programming, log on to myafn.dodmedia.osd.mil. ❧

Story by Journalist 1st Class Bruce Moody, Navy News Service.

Navy Test Vessel May Yield New Warfare Concepts

The future of naval warfare is being developed not just in a laboratory, but also at the waterfront at Naval Amphibious Base Little Creek in Norfolk.

With the help of a leased commercial vessel, the Navy is exploring the application of new maritime technology to future military operations.

The ship is a "high-speed vessel" named Joint Venture. The Navy's first HSV is currently based at Little Creek, and is being operated by a joint Navy and Army crew.

The Joint Venture is a 313-foot, wave-piercing catamaran capable of 45 knots, which can operate in heavy seas and relatively shallow water.

For the demonstration period, the Navy modified a commercial vessel with advanced hull and propulsion technology previously in use as a high-speed passenger and automobile ferry.

The HSV Joint Venture is a joint military effort to explore concepts that may develop future tactics and vessel designs. The HSV's naval employment may include: replenishment and resupply at sea, special operations insertion and redeployment, reconnaissance, command and control, anti-submarine warfare mine warfare, humanitarian assistance and evacuation, surface warfare and force protection.

Under the coordination of the Navy Warfare Development Command at Newport R.I., and support from the Office of Naval Research; the Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Army and the Joint Special Operations Command have entered into a partnership to test the vessel for up to two years.

Since the HSV's arrival in October at Little Creek, it has participated in several limited objective experiments and evaluations.

The HSV has already completed helicopter certification and has been used in unmanned underwater vehicle and small boat launches and

recoveries, as well as mine warfare experiments.

"The HSV Joint Venture is just one example of our ongoing efforts to transform naval warfare," said ADM Robert J. Natter, commander in chief, Atlantic Fleet. "This transformation effort is essential to maintaining the U.S. Navy as the world's preeminent Navy."

"Key to our transformation effort and associated research is the willingness to employ new platforms, and test emerging technology to determine what new capabilities they may bring to warfare on and from the sea," the admiral said.

The HSV offers more than high speed. Its modularity and a roll-on/roll-off ramp allow quick and efficient load outs and equipping.

The vessel's shallow draft and water jet propulsion give it tremendous flexibility and maneuverability over conventional ship forms. The combination of these unique characteristics allows the HSV to unload in more ports around the world.

The Navy's intention is not to test this specific vessel's design, but rather the capabilities that an HSV can offer. Lessons learned from current and future demonstrations will help the Navy decide what type of vessels to build for the future. "We are really excited about the possible future uses for this type of ship," said Natter.

"Our interest is in evaluating what capabilities an HSV would bring to the fight. We are particularly interested to see how tactics and capabilities would change. There is a lot of potential in this vessel that could help us literally transform naval

warfare," said the admiral.

The Atlantic Fleet will integrate HSV Joint Venture into upcoming exercises with other naval units.

The Joint Venture will serve as a mine warfare command ship and test the ability to tow mine-detection and sweeping equipment, launch and recover remote mine-hunting vehicles and serve as command and control for airborne and surface platforms.

Additionally, the HSV Joint Venture will participate in special operations, amphibious, search and rescue, maritime interdictions and anti-submarine warfare operations.

For information on the Atlantic Fleet, go to www.atlanticfleet.navy.mil. ❧

Story by Atlantic Fleet Public Affairs.

RILOP Shop Saves Navy Big Money

The RILOP (Reclamation in Lieu of Procurement) shop at Naval Air Reserve Minneapolis has been saving the Navy lots of money since it began saving usable parts off T-56 jet engines several years ago.

Led by Chief Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Fuels) Bruce Ager of the Naval Air Base Support Unit (NABSU), the maintenance shop re-conditions, labels and ships jet engine parts

back to the fleet.

In one year alone, they saved the Navy 354 man-hours, 256 parts and \$1,414,959, because the Navy did not have to hire a private contractor to do the work. Ager said the work is challenging, but rewarding.

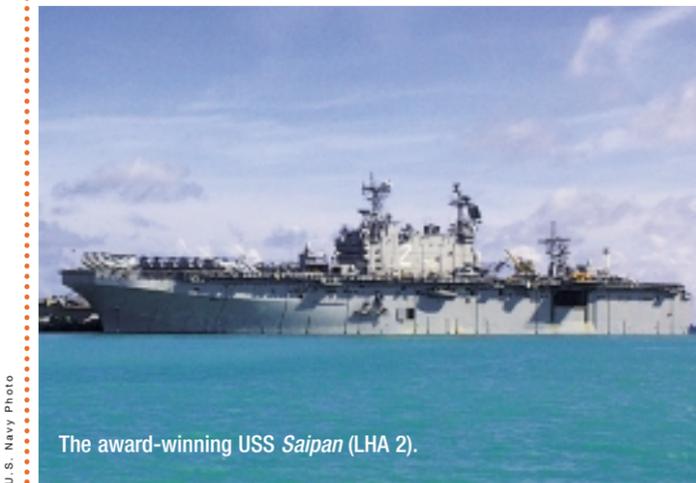
"This is one work center that really gives Sailors the feeling that they really did something to help the Navy as a whole. Nothing gives a Sailor more pride than to know [what was done was] something that helped save our country so much money," Ager said.

On average, about 36 parts are saved from each jet engine amounting to \$134,616 in savings. Dollar amounts were calculated by subtracting the rework cost from the Navy stock number "ready-for-issue" value. Some engines do not have all parts due to pre-shipment cannibalism.

The shop has orders for gearboxes, planetary assemblies, compressors and back plates, among others. Some of these parts cost \$30,000 each. Additionally, it's great training for the aviation maintenance, Seabees and supply personnel of NABSU.

They custom build elaborate shipping boxes for the odd-shaped, heavy jet engines. Parts are shipped to places like Naval Air Station Jacksonville, Fla.; Norfolk; Naval Station San Diego; and Kelly Air Force Base, Texas. For more information on NAR Minneapolis, go to www.navalairmpls.navy.mil. ❧

Story by JO2 Frederick C. Busch, Naval Air Reserve Minneapolis Public Affairs.



The award-winning USS *Saipan* (LHA 2).

U.S. Navy Photo

Home to AMERICA'S EMBRACE



Being away from friends and family for a six-month cruise is never easy, but it rests at the core of the sacrifices Sailors have to make to serve our country and protect our national interests.

Imagine how much more difficult it was for the Sailors aboard USS *Enterprise* (CVN 65), who were on their way home, to be told that their deployment had been extended because terrorists attacked the United States. It was a course change all hands on the "Big E" readily made, answering their nation's call to arms.

Sailors on board USS *Enterprise* (CVN 65) man the rails as their ship, under armed escort by a Navy patrol craft, approaches Naval Station Norfolk.



Scrubbing down the flight deck was just one of the many jobs the Sailors on board *Enterprise* accomplished prior to pulling into port at the end of their extended deployment.

After more than 650 successful sorties flown and having traveled more than 62,000 nautical miles, the *Enterprise* crew did finally head for home after an extra month of intense activity in support of Operation *Enduring Freedom*.

The day before the carrier was to pull into its homeport of Norfolk, Electronics Technician 3rd Class (SW/AW) Derrick Moore waited impatiently to meet his newborn daughter, Shadé. “*Enterprise’s* crew was temporarily stunned when they heard about the Sept. 11 attacks,” he recalled.

“Our first six months went pretty smooth. We hit a lot of ports, and were on our way to a liberty port in South Africa when the attack happened,” he said. “I thought it was a movie. I just couldn’t believe it.”

Despite the initial shock, most of *Enterprise’s* Sailors agreed that a calm resolve came over the ship as they focused on the mission at hand.

Aviation Boatswain’s Mate 1st Class Jon Clark said he was really impressed with his shipmates. “They were more patriotic and eager to do the job. There was a lot less griping, and it seemed we



Photo by PHS Clifford L.H. Davis

As *Enterprise* made her way back home to Norfolk, Diane Sawyer and the “Good Morning America” crew came on board to welcome the Sailors home. Secretary of the Navy Gordon R. England was interviewed during the live broadcast and let Sailors know how proud he was of them.

had a sense of purpose to what we were doing.” He added, “When we recovered the jets, and they didn’t have the bombs on them anymore, it really sunk in that we were out here defending our country.”

Aviation Maintenance Administrationman 3rd Class Amber Bobbitt, who

was on her first cruise, said she never realized just how close the crew had become. “It was amazing, seeing this many people work together to get the mission accomplished,” she said. “The attacks made us all stronger. We were scared, not knowing what was going to

Home to AMERICA'S EMBRACE

It's an emotional family reunion as ITC (SW/AW) Rob Bishop finally greets his wife and four daughters on the pier in Norfolk. USS *Enterprise* had been scheduled to return a month earlier, but was kept on station to participate in Operation *Enduring Freedom* following the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11.



happen, but our leadership did an excellent job keeping us informed.”

Although these Sailors were busy on the frontlines of war doing a dangerous job, often in the back of their minds they were more concerned with what their families were going through back home. Moore said, “My biggest fear was for my wife

and three kids in Norfolk. We kept hearing that there were threats of more attacks.” Steaming home, he said he just couldn’t wait to see them on the pier.

Clark agreed, saying, “Here on the ship, we felt safe. I think we worried more about our families being in jeopardy.”

Even with all of the excitement *Enterprise* had during the cruise, nothing compared to the energy level running through the ship the day before they pulled back into Norfolk.

Enterprise took center stage the day before their homecoming on television sets across the country, as Diane Sawyer and Charles Gibson hosted their show, *Good Morning America* (GMA), from the hangar bay. GMA broadcast live from sea, bringing America’s greetings to “Big E” Sailors, including an on-board interview with Secretary of the Navy Gordon R. England.

“Seeing them dedicate their entire show to *Enterprise* coming home really makes you feel good,” said Moore. “It was nice to see SECNAV come out to the ship as well. It shows just how much he cares about us.”

After the bright lights and TV cameras were gone, and the

Although these Sailors were busy on the frontlines of war doing a dangerous job, often in the back of their minds they were more concerned with what their families were going through back home.

As the announcement, “Moored, shift colors!” was made, cheers roared from *Enterprise*, only to be drowned out by the thunderous yells coming from the pier.



DN Allen Mann, a dental technician on board *Enterprise*, volunteered his time preparing roses for the crew to give to family members when the ship pulled into port.



Jean Cooper can't conceal her delight as she greets her granddaughter, ET3 Jamese Bennett, following her return to Naval Station Norfolk.

sun settled lower on the horizon, Sailors began moving with an obvious sense of urgency. While some were busy crating up equipment for off-load or scrubbing down the flight deck, others were running around doing last minute clean up, wanting to show their ship in the best light possible.

Those who weren't busy getting the ship ready found it hard to go to sleep anyway. “I'm way too excited to sleep,” said Bobbitt. “My family is going to be waiting on the pier.”

Moore said that thinking about meeting his new daughter for the first time was going to keep him up all night.

“I saw my first two children be born, but I wasn't even able to be home for much of this pregnancy. I haven't been able to get much sleep the whole week.” He added, “I'm really looking forward to the holidays. This year, Thanksgiving is going to mean a whole lot more to me than it did in the past.”

Those who suffered from “channel fever” found plenty of activities to keep them occupied. Some sat in the galley, playing cards or dominoes. Many joined the big bingo game, where the top prize was \$1,500, and some relaxed in the hangar bay, watching as the cruise video replayed memories from their last seven

months together. Still others, like Dentalman Allen Mann, volunteered to spend part of their last evening on board handing out roses for crewmembers to give their loved ones the following day.

The next morning, the crew donned their dress blues, and soon thousands of Sailors manned the rails, waving American flags and holding streamers at the ready, as the ship eased into her berth at Naval Station Norfolk.

As the announcement, “Moored, shift colors!” was made, cheers roared from *Enterprise*, only to be drowned out by the thunderous yells coming from the pier. The cheers only got louder, as one family

LISN Dan Przybylinski holds the American flag as he mans the rail, waiting for his ship to pull into port.



Home to AMERICA'S EMBRACE

member after another got the first glimpse of their Sailors whose service to the country had made them so proud.

Enterprise was home – with a sense of purpose and patriotism not seen in many years – and America was there, waiting with open arms to greet her returning warriors. **NS**

Strawser is a photojournalist assigned to All Hands.



After an extended deployment, USS *Enterprise* Sailors scan the crowd, carefully searching for the faces of their loved ones.

“It’s My Plane”

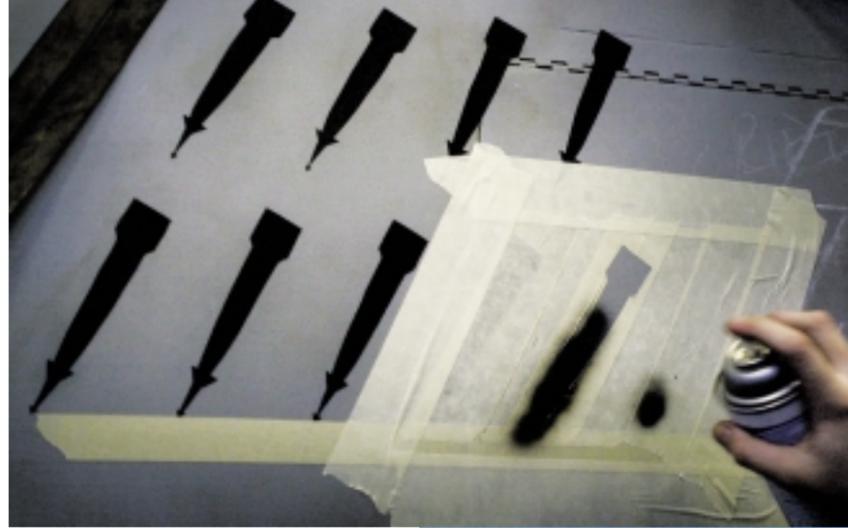
A Brown Shirt at War

As jets make their way down the flight deck after landing, Plane Captain AN Michael Holmes, walks along side in case it needs to be quickly secured to the deck.



WHEN AIRMAN MICHAEL HOLMES FINALLY GETS to his rack at the end of a long day of work on board USS *Carl Vinson* (CVN 70), he pauses for a moment and thinks. The 29-year-old thinks about his wife and kids. He thinks about the fact that he works in one of the most dangerous places in the world, the flight deck of an aircraft carrier. He thinks about the war he is fighting. He also thinks about the fact that he has to get up in a few hours and do it all again. As he nods off, his thoughts turn to dreams.

When his alarm clock goes off in the morning, Holmes begins his job all over again, serving at sea in a war against terror. While he’s not in a foxhole, the airman is on the front lines of Operation *Enduring Freedom*.



Upper Left – Holmes keeps track of the condition of his plane on his daily inspection card. At the end of his shift, he will use the card to brief his relief on the current condition of his jet.

Above – Another bomb silhouette is sprayed on the side of the “400” plane after its return from a successful bombing run over Afghanistan. After 20 silhouettes, a star will then be painted on for every additional 20.

Left – The tools of the trade for a plane captain include tie-down chains, which are used to secure the jet to the deck of the carrier.

Holmes is a plane captain assigned to VFA-94. “It’s my plane,” said Holmes, “until the pilot comes out [on the flight deck]. Then I give him a salute and turn it over.”

Holmes’ F/A-18 *Hornet* has been very busy lately. “I don’t know if it’s going over Afghanistan or not, but when it gets back with no bombs, I know they didn’t just disappear,” he said.

The *Carl Vinson* and *Theodore Roosevelt* battle groups were in at the very start of the war, conducting a 24/7 bombing campaign over Afghanistan, and Holmes’ plane has “led the charge,” so to speak.

His plane, aircraft 400, is the “CAG” bird for his squadron. “The Air Wing Commander’s [CAG] name is painted on my plane,” said the Baltimore native. Holmes thinks this is good luck, as that jet rarely breaks on his watch.

Holmes is not only in charge of the

most visible *Hornet* in his squadron, he is also the leading airman of his shop. “Airman Holmes is an excellent leading airman. He has been acting like a petty officer in an airman’s position,” said Holmes’ LPO, Aviation Ordnanceman 1st Class (AW) David Perez.

With several plane captains in each squadron, each with his or her name and hometown on the side of their plane, being the leading airman is an important job. “I have to make sure there is a plane captain assigned to every plane on the roof,” said Holmes.

In addition to being in charge of all the plane captains in his shop, he is also responsible for the accountability of every tool. “If one tool is missing, we have to stop all launches until we find it,” said Holmes. “A missing tool is dangerous, because it means there’s a chance it was left inside an aircraft. If that’s the case, it



Holmes’ plane gets shot from the flight deck for a mission over Afghanistan. At the start of the raids, USS *Carl Vinson* conducted around-the-clock flight operations.

“It’s My Plane”
A Brown Shirt at War
When his alarm clock goes off in the morning, Holmes begins his job all over again, serving at sea in a war against terror.





After every screw has been counted and every circuit has been checked, it's time to launch the plane.

"It's My Plane"

A Brown Shirt at War



Upper Left – After his plane launches, Holmes will usually try to grab a bite to eat and relax until it's time for recovery.

Above – The pilot watches Holmes' hand gestures as the jet engines are powered up.

Left – Cards of well wishes from school children across America decorate Holmes' berthing area. "It's nice to know people back home are thinking about us," he said.

could compromise the mission and the lives of the pilot and flight deck personnel, not to mention the taxpayer's investment in a multi-million-dollar warplane."

Guarding against such a mishap is behind everything Holmes does on the job. After every screw has been counted and every circuit has been checked, it's time to launch the plane.

He makes his way to the steaming flight deck, where he takes a walk around the jet looking for any abnormalities. Opening panels, wiping down the canopy, checking air intakes and inspecting the landing gear, he is meticulous in his inspection.

After he has gone over the plane with a fine-tooth comb, he waits for the arrival of the pilot. He's often up on the roof for more than an hour in the sweltering sun with his brown jersey, float coat and cranial.

"I'm the happiest man on earth when I see the pilot, because when that plane

takes off, I'm done," said Holmes. While he isn't exactly done, he can leave the flight deck while the plane is airborne. He can go down to the mess deck and grab a bite to eat, or check his e-mail. "I probably check my e-mail two or three times a day," said Holmes. "It's good to hear from the family."

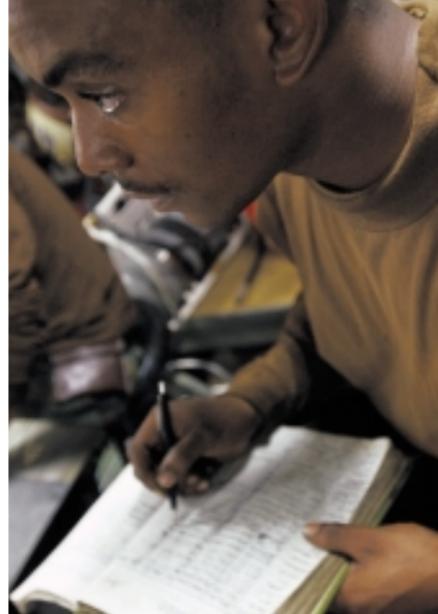
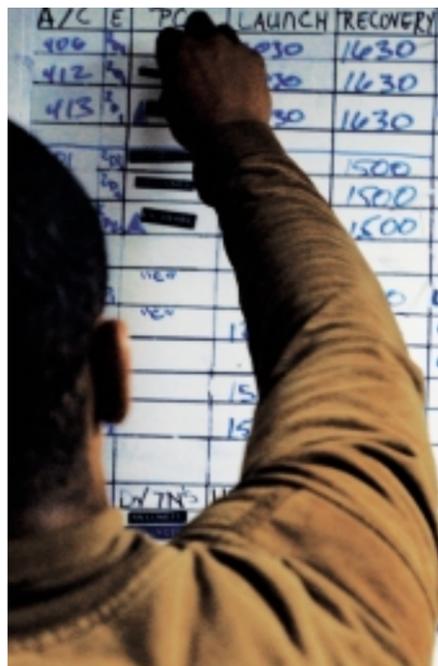
When it's time to go topside again to recover his jet, the first thing Holmes does is look to see if the 1,000-pound laser-guided bombs are still attached to the wings of the F/A-18. Then, after he has chained the plane to the deck, he greets the pilot, who turns the jet back over to him. It is now Holmes' plane again, and he must ensure it's ready for the next mission, sometimes only a few hours away.

At the end of his 12-hour shift, he turns over with another plane captain, who will keep an eye on his plane through the night.

You would think after a long day of physically and mentally challenging work,



Holmes waits patiently by "his" F/A-18 *Hornet* for permission to fire up the engines before launch.



Far Left — As leading airman, Holmes is responsible for assigning every plane in his squadron to a plane captain as well as getting others qualified to be a “PC.”

Left — Inventorying tools and equipment is a major part of being the leading airman in Holmes’ shop. If one screw is missing, the flight operations of the entire squadron come to a halt until it’s found. If it was left in a plane, it could cause serious damage.

Below Left — After a long day of work, Holmes and his LPO, AO1(AW) David Perez, hit the weight room. They usually work out every other day.



After checking the multi-million-dollar jet for damage, Holmes wipes off the smudge marks left by people working on his jet.

“It’s My Plane”

A Brown Shirt at War

After he has chained the plane to the deck, he greets the pilot, who turns the jet back over to him.

Rainbow Wardrobe

The brown shirt is just one of the seven colored jerseys on the flight deck that indicate a Sailor’s specific job. For example, the brown jersey is for line leading petty officers and plane captains. Here are the other colors of the flight deck rainbow:

Green Jerseys — the arresting gear crew, catapult crew, signal enlisted troubleshooters, helicopter leading signal enlisted, hook runners, maintenance leading petty officers, maintenance crews, photographers, supply vertical replenishment coordinators and integrated catapult control system coordinators.

Purple Jerseys — aviation fuels crew.

Yellow Jerseys — aircraft handling officers, plane directors, catapult and arresting gear officers.

White Jerseys — landing signal officers, squadron plane inspectors, liquid oxygen crews, medical air transfer officers and safety officers.

Red Jerseys — ordnancemen, explosive ordnance disposal technicians, crash and salvage crews.

Blue Jerseys — aircraft handling crews, chock men, messengers, telephone talkers, tractor drivers and elevator operators.

Source: The U.S. Navy’s web page, “Rainbow Wardrobe” www.chinfo.navy.mil/navpalib/ships/carriers/rainbow.html

both above and below the flight deck, that Holmes would crawl into his rack and pass out. Not this Sailor. He is an avid weight lifter and often works out with his LPO. “We try to get in the gym every other day, but sometimes it’s difficult,” said Perez.

Weightlifting isn’t the only thing Holmes is interested in. “I’m striking for ‘AT.’ I’ve already taken the test, and now I’m just waiting,” said Holmes.

While he’s a man of few words, Holmes believes in the mission. “I think it’s a good thing we are doing out here. It’s good to know people back home are supporting us,” he said.

Holmes is just one of many Sailors serving on the frontlines. He doesn’t ask for much in the end but to go home and be with his family. For now though, this brown shirt answers his country’s call to arms with pride. **S**

Ingle is a photojournalist assigned to All Hands.

A Sailor assigned to USS *La Salle* (AGF 3) mans the rails as the 6th Fleet flagship arrives in the Bulgarian port city of Varna, just nine hours after departing Constanta, Romania. After setting sail from Gaeta, Italy, *La Salle* and the embarked 6th Fleet staff made port calls in Istanbul, Turkey; Novorossiysk, Russia; Sevastopol, Ukraine; and Constanta, as well as Varna, Bulgaria.



Photo by JO1(SW) Jason Thompson



Photo by JO1(SW) Jason Thompson

Rich in culture and history, Istanbul symbolizes a blend of ancient and modern Turkey. During 6th Fleet/*La Salle*'s three-day port visit here, Sailors took the opportunity to visit the city's "must-see" tourist sights, including the sixth century Hagia Sofia Church; the Blue Mosque (right); the 15th century Topkapi Sarayi palace; and the Byzantine-era Hippodrome and Grand Bazaar.

THE PARTED CURTAIN

Story courtesy of 6th Fleet Public Affairs

Sailors often join the Navy to see the world, but there are only a select few who get to visit ports in the Black Sea, the isolated body of water that sits north of Turkey. It was only during the last decade that the United States Navy has been able to conduct routine port visits in the Black Sea.

Even now, after the Iron Curtain has been pushed aside, Black Sea port visits are rare opportunities for Sailors of the 6th Fleet. Once inside, they see a world that isn't quite European, yet not Asian either.

We now take you to lands that have only recently discovered freedom, as we look through the Parted Curtain.

THE BLACK SEA IS SO NAMED, BECAUSE the lack of oxygen in the water prevents the development of microorganisms, making it appear black. The only way in or out of the Black Sea is to sail from the Mediterranean, north through the Aegean Sea past Greece, then through the Dardanelles Strait into the Sea of Marmara. Finally, you enter Turkey's Bosphorus Strait, which separates Europe and Asia.



A Romanian woman embroiders a table doily to sell to tourists visiting Constanta's King Carol I mosque.

Photo by JO1(SW) Jason Thompson

THE PARTED CURTAIN



Left – The 6th Fleet Band's MU2 Nate Bissell belts out a solo during one of the band's live performances in Romania's largest port city, Constanta. The band put on two shows; the first, which was broadcast live, was on the beach just outside radio station headquarters, the second was performed along Constanta's waterfront walkway.

Below – Sixth Fleet's Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff for Communications, CDR Patrick Mooney and nine-year-old Alexandra, from Casa Speranta, a home for abandoned children with HIV, spent hours together during a visit from 6th Fleet staff and Sailors stationed aboard *La Salle*. The 28-person volunteer team brought new toys and new friendships to the orphans. Constanta was the fourth stop on 6th Fleet's month-long Black Sea deployment.



Bottom – LTJG Michael Yelanjian keeps an eye on deck operations as *USS La Salle* (AGF 3) pulls pierside into Novorossiysk, Russia.



Photo by PH2 Paul Phelps

Gargantuan tankers weave their way along the strait, which is 700 yards across at its narrowest point, near Istanbul, Turkey, while packed ferries cross from one bank to the other. The 6th Fleet flagship, *USS La Salle* (AGF 3), and the embarked 6th Fleet staff, transited the narrow strait to emerge into the Black Sea for a five-country deployment last summer. Few Sailors knew what to expect.

"We are here to show our presence, be ambassadors of goodwill and show people that we are interested in fostering stronger ties with them," said Intelligence Specialist 3rd Class Jaime Martinez during *La Salle's* first port call to the region since 1998. "People will remember Americans favorably if we leave a good impression."

That mission of diplomacy was repeated throughout the entire 17-day, five-country deployment to the Black Sea. U.S. Sailors brought messages of peace, friendship and an opportunity to find common ground. Stops included: Istanbul, Turkey; Novorossiysk, Russia; Sevastopol, Ukraine; Constanta, Romania; and Varna, Bulgaria.

One global area of common ground was a shared devotion to family. One way that *La Salle* and 6th Fleet Sailors found to express that shared devotion, was to volunteer liberty time, offering assistance with community projects that routinely centered around family and children in every country they visited.

"It's the best birthday present I can get – spending time with children," said Machinist Mate 3rd Class Najm Lewis, who spent her 19th birthday with several other Sailors, distributing arts and crafts supplies to an orphanage and playing with

the children living there on the outskirts of Novorossiysk, Russia.

"Anything to help out the kids is worth the effort," said *La Salle* Intelligence Specialist 1st Class Tony Morgano. He was one of several volunteers who took part in every Black Sea community relations project conducted. "I think it also presents a positive image for America."

Another group of Sailors who presented a positive image for America and the U.S. Navy was the 6th Fleet Band. These musical ambassadors spoke in the international language of music, and entertained thousands during their 27-concert itinerary.



Photo by JO1(SW) Jason Thompson

"It feels great to represent the Navy and the United States through music," said tenor sax player Musician Seaman Chris Sams, who was on his first deployment away from the 6th Fleet Band's home base in Naples, Italy. "The crowds were very receptive and treated us like celebrities. All of us tried to return

"We are here to show our presence, be ambassadors of goodwill and show people that we are interested in fostering stronger ties with them."

Fazi Dijran, an employee at one of literally hundreds of carpet shops in Istanbul, Turkey, waves a beautiful Turkish hand-woven carpet in front of prospective American buyers. All genuine Turkish rugs are woven by hand and – depending on the quality and detail of weaving – may take several months to a year or more to complete.

THE PARTED CURTAIN



Using arts and crafts donated by the 6th Fleet/*La Salle* First Class Association, *La Salle's* IS1(SW) Tony Morgano and a boy from the Umut Cocuklari orphanage enjoy their time together. During the visit, 44 6th Fleet and *La Salle* Sailors joined the boys in playing basketball, sharing arts and crafts and learning how to dance to Turkish folk tunes.

Photo by JO2 Greg O'Leary

the gesture by giving them the best performance we could.”

“They are great musicians,” said Zhleyazko Nicolov, a Bulgarian naval communications officer. “We don’t see Sailors from the American Navy very often – it was nice to see them here. Maybe we can get to know each other better and become better friends.”

“I like jazz very much,” added Krasimir Kostov, a sergeant in the Bulgarian navy, following his first interaction with American Sailors. “The band sounded great. The visit of the American Navy here is important – both sides can learn from the exchange of experiences

and learn from each other.”

Sixth Fleet also actively initiated cooperation between the U.S. Navy and the navies of the Black Sea, to promote a new era of regional stability.

“The last decade has been one of tremendous change in the Black Sea region,” said VADM Gregory Johnson, then the 6th Fleet commander, during a reception held in the Bulgarian port city of Varna. “But, we must ensure that the

past informs and instructs us and does not obstruct our vision of the future.”

While 6th Fleet diplomacy primarily emphasized commonality, another effective tool of diplomacy was engagement



Photo by JO2(SW) Jeremy Johnson

A03 Melissa Prall marches with a Russian marine as they prepare to lay a wreath at the base of Novorossiysk’s Hero’s Square. The memorial honors fallen Russian service members who died in the recapturing of the city during “The Great Patriotic War” (World War II). The ceremony was just one of several joint U.S. and Russian events that 6th Fleet/*La Salle* Sailors and Marines participated in while visiting the Russian port city.

through operational exercises. During their deployment, staff talks between 6th Fleet and representative navies were conducted in each country visited.

“These meetings in each port are very important,” said 6th Fleet Operations Officer CAPT Jason Leaver. “Being able to meet face to face lets us better understand what kinds of operational naval exercises they’d like to do with the United States.”

“We discussed issues dealing with our Partnership for Peace,” said 6th Fleet Policy and Strategy Officer, LCDR Mike Hill. “We also discussed issues dealing with different aspects of junior officer training and the possibility of joint exercises down the road.”

U.S. and Black Sea region Sailors came together in Russia, Ukraine, Romania and Bulgaria for wreath-laying ceremonies at various war memorials.

“It was a very dignified and respectful ceremony that acknowledged the sacrifices of the Ukrainian people, and honored their memory and past struggles,” said 6th Fleet’s LCDR Stanley Kieve, who attended the ceremony honoring those who fell to recapture Sevastopol from the Nazis.

“I enjoyed the opportunity to witness first hand a very sacred and time-honored tradition of honoring the sacrifices of others,” said

Operations Specialist 1st Class (SW) Lawrence Nichols, who participated in a Bulgarian ceremony. “I believe that it helps to strengthen the ties between the United States and these various countries, by showing that Americans are compassionate and sympathetic to their losses, as well as respectful of their customs.”

Between staff talks, receptions, community relations projects, wreath laying ceremonies and band perfor-



Photo by JO2 Sean Linville

Sailors assigned to USS *La Salle* (AGF 3) level a large dirt pile at Varna’s Karin Dom, a center for children with special needs. They were among 23 Sailors who participated in one of five community relations projects conducted during 6th Fleet’s 17-day, five-country deployment to the Black Sea region.

mances, 6th Fleet Sailors were also able to enjoy liberty in a region rarely accessible.

From Istanbul’s sixth century Hagia Sofia church and Blue Mosque, to memorials of times of struggle, Sailors had ample opportunity to taste the culture of the region. 6th Fleet and *La Salle* Morale, Welfare and Recreation coordinated tours in every country.

“It’s important that Romanians and Americans learn about each other’s history and culture so we can understand each other better,” said

Mihaela Dumitrescu, the Constantan tour guide on a trip to the Romanian capital, Bucharest. “The best way to learn about people is to meet them face to face – not from a textbook.”

“Our rich history belongs to everyone,” said tour guide Beken Guray, a retired Turkish military officer who now makes a living showing Istanbul’s art, culture and history to foreign tourists. “I want to tell the story of my country to the

whole world. The best way to learn about the Turkish people is to come and see them firsthand.”

“The history here is unbelievable,” said Martinez, who enjoyed his first port visit to Turkey and a tour that included the Byzantine-era Hippodrome and the Grand Bazaar. “I took

this tour because I might never get another opportunity to see this place.”

“I feel like I now understand more about the region’s history, culture and society,” said 6th Fleet’s Legalman 1st Class (SW) Steve Crowston, one of approximately 40 Sailors who signed up for an all-day tour to Bucharest. “The people seem friendly, helpful and receptive to Americans. They are so friendly, in fact, it’s almost as if a curtain never existed.”

Turn Over a New Leaf

Getting Out From Under Credit Card Debt

Story and photos by JO1 Joe Gunder

The holiday decorations are finally put away. The tree is down, and the presents are already being used or played with. As normal life resumes, the other shoe drops. The credit card bill arrives in the mail. Egads! Your minimum monthly payment is going to take a maximum chunk out of your paycheck. So you ask yourself, "Did I really have to purchase those gifts with plastic?" Now you're in a credit crunch.

Credit, whether in the form of a credit card or a bank loan, isn't evil and needn't be totally avoided. It's a convenient means to make purchases without having to carry large sums of money. However, too much credit can quickly put you "in the hole," one that might take you seemingly forever to get out of.

The best use of credit is to purchase assets that will grow in value over time, like a house. But, the purchase of "big ticket" consumer goods, such as a car, would not be possible for most Sailors without the use of credit. Purchasing consumables, including furniture, clothes, sporting goods, vacations or anything else that loses its value after purchase is a dangerous use of credit.



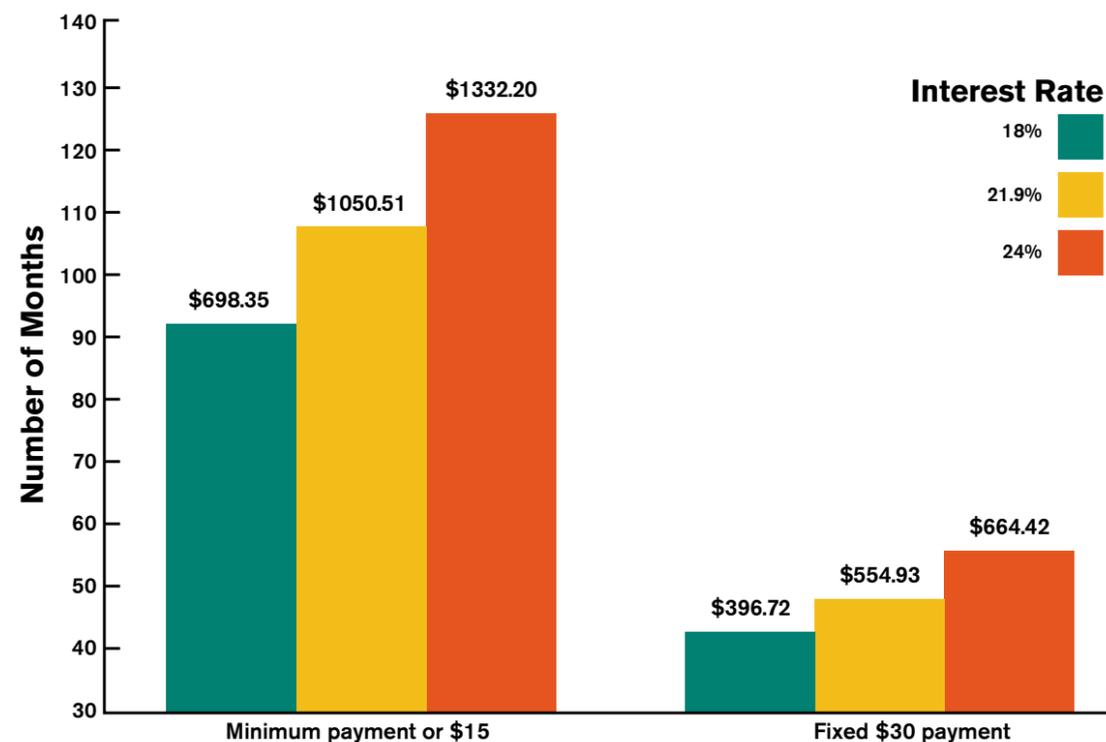
Courses like "Budgeting for Baby" help members understand their finances and teach them ways to avoid credit problems.

Turn Over a New Leaf

Getting Out From Under Credit Card Debt

The Cost of Credit

Time Needed to Pay Off \$1000



Source: Navy/Marine Corps Relief Society

“I have learned to ask myself whether this is something that I need, or want,” said Disbursing Clerk Seaman John Brantly of Naval Station San Diego Security. “For me, those are two totally different things.”

“I’ve learned to manage my expenses by telling myself, ‘If I can’t afford it, then I don’t need it right now.’ I don’t get caught up in the ‘credit card trap.’”

Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Richard Moyer, a command financial counselor at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, Bethesda, Md., has some tips for the Sailors he advises. “Be aware of what your balances are. Don’t spend

more than you get paid. Only get things that are necessary.”

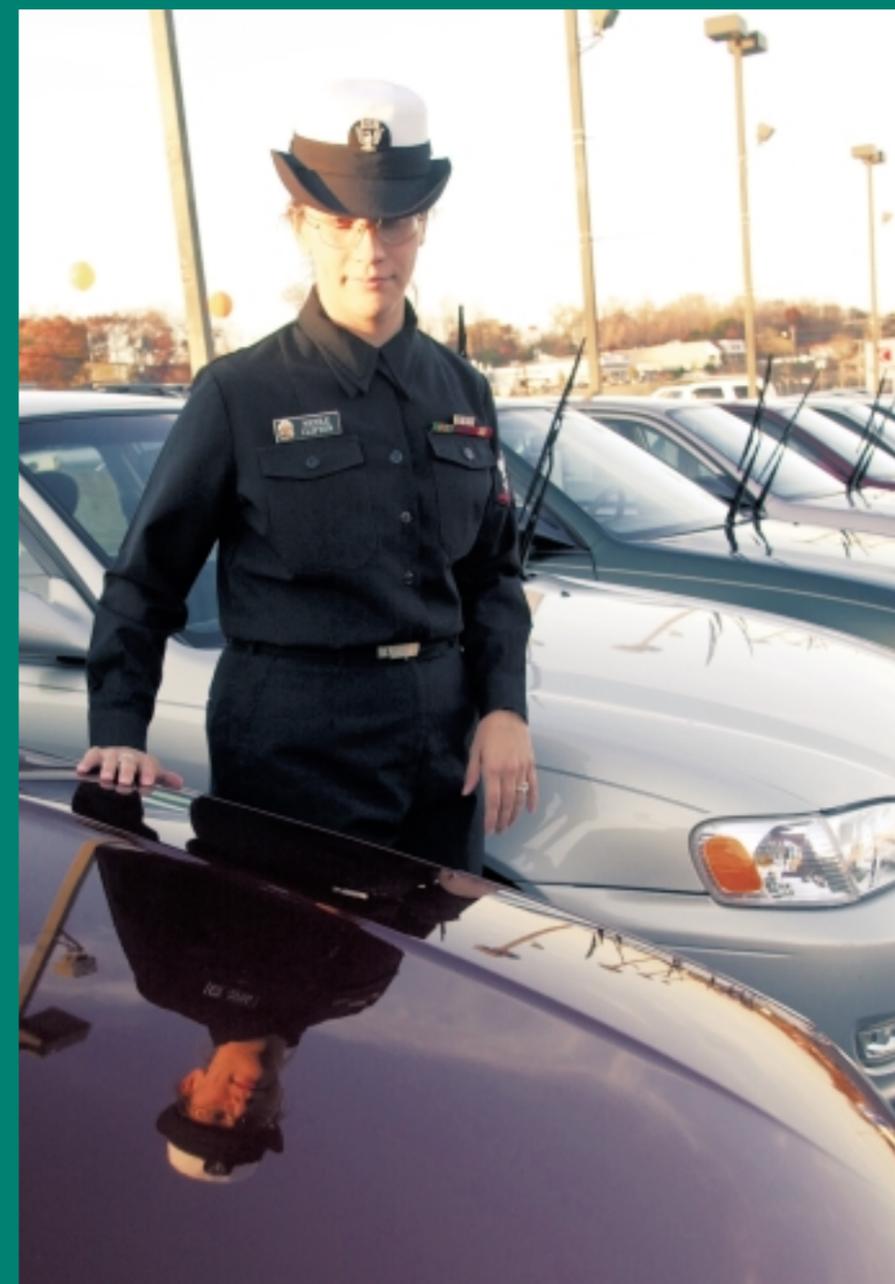
Here are four of the most common types of credit. How these are granted depends on the lending institution and the income, credit rating, character and collateral of the borrower.

Open-End Credit – These include credit cards, cash advance credit cards and lines of credit, which can be used up to a pre-approved limit. Credit cards might have annual fees, while some lines of credit will charge maintenance or usage fees.

Closed-End Credit – This is the kind of loan you would use to buy a house or

Right – “I remember how my credit card bills used to be out of control, and I hated being in debt,” said ET2 George Weindel of the Communications Repair department at Shore Intermediate Maintenance Facility, San Diego.

Below – Outside of buying a house, a shiny new car is probably the biggest purchase anyone could make. Credit comes in handy when buying a car, as most Sailors couldn’t plunk down the total cost up front, nor would carrying that much cash around be a good idea. The purchase of a car is a good use of credit as it won’t lose its value as fast as a vacation or a dinner.



a car. Unlike a credit card, the interest rate, amount financed and payment schedule are all agreed upon by the lender and the borrower.

Incidental Credit – This is what professionals (like doctors) grant. You are charged for a service after you use it. Usually, there is no fee charged.

Public Utility Credit – This is used by utilities such as telephone, electricity and cable companies.

Now that you know what credit is, you can start working on your “credit history.”

Someone with a good credit history, who always pays their bills, will be able to borrow more. This is possible because the lending institution knows the member isn’t going to stiff them. Your local bank or credit union might also offer a credit card with a lower interest rate if you have a good credit history.

Credit isn’t free. It costs something to borrow money. There’s that interest rate on any balance you maintain. Major credit cards vary in how they compute this rate, but it’s usually much higher than what a financial institution would charge for a loan. Plus, credit cards also tack on finance charges just for maintaining a balance, for cash advances and for late fees.

Unfortunately, some people just can’t put down their plastic money, and they wind up with debt in the thousands, if

Turn Over a New Leaf

Getting Out From Under Credit Card Debt

not tens of thousands, of dollars.

Although there are ways to get help if you find yourself in this situation, the very first thing you should do is change your behavior. If you've dug yourself "in the hole," stop and put down the shovel.

"I knew of some Sailors who got themselves a credit card and racked up too much debt," said Pat McCormack, a budget counselor for the Navy/Marine Corps Relief Society. "If they're in too deep, sometimes its necessary for them to get a second job. What some members need at this point is almost a complete change in attitude to stop using the plastic."

Although it's fun to look, SK2 Cheryl Joseph of Washington Navy Yard Logistics doesn't give in to the temptation to pull out the plastic. "If I don't need it, I don't buy it. But, I do put money aside in an allowance. That way, if I want to do something, I have the cash available and I won't need credit cards."



There are things you can do to start your way back up to ground level. Contact your lending institution and ask if they have any kind of credit counseling services.

"The most severe level of counseling that some credit unions or banks use is the kind where they take away your credit cards and force you to go on a strictly cash economy," McCormack noted. "They'll verify how much debt you have and ask the creditors for a lower interest rate. Most creditors are willing to charge a lower rate if it means they'll get their

money, rather than have the member declare bankruptcy and they get nothing."

What happens if you need to seek assistance from a financial institution? You may be put on their most severe remediation program, which would require that they take funds directly from your paycheck and make the payments to the creditor(s). This continues until the lowest balance is paid off. In turn, the extra money no longer spent on that bill would be reallocated to the next larger bill until it too was paid off, and so on.

Here are some things you can do on your own to keep yourself from getting in too deep:

- **Prioritize your debts;** things like the mortgage and car payment should come first.
- **Budget your living expenses based on what you earn.** Once you've figured that out, ensure all minimum monthly payments are met on all your debts.
- **Pick the credit card with the lowest balance and begin "power payments."**

Above – The "Budgeting for Baby" course at the local Navy/Marine Corps Relief Society helps new parents understand the cost of a baby and how to stay out of the credit trap.



These are made with whatever is left over after all expenses and minimum payments are budgeted. Paying the credit card with the smallest bill, similar to what a financial institution would do, allows you to see success sooner and move on to bigger bills.

Of course, as they say, prevention is the best medicine. If you don't need it, don't charge it. But if you find your cash reserves going more and more toward credit card payments, stop what you're doing and get some outside assistance.

A good place to start is with your local Navy/Marine Corps Relief Society, at www.nmcrs.org. They provide budget counseling, loans, grants, various services, and referral to other community resources. There are no fees for such help, but they will not assist with the purchase of non-essentials, nor do they supplement the income of persons who live beyond their means. With persistence and a change in spending habits, you'll be out of the hole and on your way to financial freedom.

Credit can be a useful tool to help members realize their dreams, but don't give in to the temptation to over-use the plastic, or you'll be in for a credit crunch. 

Gunder is a photojournalist assigned to All Hands.

'The New Front-Line

A mailroom is not your typical battlefield, but since Sept. 11, 2001, it has become another front line in the war on terror.

Postal Clerk 3rd Class (SW) Eric Gomez works in the mailroom on board USS *Carl Vinson* (CVN 70), which played a major role in the opening days of Operation *Enduring Freedom*.

They were not only fighting terror over Afghanistan, but in the ship's post office as well. With worries about the possibility of anthrax being sent through the mail, Gomez and the rest of *Vinson's* PCs stepped up safety precautions for moving the carrier's mail, much like their counterparts back home.

"We get suspicious packages every day," said the San Diego

native. "Most of the time it's just melted chocolate or shampoo, but we check anyway," added Gomez.

To protect against the threat of anthrax during deployment, the PCs on *Vinson* wore gloves and masks when handling mail. There have also been changes in the sorting process. "We handle the mail a lot more carefully," said Gomez.

In a war against terror, communicating by mail while at sea is just another reason for postal clerks, and other Sailors, to be ever vigilant in protecting that freedom. **S**

Ingle is a photojournalist assigned to All Hands.

Eye on the Fleet

EYE ON THE FLEET is a monthly photo feature sponsored by the Chief of Information Navy Visual News Service. We are looking for **HIGH IMPACT,** quality photography from **SAILORS** in the fleet to showcase the American Sailor in **ACTION.**



SAILOR PRIDE

Sailors from Pre-Commissioning Unit (PCU) *Ronald Reagan* (CVN 76) and *USS Nimitz* (CVN 68) unfurl an American flag on *Nimitz's* flight deck as the ship transits to her new homeport of San Diego.

Photo by PHAN Tiffini Jones

BOMB FARM

Sailors inspect AGM-65 *Maverick* air-to-surface tactical missiles and laser-guided bombs on the flight deck of *USS Enterprise* (CVN 65) in support of Operation *Enduring Freedom*.

Photo by PHAA Lance H. Mayhew Jr.



FREE FALLING

An explosive ordnance disposal technician assigned to Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit (EODMU) 5 leaps from a CH-46 *Sea Knight* helicopter during a static line water parachute jump over Apra Harbor, Guam.

Photo by PH2 Marjorie McNamee



WATCHFUL EYE

An aviation ordnanceman mans his watch station at the 20mm chain gun on board *USS Peleliu* (LHA 5) as the fast combat support ship *USS Sacramento* (AOE 1) (behind) delivers fuel and supplies. *USS Philippine Sea* (CG 58) is seen in the distance, providing air cover and protection. These ships were serving in support of Operation *Enduring Freedom*.

Photo by PHCM Terry Cosgrove



AIR ASSAULT

A Landing Craft Air Cushion (LCAC) of Assault Craft Unit (ACU) 4, prepares to leave the beach loaded with U.S. Sailors and Marines returning back to the *USS Bataan* (LHD 5). The Sailors and Marines are returning from Kandahar, Afghanistan after a successful ground campaign in support of Operation *Enduring Freedom*.

Photo by PHC Johnny Bivera

TO BE CONSIDERED

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JULY 1984

USS *Iowa* (BB 61) fires a full broadside of nine 16-inch and six 5-inch guns – otherwise known as the “John Wayne,” during a target exercise near Vieques Island, Puerto Rico, in July 1984, causing concussion effects on the water surface.

Photo by PHAN J. Alan Elliott

NOVEMBER 1944

ADM William F. “Bull” Halsey, Commander, 3rd Fleet (left center), eats Thanksgiving dinner with the crew of his flagship, USS *New Jersey* (BB 62) in November 1944.



1945

A historical marker on the deck of USS *Missouri* (BB 63) notes the location where the instrument of Japan's surrender was signed Sept. 2, 1945. This plate was selected by CAPT S.S. Murrery and installed at the Norfolk Naval Shipyard in 1945.



JANUARY 1943

A fireman on board USS *Alabama* (BB 60) installs a burner on one of the ship's boilers during her shakedown cruise in January 1943.



1920s

The United States Battle Fleet steams in formation off the California coast during the 1920s. The four leading ships are USS *Colorado* (BB 45), USS *Maryland* (BB 46), USS *West Virginia* (BB 48) and USS *Tennessee* (BB 43).

U.S. Navy photos courtesy of the Naval Historical Center

Remembering Bill & Kip

Story by CDR W. Scott Gureck

Like millions of other Americans, I watched in horror as the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11 unfolded on live television. Making the events of that day more surreal, I could see the Pentagon burning from my office across the Potomac.

And like many people, I think I was in a mild state of shock in the days and weeks that followed. It was in that frame of mind that my wife and I took our seats in a pew at the Naval Academy Chapel, Friday, Oct. 5, 2001. We were there to attend a memorial service for CDR William H. Donovan Jr., a 1986 classmate of mine who was killed at the Pentagon.

As we sat there solemnly waiting for the service to begin, one of the saddest scenes I had ever witnessed occurred as Bill's widow and three young children — all under the age of 10 — entered and took their places up front. Seeing their faces, their grief, their shattered lives, I was overwhelmed with emotion. At that moment, I felt the true impact and

busting bomb, which was subsequently loaded onto aircraft 301 — an F/A-18 *Hornet*.

With the permission of the ship's ordnance handling officer, I then wrote a brief tribute to my classmate Bill Donovan on one fin, and another in honor of Army Lt. Col. Kip Paul Taylor on another. Kip was a high school classmate who also was killed at the Pentagon, and who left behind a pregnant widow and a young son. Had I not deployed, I would have attended his funeral at Arlington National Cemetery a week after Bill's memorial service.

Shortly after lunch, I made my way to "Vultures Row," where I watched aircraft 301 take off as part of the 1300 launch and recovery. While I didn't know who the pilot was on this mission, I silently wished him "Godspeed" as he took off for Afghanistan.

Some seven hours later, he returned safely aboard minus one 2,000-lb. bomb.

Seeing their faces, their grief, their shattered lives, I was overwhelmed with emotion. At that moment, I felt the true impact and senselessness of what those cowardly terrorists had done to thousands of families.

senselessness of what those cowardly terrorists had done to thousands of families. And to imagine this being repeated countless other times, in countless other churches, was too horrible to comprehend.

I felt sadness, anger and like many people, a burning desire to be where the action would be. Little did I know, in a small way, I would soon get my chance.

Shortly after the service, I was notified that I was being deployed immediately to Bahrain to augment the 5th Fleet public affairs office to help with the hundreds of media on hand to cover the military action — which apparently was imminent.

Forty-eight hours later, I arrived at Bahrain International Airport just as the first wave of strikes was hitting targets in Afghanistan. Twelve hours later, on Monday, I found myself on the deck of USS *Carl Vinson* (CVN 70), underway in the Northern Arabian Sea. It was unbelievable to think that on Friday I was attending Bill's memorial service, and less than 72-hours later I was thrust forward to the "pointy end of the spear." It was as though fate had stepped in.

Several weeks into the conflict, the ship received a request by the New York City Police Department (NYPD) to fly an enclosed NYPD flag from the ship's mast, and to put a few department decals on a bomb.

Early in the morning of Nov. 4, a Sailor from the ship's weapons department placed the NYPD decals on a 2,000-lb. GBU-31 bunker-

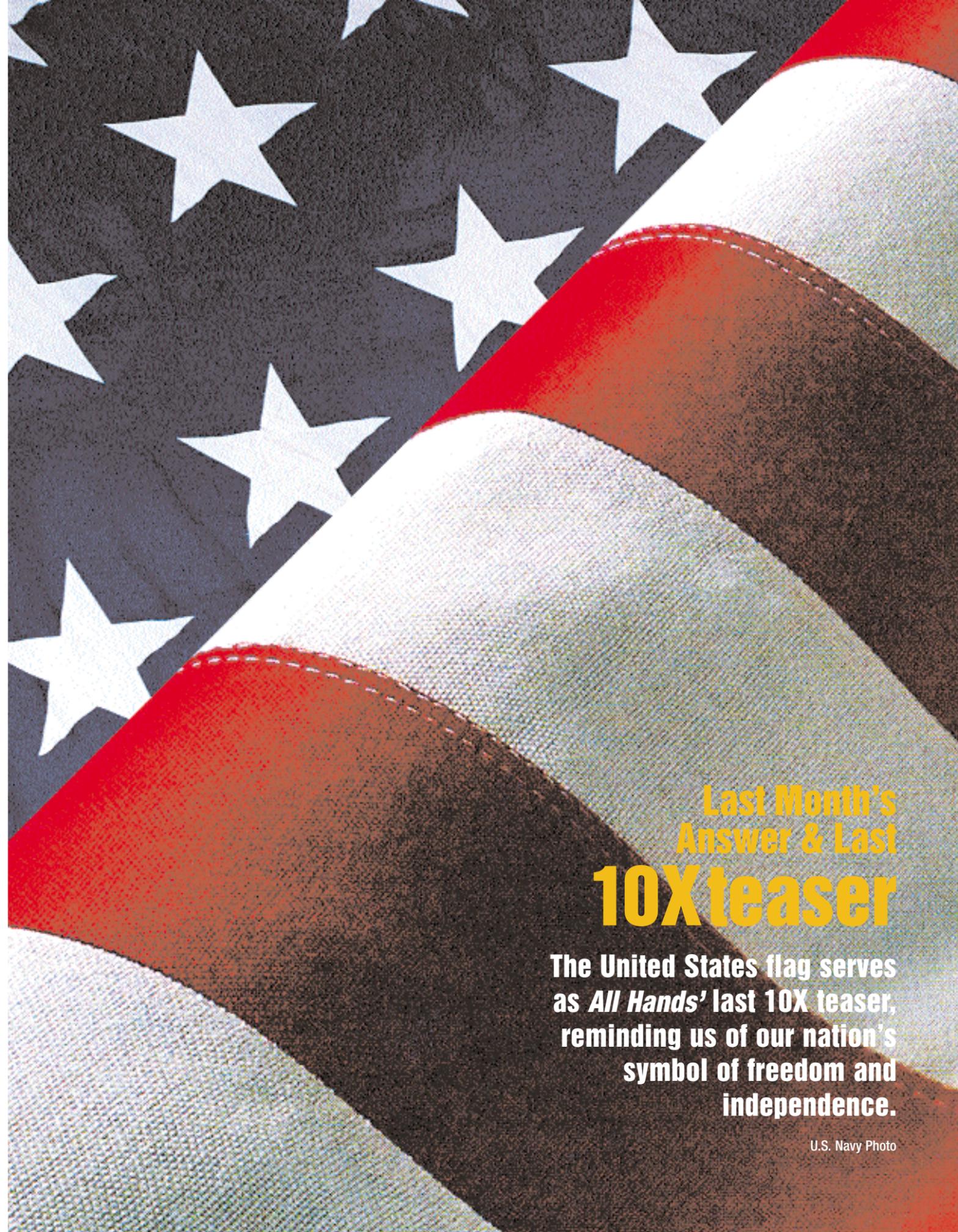
When I entered the squadron ready room to meet the pilot, he was beaming from ear to ear. He said this had been his most successful mission to date.

It was indeed a successful mission. This pilot and his wingman had checked in with their forward air controller (FAC) just as the FAC had finished counting more than 25 Taliban troops climbing into a bunker. It was a prime target. Aircraft 301 dropped first, scoring a direct hit accompanied by massive secondary explosions.

Justice had been brought to this particular group of evildoers. CDR Donovan Jr., and Lt. Col. Taylor — professional warriors and devoted family men — had, albeit symbolically, their moment in combat. For me, it was a cathartic moment when I was able to feel a sense of closure.

Although Bill and Kip's names were the only ones on that particular bomb, they represented all of our fallen shipmates and comrades-in-arms. They carried the message that their deaths were not in vain, and since this particular group of terrorists could not be brought to justice, justice was brought to them. **✍**

Gureck is chief of publishing, Naval Media Center, Washington, D.C.



Last Month's
Answer & Last
10Xteaser

The United States flag serves as *All Hands'* last 10X teaser, reminding us of our nation's symbol of freedom and independence.

It's the hard work and dedication of the HSL-41 Phased Maintenance Crew, performing periodic quality control checks of aircraft, that keeps the pilots and air crew safe while conducting their mission.



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