

Jax Air News

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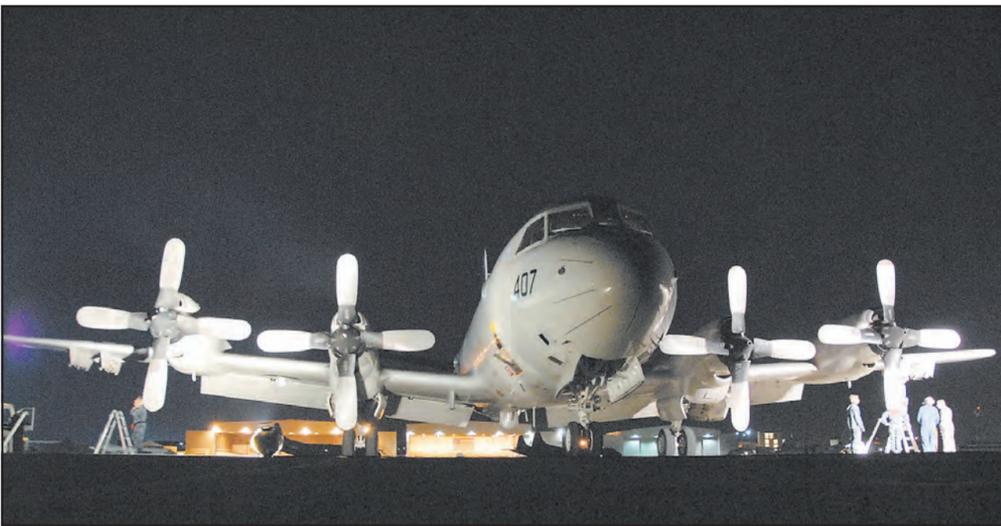


Photo courtesy of VP-5

Ensuring warfighting readiness, maintenance and ordnance personnel of VP-5 work around-the-clock in support of Joint Task Force Odyssey Dawn – the international response to the unrest in Libya and enforcement of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1973. The VP-5 "Mad Foxes" are homeported at NAS Jax.



Photo by Kaylee LaRocque

NAS Jax Commanding Officer Capt. Jeffrey Maclay (right) confers with Nathan B. Forrest High School Principal Dr. Alvin Brennan (left) and Duval County Schools Superintendent Ed Pratt-Dannals before the kickoff of the Project Navy Appreciating and Valuing Youth Program on Nov. 29.

Navy partners with Duval schools to mentor students

By Kaylee LaRocque
NAS Jax Deputy PAO

A ceremony was held Nov. 29 at Nathan B. Forrest High School to kick off Project Navy Appreciating and Valuing Youth (N.A.V.Y.), a pilot program which promotes mentorship to students by Navy personnel.

Sailors from NAS Jacksonville and NS Mayport commands are partnering with four Duval County schools – Forrest High School, Ribault Middle School, Stillwell Middle School and George Washington Carver Elementary School to connect with students and provide positive role models.

The event began with the playing of the national anthem by Navy Band Southeast and presentation of colors by members of the Forrest High School AFROTC Unit. Forrest High School student and AFROTC member James Stevens then led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Duval County Public Schools Superintendent Ed Pratt-Dannals thanked those in attendance and offered his remarks. "We are very fortunate that the Navy has chosen these schools to partner with. Navy personnel are exemplary citizens and outstanding role models in providing service to our community and to our country and will be great mentors to our students," said Dannals.

"A mentor can have a significant positive impact on someone's life, students typically have better grades and attendance, are more focused and have great goals. And to have a person next to them to help move

See **PROJECT NAVY**, Page 10

CNIC selects NAS Jax as 'Best in the Navy'

By Miriam S. Gallet
Public Affairs Officer

NAS Jacksonville was named winner of the 2011 Commander, Navy Installations Command (CNIC) Commander in Chief's Installation Excellence Award (large category). CNIC is comprised of 11 regions and 72 bases worldwide.

"It is my privilege to inform the military and civilian men and women of NAS Jax that our installation has been selected as this year's Commander, Navy Installations Command winner for best Navy installation 'large' category," said NAS Jax Commanding Officer Capt. Jeffrey Maclay.

"This award reflects the hard work by all who help NAS Jax deliver the most effective and efficient readiness from the shore. Our synergistic 'One Team, One Fight' relationship targeted the best use of available resources to ensure all accomplished their assigned mis-

sions - while at the same time focusing on innovative management actions that increase productivity. 'Bravo Zulu' to all and thank you for what you and your teams do every day," he continued.

In its mission to support the fleet, fighter, family throughout 2011, NAS Jax was the premier installation for delivering effective, sustained and improved shore readiness to its 15 home-based squadrons, Sailors and civilian personnel, as well as supporting numerous joint commands, government agencies and carrier readiness sustainment exercises. Its personnel approached every challenge with a leading-edge mentality and continued their unprecedented, accident-free growth by exceeding the Chief of Naval Personnel mandated 75 percent mishap reduction goal in addition to being almost 70 percent below the industry standards, among many other accomplishments.

CNIC Vice Adm. Michael Vitale

extended congratulations to the NAS Jax team.

"I congratulate and send my heartfelt Bravo Zulu to NAS Jacksonville Commanding Officer Capt. Jeffrey Maclay and his team for their outstanding leadership in winning the FY 2011 Commander Navy Installations Command Commander in Chief's Annual Award for Installation Excellence," said Vitale.

"Competition this year was very tight and all nomination packages were impressive and spoke to all of the great accomplishments that CNIC installations made worldwide. However, NAS Jacksonville distinguished itself and made the best use of its available resources to accomplish its assigned missions, while at the same time focusing on innovative management actions to increase the productivity of its work force. Through your hard work and dedication, the

See **CNIC AWARD**, Page 10

Remembering Pearl Harbor

~ Dec. 7, 1941 ~

From Naval History and Heritage Command

The road to war between Japan and the United States began in the 1930s when differences over China drove the two nations apart. In 1931 Japan conquered Manchuria, which until then had been part of China. In 1937 Japan began a long and ultimately unsuccessful campaign to conquer the rest of China.

In 1940, the Japanese government allied their country with Nazi Germany in the Axis Alliance, and soon occupied all of Indochina. The United States was alarmed by Japan's moves so it increased military and financial aid to China, embarked on a program of strengthening its own military power in the Pacific, and cut off the shipment of oil and other raw materials to Japan.

Because Japan was poor in natural resources, its government viewed these steps – especially the embargo on oil – as a threat to the nation's survival.

To neutralize the danger posed by the U.S. Pacific Fleet based at Pearl Harbor, Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto,



U.S. Navy Photo

In this 2007 photo, the USS Arizona Memorial can be seen in the distance from the Healing Field Flag Memorial at Pearl Harbor that featured 2,804 flags, each standing eight feet tall, to commemorate every service member killed in the Japanese attack on Dec. 7, 1941.

commander of the Japanese fleet, devised a plan to destroy the U.S. fleet at the outset of the war through a surprise attack.

In October 1941 the naval general staff gave final approval to Yamamoto's plan, which called for the formation of an attack force commanded by Vice Admiral Chuichi Nagumo. It centered around six heavy aircraft carriers accompanied by 24 supporting vessels. A separate group of submarines was to sink any American warships that escaped the Japanese carrier force.

Nagumo's fleet departed in strictest secrecy for Hawaii on Nov. 26, 1941. The ships' route crossed the North Pacific and avoided nor-

mal shipping lanes. At dawn on Dec. 7, the Japanese task force had approached undetected to a point slightly more than 200 miles north of Oahu.

Fortunately, the U.S. aircraft carriers were not at Pearl Harbor at this time. On Nov. 28, Adm. Kimmel sent USS Enterprise under Rear Admiral William Halsey to deliver Marine Corps fighter planes to Wake Island. On Dec. 4, Enterprise delivered the aircraft and by Dec. 7, the task force was on its way back to Pearl Harbor.

On Dec. 5, Kimmel sent the USS Lexington with a task force under Rear Adm. Newton to deliver 25

See **PEARL HARBOR**, Page 11

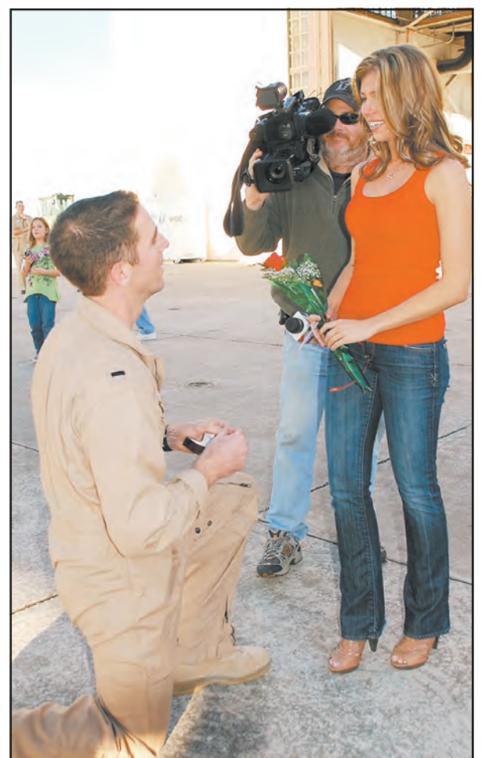


Photo by Kaylee LaRocque

'Will you marry me?'

Lt. j.g. John Hall, a VP-10 naval flight officer, proposes to his girlfriend of five years, Vanessa Grimes, on the tarmac at NAS Jacksonville upon his arrival home after a six-month deployment. Grimes was absolutely stunned by the proposal and said a definite "yes!" as tears streamed down her face.

New VP-62 C0
Dearie Takes Helm of "Broadarrows"
Page 3



Excellence
Great Year For Naval Hospital Jax
Pages 4 & 5

Seahawk & Sub
HSL-42 Det One Plucks Sailor From Sub
Page 7

Celebrating a century of naval aviation 1911-2011

Learn about naval aviation history and heritage during the yearlong Centennial of Naval Aviation celebration. Discover the wide-ranging scope of naval aviation activities, including people, aircraft, ships, innovations and other significant events. This nationally sponsored series of events will take place throughout the year. Centennial events are already underway at NAS Jacksonville and will continue throughout the year, culminating with the NAS Jax "Centennial of Naval Aviation" Air Show Nov. 5-6.



Mission

To honor 100 years of mission-ready men and women, and recognize unique aviation-related achievements through event-driven celebrations. Learn more at www.public.navy.mil/airfor/centennial.

50 Years of Naval Aviation



U.S. Navy photo

(From bottom to top) USS Independence (CVA-62), USS Saratoga (CVA-60) and USS Intrepid (CVA-11) underway in 1961, with crewmen paraded on deck in a spellout commemorating the 50th birthday of Naval Aviation.



The 56,300-ton Forrestal class aircraft carrier, USS Independence (CVA-62) is shown in April 1959, during her Caribbean shakedown cruise. Aircraft on deck include: Douglas A3D Skywarrior; Douglas A4D-2 Skyhawk; McDonnell F3H-2 Demon and Vought F8U-1 Crusader. During her service, Independence served in the Atlantic, Pacific, Mediterranean, Persian Gulf, Arabian Sea and Norwegian Sea. She was decommissioned in September 1998 at Puget Sound Naval Shipyard.

'All volunteer' is not what it seems

By Sarah Smiley
Special Coordinator

From The Homefront

I am committed to making sure this column does not become a yearlong rant about the ups and downs of having my husband deployed, but reactions to my Occupy column bring up common military-spouse conundrums: Do military families think they are owed something because of their sacrifices? And can you even call it a "sacrifice" when my husband is paid for his job?

A similar and equally perplexing problem for military spouses is: Didn't we know what we were getting into when we married someone in the military?

There are no easy answers to these questions. My husband's job involves sacrifice, yes, but we are compensated for his work. And no, we shouldn't feel entitled to anything from civilians just because we are a military family and make sacrifices on other people's behalf. It's an all-volunteer military, after all.

That's what people say, at least.

My husband doesn't "vol-

unteer" in the truest sense of the word. He doesn't have the luxury of choosing when and where he serves. No one asks, "Is now a good time to leave your family for a year?" (Remember, the military is protecting democracy, not practicing it.) And, of course, service members receive a paycheck for their "volunteerism."

So what an "all-volunteer" military actually means is that everyone else won't be forced to serve (a la the draft) if they choose not to.

I liken it to that moment in a classroom when a teacher asks a question and the crickets start chirping. Chirp, chirp. Everyone looks at their lap or busies themselves with their notes. No one wants to be called on. Then some brave soul - someone who can't stand the crickets any longer and who knows that sooner or later the teacher will start picking random people anyway - raises his hand and volunteers an answer. Everyone else sighs

with relief.

Military men and women are those people, the ones who raise their hand and save the shy kid in the back of the class from his worst nightmare. Unlike high school, however, military "volunteers" receive "free" (in quotes because nothing is ever really free, least of all military "benefits") health-care and tax-free groceries.

And then the military volunteers get married and things become really complicated:

I didn't raise my hand. Dustin's paycheck does not include my first name. I'm still practicing democracy despite living under the shadow of an organization that involves forced volunteerism. It's as if Dustin raised his hand in class and then told the teacher, "I bet Sarah knows the answer to that."

But didn't I know this when I married him? Especially because I grew up in the military?

Yes, of course, I knew all

these things in the same way that someone trying to get pregnant knows that having a baby will ultimately mean many sleepless nights, premature gray hair and stretch marks. I knew it in the same way that someone applying to college knows eventually they will be stressed about term papers, school loans and exams. I knew it in the same way that someone who brings a puppy into their home knows the pet will one day grow old and die.

Sometimes we want something so badly, all the related struggles are entirely worth it, or at least, tolerable.

But that doesn't make them any easier.

Try asking a new mother, "Well, didn't you know that you wouldn't get a full night's sleep for the next 18 years?"

On second thought, don't try that.

The point is, sometimes we know what we are getting into, but we do it anyway, usually because we believe the benefits or importance outweighs the risks. I think this is true of any profession. However, some pro-

fessions require more sacrifice.

So when I write that we should thank a policeman, fireman or other individual in a position of service, it's not because I think they are entitled or that they should be pitied, as if they've been forced into something against their will. Rather, I think we should thank these people because they "volunteered" to do work many others would not.

For instance, I'm thankful that someone else hauls off my trash, that someone else plows the highways, that someone else mans the pediatrician's phone in the middle of the night. I'm also thankful that it is my husband, not me, who deploys, and that someone else gets the power lines back up after a storm.

I don't know if all of the above means others should be grateful, too. I don't know if it means these people are entitled to something. I don't know if theirs is still a sacrifice given that they are paid and knew what to expect. I just know that these people raised their hand when the crickets were chirping. And I am grateful.

NEX/Commissary holiday closures

From Staff

The NAS Jax Commissary will close at 4 p.m. Christmas Eve, Dec. 24 and will remain closed through Christmas Day. The store will reopen Dec. 26.

The Commissary will be open normal hours on New Year's Eve, Dec. 31 and will be closed New Year's Day.

The NAS Jax Navy Exchange (NEX) will be open Christmas Eve, Dec. 24 from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. The store will be closed Christmas Day.

The NEX will be open New Years Eve, Dec. 31 from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. and New Years Day, Jan. 1 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Hey, MoneyChic!

Hey, MoneyChic!

I'm ready to make a budget that helps secure my financial future. What advice can you give me?

MoneyChic says: Creating your first budget is often the biggest challenge - but once this is done, you can begin successfully saving. First, start by figuring out your total income after taxes. Next, write down every bill you have each month. After you do this, try to estimate other expenses such as groceries, eating out, any fees, entertainment, personal care, etc. After this is done, you can see what money

is left for savings each month.

If this doesn't seem realistic and your budget says you have \$500 for savings each month - but in reality you usually only have \$20 - then try recording all the money you spend for three months. Once you have an accurate idea of what you spend each month, you have the basis for your savings plan.

Also keep in mind that the caseworkers at Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society can help you develop a budget and savings plan. Just call your local office at 542-3515 and schedule an appointment.

Chapel Center Calendar

Sunday Services

- 8:15 a.m. - Protestant Liturgical Worship
- 9:15 a.m. - Catholic Mass
- 9:45 a.m. - Protestant Sunday School
- 10:45 a.m. - Catholic CCD
- 11 a.m. - Protestant Worship
- Daily Catholic Mass**
- 11:35 a.m. (except Friday)
- Weekly Bible Study**
- 6 p.m. in the Barracks
- Officer Christian Fellowship and Bible study**
- Every Monday at 6 p.m.

NAS Jacksonville Chapel Center
Corner of Birmingham Avenue
& Mustin Road
542-3051

Jax Air News

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Dearie takes the helm of VP-62

By Lt. j.g. Amy Hession
VP-62

Cmdr. Gerald Dearie relieved Cmdr. Brian Carpenter as commanding officer of VP-62 during a ceremony in Hangar 117 Dec. 3. Capt. Trey Wheeler, commander, Patrol and Reconnaissance Wing-11 (CPRW) presided over the ceremony.



Photo by MC2 Sean Allen

Cmdr. Gerald Dearie receives his command pin from his wife, Lisa, while assuming command of VP-62.

With the charge "I relieve you, sir," Dearie became the 30th commanding officer of the VP-62 "Broadarrows", one of two Reserve VP Squadrons under the operational control of CPRW-11. The squadron consists of 130 drilling Reservists and 119 active component and full-time support personnel. VP-62 Reservists travel from seven states to train for operational missions in support of national defense and the Global War on Terror.

Dearie, a second generation P-3 Orion pilot, is from Stone Mountain, Ga. He received his commission from the United States Naval Academy in 1992, graduating with a Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Science.

Following graduation, Dearie reported to VA-205 at NAS Atlanta. He then completed primary and intermediary flight training with VT-27 and advanced flight training with VT-31 at NAS Corpus Christi, Texas. He was awarded his pilot wings in July 1995. After graduation from fleet replacement training at VP-30, Dearie reported to VP-45.

In August 1999, Dearie was selected for the Pilot Exchange Program and reported to Royal Australian Air Force 292 Squadron in South Australia.

Dearie left active duty in July 2002 and joined VP-62 as a drilling Reservist. He held several billets including training officer and operations

officer. In 2010, while taking part in Rim of the Pacific Exercise, Dearie led Crew 8 through the successful launch of a Harpoon (AGM-84) anti-ship missile - the first time a Reserve crew launched a harpoon in more than 10 years.

Dearie was hired by FedEx Express in 2003 as a professional instructor in the McDonnell Douglas MD-11. He is currently a proficiency check airman in the Boeing 727, qualified to fly as both a first officer and flight engineer.

Under the leadership of Carpenter, the squadron received the Commander, Naval Air Force Reserve Battle Efficiency Award for 2011 and the Retention Golden Anchor Award for



Photo by MCCA Hugh Laughlin

Cmdr. Gerald Dearie assumes command of VP-62 during the change of command ceremony at NAS Jacksonville on Dec. 3.

2010. Carpenter also led the Broadarrows through the re-establishment of their maintenance department. He guided the efforts which were comprised of 60 newly assigned full-time personnel, most without P-3 experience.

During his term, the squadron passed three standup milestones: the CPRW-11 Maintenance Process Assessment, the Commander, Naval Air Force Aviation Maintenance Inspection and the Commander Patrol and Reconnaissance

Group Conventional Weapons Technical Proficiency Inspection.

The maintenance department facilitated 375 sorties and 1,400 mishap-free flight hours, completing more than 4,000 maintenance actions and 19,055 accident-free maintenance man hours, resulting in a 93 percent fully mission capable rate and 97 percent mission completion rate.

And, during Carpenter's tenure the squadron detached to participate in a Joint Task Force Exercise off the coast

of southern California - flying over 70 hours in support of the exercise. The Broadarrows were also awarded the CPRW-11 Quarterly Anti-submarine Warfare Symposium Challenge trophy.

Carpenter has received orders to the office of the Chief of Naval Aviation.

Cmdr. Jon Townsend assumed duty as the VP-62 executive officer.

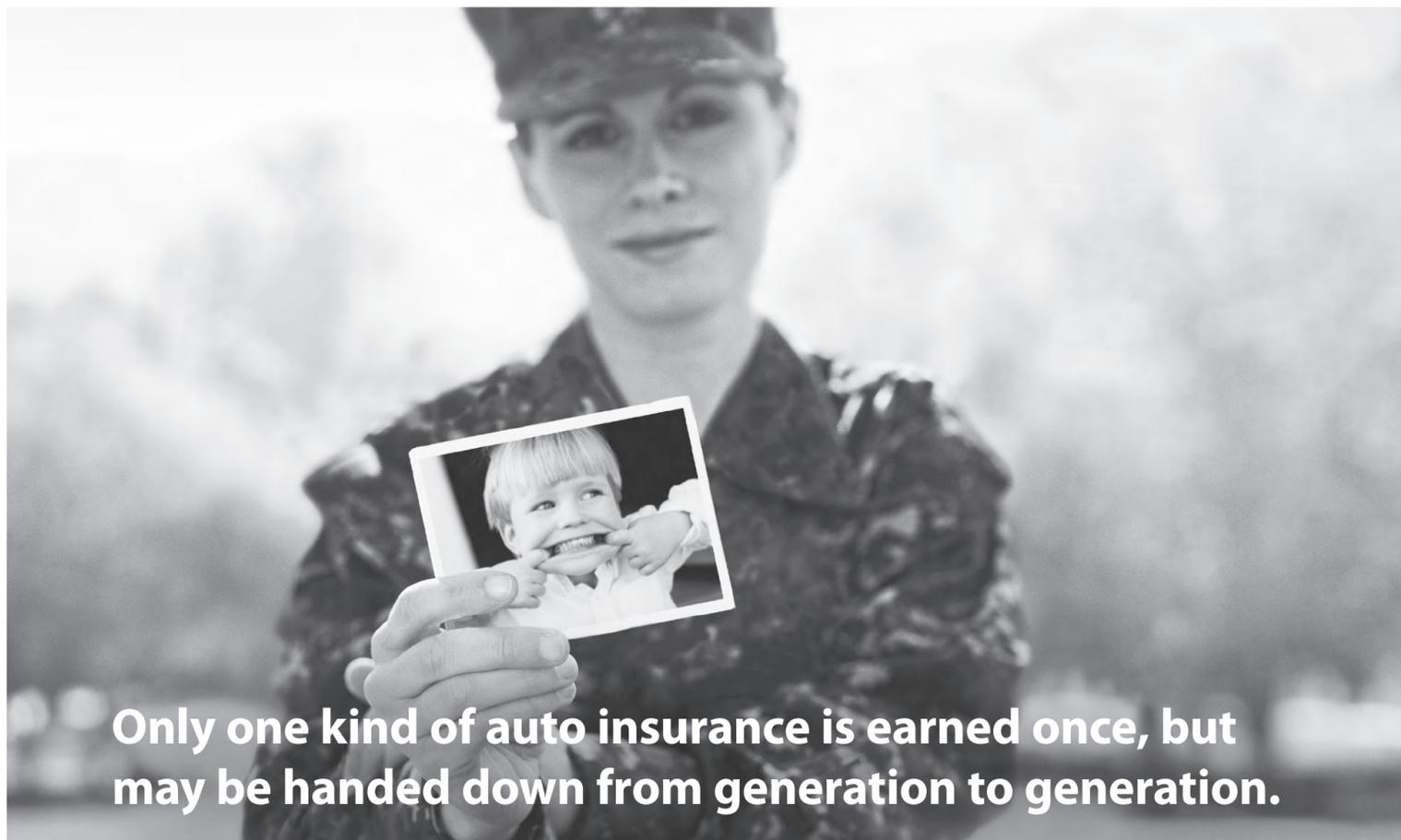
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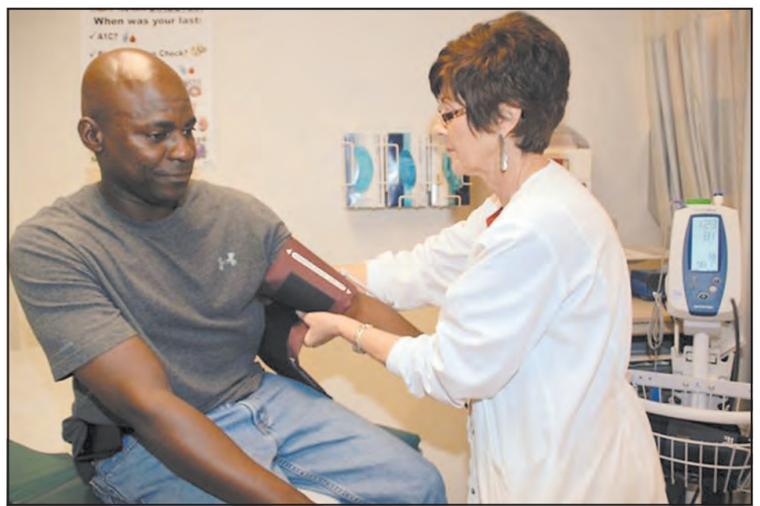
An active duty mom and her baby interact with a Naval Hospital Jacksonville lactation nurse. "Healing our nation's heroes" also includes caring for military members' families here at home. Naval Hospital Jax welcomes two to three new babies into the world each day in its new, family-friendly labor and delivery suites adjacent to its new maternal infant unit.



A lab technician prepares specimens for serum chemistry testing to help Naval Hospital Jax doctors better understand any underlying health conditions of their patients.



Naval Hospital Jacksonville Director of Surgical Services Cmdr. Mark Gould demonstrates the new state-of-the-art surgical technology available to hospital patients and the staff who treat them. The hospital's \$60 million new medical, surgical and clinical service area brings the hospital facility on par with the expert patient-centered care it's been delivering for the past 70 years.



An occupational health nurse at Naval Hospital Jacksonville's Branch Health Clinic in Albany, conducts a blood pressure check on one of the approximately 2,500 Marines aboard the Marine Corps Logistics Base there. Naval Branch Health Clinic Albany - a \$6 million clinic - is one of five clinics and a hospital that comprise the Naval Hospital Jacksonville command which provides care to service members of all uniforms throughout Florida and southern Georgia.



U.S. Navy Photo

While on deployment to Forward Operating Base Lagman in eastern Afghanistan, Naval Hospital Jacksonville's Maternal Infant Unit Department Head, center, cares for an injured service member in the Shock Trauma Unit. At any given time, up to 15 percent of Naval Hospital Jax's military staff from its hospital and five branch health clinics are deployed around the world providing combat, disaster and humanitarian care.



Naval Hospital Jacksonville's ophthalmology clinic staff performs their 10,000th corneal refractive procedure on an active duty Coast Guardsman.

2011: Naval Hospital Jacksonville celebrates achievements

By Tami Begasse
Naval Hospital Jacksonville
Public Affairs Officer

Naval Hospital Jacksonville's mission, since its founding in 1941, is to heal our nation's heroes and their families. The command is comprised of the hospital located on board NAS Jacksonville, and five branch health clinics in Florida (Jacksonville, Key West and

Mayport) and Georgia (Albany and Kings Bay). Achievements by the staff of 2,500 military and civilian personnel have led to an award-winning year.

"It's been an incredible year for our hospital and branch health clinics," said Naval Hospital Jacksonville Commanding Officer Capt. Lynn Welling.

"Our achievements underscore our constant commit-

ment to providing the best care possible to each and every one of our patients."

The team passed 25 command readiness inspections — including receipt of the Joint Commission Gold Seal of Accreditation, the nation's premier accrediting system for hospitals — NH Jax and its reserve units (Naval Operational Health Support Units) received Navy Surgeon



A Naval Hospital Jax dermatologist performs a minor surgery procedure on a patient with the assistance from an active duty hospital corpsman at the hospital's Dermatology Clinic.



Photo by Cindy McCausland

Naval Hospital Jacksonville dental staff at its Branch Health Clinic in Key West, Fla. exam a patient on board USS Spruance (DDG 111). Working extended hours, the clinic staff performed 46 dental exams, seven eye exams, refilled medications, administered immunizations, performed eight lab tests and provided acute care to meet the medical and dental needs of the ship's Sailors prior to the ship's commissioning.

General's Blue "H" Awards for promoting healthy lifestyles and medical readiness. First Coast Worksite Wellness

Council also recognized the hospital as one of Jacksonville's healthiest companies.

See **HOSPITAL**, Page 5



Two members of Naval Hospital Jacksonville's Medical Homeport "Purple" Pediatric Team examine a boy as part of the assessment process at the hospital. This team approach to healthcare places patients at the center of a family of caregivers — their Medical Homeport — comprised of their primary care doctor, nurses, corpsmen and support staff to meet their comprehensive healthcare needs.



Naval Hospital Jacksonville, home to the Navy's largest family medicine physician residency program, graduates its newest class of 2011 residents at the NAS Jacksonville Officers' Club Naval Hospital Jax was named the 2011 Family Medicine Clinical Site of the Year by the Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences.

Photos by HM1(SW) Scott Morgan, MC2 Gary Granger Jr., Pamela Jackson and MC2(SW) Jacob Sippel



An American Red Cross volunteer delivers cookies and punch to a new mom in Naval Hospital Jax's Maternal Infant Unit. Approximately 60 Red Cross volunteers contribute more than 15,000 hours annually in support of Naval Hospital Jax's mission to heal our nation's heroes, doing everything from welcoming patients to driving the parking lot shuttle.



HN Edwin Torres instructs Jurgen Comberg, a college preparatory medical arts magnet high school student attending Naval Hospital Jacksonville's second Science, Service, Medicine and Mentoring (S2M2) program, on how to prepare a demonstration patient, HN Adam Christopher, for an electrocardiogram. The S2M2 program is an intensive five-day course where students will get real-world experience in patient care areas from the operating and emergency rooms to pharmacy to physical and occupational therapy.

HOSPITAL: 'an incredible year'

From Page 4

Illustrating the hospital's clinical excellence, the family medicine residency program was named the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences Clinical Site of the Year 2011. The Navy Inspector General recognized the command's Deployment Health Center, Third-Party

Collections, Case Management and Civilian Personnel departments as best practices. What's more, the Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery recognized NH Jax as home of the Case Manager of the Year.

On the international front, the hospital also became the first hospital on Florida's First Coast to be designated as "Baby Friendly" by the World Health Organization and United Nations Children's Fund.

And the list goes on for the command that serves a patient population of approximately 215,000 active and retired Sailors, Soldiers, Marines, Airmen, Reservists, Coast Guardsmen and their families — 57,000 of whom are enrolled with a primary care manager at one of the NH Jax facilities.

"We have an outstanding staff. Each and every day, our dedicated team of military and civilian personnel sees 1,800 outpatients, admits 15 inpatients, cares for 80 people in the ER, performs 14 same-day surgeries, fills 4,700 prescriptions, conducts 4,600 lab tests and delivers two or three 2 to 3 babies," explains Welling.

"Additionally, as one of the Navy's most deployed medical commands, at any given time up to 15 percent of our military staff is deployed around the world meeting combat, humanitarian and disaster needs."

NH Jacksonville also offers numerous patient-centered programs and initiatives. Medical Homeport — the Navy-wide approach to primary care that places patients in the center of a team

of caregivers — is offered at the hospital and branch health clinics in Mayport and Kings Bay.

"Our adoption of Medical Homeport means our patients regularly see the same family of caregivers who help plan their care, now and in the future," said Welling.

"Our move to a 'whole person' approach is designed to enhance our patients' access to care, strengthen communications and build stronger relationships between them and their team."

Along with its direct care of our nation's heroes and their families, NH Jax's leadership understands the positive results of community collabora-

tion. On behalf of 14 health care organizations involved in the Quality Collaborative of Northeast Florida, NH Jax announced in September the development of emergency department pain medication guidelines to ensure patients get the most appropriate medication, while minimizing controlled substance abuse.

The command also participated in University of North Florida's (UNF) annual Caring Community and Quality Collaborative conferences, and Duval County Medical Society events. NH Jax hosts its annual Deployment Mental Health Symposium in partnership with UNF on Dec. 8 and 9, as well as its annual Patient Safety Symposium early next

year. "Medicine by its very nature is complicated," explains Welling.

"So it is very important for private and public sector healthcare leaders to come together as a community to learn from each other and to advance patient safety and quality care across the region in the hopes of making medicine safer for patient everywhere."

Along with NH Jax's award-winning programs, innovations, approach to quality care and community collaboration, the command continues to receive high patient satisfaction ratings, which currently are at 92 percent.

"We're here to heal our nation's heroes — it's that simple," Welling concluded.



A service member interacts with his horse as part of Naval Hospital Jacksonville's horse-assisted therapy to promote recovery among local service members dealing with combat-related stress. Naval Hospital Jax's long-term goal is to combine equine-assisted therapy with other traditional and non-traditional therapies as the basis for an immersive day treatment program it hopes to make available in 2012 to service members diagnosed with PTSD and post-concussive syndrome.

VP-16 aviation ordnancemen in spotlight

By Lt. j.g. Michael Glynn
VP-16 PAO

As the 'War Eagles' of VP-16 prepare to deploy, their team of aviation ordnancemen (AOs) have kept them armed and mission-ready. In order to train and complete an Inter-Deployment Readiness Cycle (IDRC), a P-3C Orion squadron must carry, train with, and deploy a variety of sensors and weapons. Despite typical IDRC challenges, the AO shop has answered the call, supported their shipmates, and excelled during their inspections during the last year.

AOs or "Ordies" are responsible for maintaining, loading, inspecting, and recovering weapons and external sensors. The most common job is loading expendable search sensors or sonobuoys, to detect submarines. The sonobuoys are loaded in internal racks and external chutes in the belly of the P-3C.

The AO shop loads practice torpedoes and missiles for local training flights and can equip the P-3C with defensive flares to protect against surface to air missiles in threat environments.

The daily flow of work revolves around supporting



Photo by Clark Pierce

AO3 Jose Rosario checks the missile guidance unit of an AGM-84 SLAM-ER (Stand-Off Land Attack Missile-Expanded Response) Harpoon missile Nov. 10 beneath the fuselage of a "War Eagles" P-3C Orion.

the squadron's flight schedule. AOs arrive at the aircraft a few hours before the flight crew to upload mission ordnance and to conduct a preflight inspection.

Once the flight crew arrives, AOs stand by to troubleshoot equipment. If the plane is car-

rying missiles, the AOs pull pins out of the weapons just before takeoff to remove the safeties and arm the weapon.

The AOs of VP-16 recently completed a successful Conventional Weapons Training Proficiency Inspection (CWTPI). This

inspection lasted several days and involved outside observers testing safety and proficiency standards. The AOs scored very well on this most recent CWTPI. They also assisted the 'Broadarrows' of VP-62 in preparing for their successful CWTPI.

AO2 Jose Rosario explained that there are some advantages to working with a small team, "Having such a small shop has really helped all of us improve our skills and work on our flexibility as we have to quickly yet efficiently get all of the parts needed. We must have everything up and running with buoys loaded before aircrew show up while still being ready to switch planes if something goes wrong."

The hard work of the AOs is not lost on the aircrew they support: "Our Ordies do an awesome job," said Lt. j.g. Ryan Cunz.

"Not only do they work quickly, efficiently and get things done correctly; they are team players, always willing to work with you. They are a great contribution to our mission accomplishment."

Mission accomplishment is the name of the game, and it's not lost on the AOs. AO3 Benjamin Marks shared his thoughts on job satisfaction, "When a crew comes back from their mission and everything works correctly, it is a great feeling knowing all of our training and hard work has paid off and the mission was successfully completed because of it."

FRCSE welcomes decorated wounded warrior to federal service

By Marsha Childs
Fleet Readiness Center Southeast

Fleet Readiness Center Southeast (FRCSE) welcomes the second Wounded Warrior Project (WWP) TRACK Program graduate hired at the aviation maintenance facility. Adam Sardinias, 26, a decorated Marine and Iraq War veteran wounded during his second tour to the Middle East, works as an engine mechanic helper in the J52 Blade Shop at the Crinkley Engine Facility.

"The job is great," said Sardinias. "There is always room to learn here. That is the best part about it. All these guys are very smart. They are incredible."

He served in the U.S. Marine Corps as an infantry machine gunner, but he developed a passion for machinery early on while working on cars with his stepfather.

"I was always building hotrods and motors," he said. "It came natural to me. I loved the mechanics of it."

Sardinias enlisted in June 2003 two weeks after graduating from Tampa Bay Technical High School, Tampa, Fla. He said he looked for the branch of service that best represented G.I. Joe, the action figure toy. For him that was the Marine Corps. The 20-year-old saw plenty of action while deployed for seven months with the 3rd Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment to Fallujah, Iraq in 2005. It was during his second tour a year later when then Lance Cpl. Sardinias and two Marines sustained injuries while their unit, Kilo Company, engaged Sunni insurgents in Ramadi, Iraq, the capital of Anbar province.

"We were on a roof doing 'over watch' on a perimeter, when an RPG (rocket-propelled grenade) exploded," he said. "I was knocked unconscious for 30 seconds to a minute. When I finally woke up, they (Marines) were picking me up.



Photos by Victor Pitts

Engine Mechanic Helper Adam Sardinias inspects a second-stage compressor blade from a J52 engine used to power the EA-6B Prowler aircraft, at Fleet Readiness Center Southeast on Nov. 15. Sardinias, a wounded Iraq War veteran, graduated from the Wounded Warrior Project TRACK Program and accepted a job at the military aircraft overhaul, maintenance and repair facility in August.

They had wrapped up my face and hands. Shrapnel nearly tore off my right thumb, and I had two pieces in my face."

After a series of surgeries, the first in Ballad and two more at Naval Hospital Camp Lejeune, N.C., doctors were able to fuse his fractured thumb and insert a metal pin. He still carries the shrapnel in his face as a reminder of that fateful day, April 24, 2006. In addition, Sardinias suffered a traumatic brain injury (TBI). His TBI counselor told him about the Wounded Warrior Project (WWP) TRACK Program headquartered in Jacksonville. He applied and interviewed at the education center specifically designed for wounded warriors.

While assigned to the Wounded Warrior Barracks at Camp Lejeune, he received a Purple Heart Medal in October 2006. He was honorably discharged from the Marine Corps in 2007.

Sardinias relocated to Jackson-

ville in August 2010 to start the yearlong WWP TRACK Program. He completed a three-month external internship at FRCSE repairing F/A-18 Hornet aircraft, welding components in Plant Services, and measuring J52 engine compressor blades in the engines facility. Upon graduation, he applied for his current position working with engines.

He still deals with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and limited range of motion in his right thumb. Yet, he feels fortunate to have the opportunity to pursue a civilian career.

"One year later, my life has definitely changed for the better," he said. Sardinias is the second WWP TRACK graduate employed at FRCSE.

The first is Purple Heart recipient Christopher Lynch, a U.S. Army veteran with service-connected disabilities, hired in January 2011. He also works at the FRCSE Crinkley Engine Facility.



Photo courtesy of VP-8

AEAN David Perez talks to recruits from Division 372 about his experiences in the Navy before the commencement of battle stations at Recruit Training Command, Great Lakes, Ill., Nov. 10.

VP-8 'Fighting Tigers' mentor recruits

From VP-8 Public Affairs

Several members of the VP-8 "Fighting Tigers" watched proudly as the new Sailors of Recruit Division 372 conducted a pass in review Nov. 10 in front of friends, family and VIPs at Recruit Training Command (RTC), Great Lakes, Ill.

Over the past eight weeks, personnel from the squadron have made several trips to RTC during their sponsorship of Division 372. The VP-8 Sailors provided encouragement, mentorship and guidance for the recruits as they completed requirements ranging from their initial physical fitness assessment to battle stations. The Fighting Tigers, led by Commanding Officer Cmdr. Chris Flaherty, CMDCM Frank King and AMC Dillon Lacoste, attended the recruits' battle station exercise, capping ceremony and pass in review.

"It was great to see Division 372 make the transition from citizens to Sailors during their time at Recruit Training Command. The recruit division commanders did an outstanding job teaching these Sailors, and setting them up for a successful Navy career," stated Flaherty.

All of the VP-8 Sailors who had the opportunity to travel to RTC agreed that it was very rewarding to observe and mentor the recruits. The drastic change that the division made over the course of the eight weeks was evident to all. Division 372 was recognized as the number one division in their graduating group, earned the coveted Chief of Naval Operations Gold Division Award, and the recruits had a 100 percent passing rate on their final physical fitness test.

Lacoste remarked, "It was a great experience for our Sailors as well as the recruits. I believe the division sponsorship program is a catalyst for success. The recruits gain a better knowledge of their future ratings and general Navy living by spending time with fleet Sailors."

"Sailors participating in the program gain a sense of remembrance and pride as they relive some of the moments they experienced when they were recruits. I am grateful to have had to opportunity to be a part of this experience," continued Lacoste.

Both the recruits and their mentors agreed that the sponsorship program provides an outstanding opportunity for a mutually beneficial partnership, and some of the recruits already expressed their desire to return as mentors in the future, maybe even one day as part of VP-8.

Navy announces updated special duty assignment pay rates

From Navy Personnel Command Public Affairs

A Navy message released Nov. 22 announced revisions in special duty assignment pay (SDAP).

NAVADMIN 356/11 lists updated SDAP levels for active-duty and Reserve component full-time support and qualified selected Reserve Sailors on active duty. Increases to existing SDAP levels are effective immediately and reductions are effective 60 days from release of NAVADMIN 356/11.

Sailors whose SDAP will be eliminated will receive half of their previous SDAP entitlement for 12 months, or until the Sailor completes the tour, whichever comes first.

The SDAP program is an incentive pay ranging from \$75 to \$450 a month used to entice qualified Sailors to serve in designated billets that are considered

extremely difficult or entail arduous duty. Program levels change to reflect the current environment associated with each billet and to sustain adequate manning levels.

In order to qualify for SDAP, Sailors must be assigned to and working in a valid billet on the Command Manpower Authorization Listing. This billet must be authorized by the Bureau of Naval Personnel as a special duty assignment billet. Commands holding SDAP billets are required to complete an annual recertification.

NAVADMIN 356/11 supersedes previously released SDAP rates.

More than 25,000 Sailors currently receive SDAP. Sailors can read OPNAVINST 1160.6 and talk with their command career counselor to learn more about SDAP.

'Proud Warriors' Det. One helps submarine Sailor

By Lt. Julia Peterson
HSL-42 Public Affairs

HSL-42 Detachment One, the "Yellow Bellied Sliders," currently deployed on board the guided-missile frigate USS Samuel B. Roberts (FFG 58), was recently called on to conduct a personnel transfer (for humanitarian reasons) from the Ohio class cruise-missile submarine USS Georgia (SSGN 729).

The crew of Proud Warrior 431 - having previously conducted several passenger transfers and medical evacuations during the deployment - was tasked with the mission. When informed that the transfer would be from a submarine, the crew knew it would not be a routine event.

USS Georgia was unable to leave its station, so the Roberts immediately began to close on the submarine's position at best speed. After calculating time and distance to the submarine, it was decided that the transfer would take place the following morning in lieu of a night transfer. The SH-60B Seahawk crew reviewed submarine transfer procedures and prepared themselves to execute this unique mission. After conducting a thorough preflight brief, Proud



Photo by MC2 William Jamieson

AWRAN Robert Dukes is lowered from Proud Warrior 431 to the pitching deck of USS Georgia (SSGN 729) during a 2011 passenger transfer in the Indian Ocean. The SH-60B Seahawk, assigned to HS-11 Det. 1, is embarked aboard the guided-missile frigate USS Samuel B. Roberts (FFG 58).

Warrior 431 launched just after sunrise and flew toward USS Georgia.

The combination of gusty winds and rough sea state were not ideal for the transfer. The course that gave the submarine the most stable deck required a downwind recovery from the starboard sailplane.

The preferred recovery from the missile deck would have required a compromise between a headwind component for the helicopter and bow seas for the submarine. Unfortunately, waves crashing over the bow and the missile deck were cause for concern for the Sailors who were required to be on deck.

After close coordination, the submarine maneuvered to place the wind directly off the bow, providing a more stable deck, while also providing a headwind component for the helicopter.

The pilots, Lt. Seth DiNola and Lt. Jennifer Holsclaw, set up for the approach at approximately one-half mile and 200 feet. The helicopter then established a 30-foot steady hover, coned into position by the senior aircrewman, AWRC Scott Wade. On deck below the helicopter were the transfer petty officer and passenger. Three safety observers were on deck, next to the submarine's dry dock shelter just aft of the sail.



U.S. Navy photo

Members of HSL-42 Detachment One gather in front of their helicopter on board USS Samuel B. Roberts (FFG 58). Front row, from left, AWRAN(AW/SW/NAC) Robert Dukes, AT3 John Getchell, AE2(AW/SW) Christopher Lloyd, AM2(AW/SW) Kevin Lunar, AWRC(AW/SW/NAC) Scott Wade, AD3 (AW) Austin Betourne, AM3(AW) Gregg Birkholz. Middle row, from left, ATC(AW/SW) Jason Kelly, AO2 (AW) Phillip Howard IV, AT2(AW/SW) Craig Nelson, Lt. Jennifer Holsclaw, Lt. Seth DiNola, Lt. Cmdr. Teague Suarez, Lt. Matthew Bayer, Lt. Julia Peterson, AD1(AW/SW) Jeffery Delarosa, AM1(AW) Edward Gladden. Back row, from left, AM3(AW) Andrew Kingston, AD2(AW) William Boles, AT1(AW/SW) Kevan Hoff, AE2(AW) Garret Carter, AD2(AW/SW) Samuel Stebbins and AZ1(AW/SW) Michael Causey.

Once in position, junior aircrewman AWRAN Robert Dukes was lowered to the deck of USS Georgia where he attached a seabag to the rescue hoist - and stayed on deck to give the passenger a quick safety brief for the upcoming return to USS Roberts.

After Dukes connected himself to the helicopter hoist and

then the passenger to himself - both were successfully lifted off deck. When safely inside the aircraft cabin, Proud Warrior 431 was cleared for forward flight and departed for USS Roberts.

In the end, it was the close coordination between aircrew and submarine that ensured success of the mission.

New command senior chief at FACSFACJAX

By OS1(SW) Debra Taylor
FACSFACJAX PAO

ATCS(AW/NAC) Eric Elkin assumed the duties as first command senior chief at Fleet Area Control and Surveillance Facility Jacksonville (FACSFACJAX) Nov. 21.

The 9578 NEC requirement to have a full-time command senior chief became a reality on Nov. 1.

This billet enhances the command's readiness by alleviating the need for a collateral duty senior enlisted leader and allowing a dedicated leader to properly execute the Navy's key foundational pro-

grams.

FACSFACJAX is the first FACSFAC command to convert an E-8 billet to a dedicated command senior chief billet.

Elkin previously served with the "Shadows" of VQ-4, Naval Air Maintenance Training Group Detachment 1080, the "Pelicans" of VP-45, and in September 2009, he reported to Helicopter Sea Combat Wing Atlantic Detachment Jax (CHSCWL) via the United States Navy Senior Enlisted Academy, Newport, R.I.

During his assignment at CHSCWL, Elkin was board-selected as a command senior chief and recently attended the

Command Leadership School Command Master Chief/Chief of the Boat course.

"I look forward to working with each and every Sailor attached to FACSFACJAX and will strive to uphold and enforce the highest standards of professionalism and integrity.

This goal of achieving excellence will only be attained through active communication at all levels of our command, while adhering to our command principles:

Do Focus On The Basics; Do The Right Thing; Do Respect Yourself and Your Peers; and Do Enjoy What You Do," said Elkin.



ATCS(AW/NAC) Eric Elkin

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NAVSUP FLC Jax to manage new JPPSO Southeast

By Bobby Reeder
NAVSUP Fleet Logistics
Center Jacksonville

Naval Supply Systems Command Fleet Logistics Center (NAVSUP FLC) Jacksonville hosted the Joint Personal Property Shipping Office (JPPSO) Southeast kickoff meeting Nov. 15-16 at NAS Jacksonville.

Attendees included representatives from NAVSUP Global Logistics Support, NAVSUP FLC Jacksonville and personnel from JPPSO South Central (Texas).

Personnel from the Personal Property Shipping Offices (PPSO) at Beaufort, S.C., and Albany, Ga., and Marine Corps, Army, and Air Force Personal Property Headquarters command representatives also attended the two-day event.

In an effort to reduce redundancies, the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) encouraged regionalization of



Photo by Kari Hansen

Attendees of the Joint Personal Property Shipping Office (JPPSO) Southeast kickoff meeting worked together Nov. 15 - 16 to implement the Office of the Secretary Defense's goal of regionalization of JPPSOs.

PPSOs with the goal of gaining logistics efficiencies and improving customer support.

The conclusion of this regionalization process will result in all back office functions, contracting of carriers and movement household goods being performed by JPPSOs. The

customer interface, or front office functions, e.g., fielding questions about the online completion of forms and the entire move.mil system, will be performed by local Personal Property Offices (PPO).

NAVSUP FLC Jacksonville will manage JPPSO Southeast,

which will provide back office support to all services PPOs in Florida, Georgia, South Carolina and the Caribbean.

The first sites will transfer into the regional plan in Fiscal Year (FY) 13, and the final sites in FY16. Once regionalization is complete, there will be seven JPPSOs strategically located across the nation.

Key areas of discussion during the event were IT requirements and costs, staffing and human capital requirements, communication strategies and overview of the detailed Plan of Action and Milestones for the transition of each site.

Attendees developed a greater understanding of the future JPPSO operations, as well as networking with personnel from other services.

The individual networking of JPPSO and PPSO representatives opened communications channels that will play a critical role in the successful establish-

ment of JPPSO Southeast.

"This meeting was extremely beneficial in helping my team understand the unique service requirements at each of the sites we will be supporting under JPPSO Southeast. Insight from the Air Force on their regionalization efforts [JPPSO South Central] provided valuable information that we can use to ensure we make a seamless transition here in Jacksonville," said Carlos Vargas, NAVSUP FLC Jacksonville household goods regional manager.

NAVSUP FLC Jacksonville, one of seven fleet logistics centers under NAVSUP Global Logistics Support, provides operational logistics, business and support services to fleet, shore and industrial commands of the Navy, Coast Guard, Military Sealift Command, and other joint and allied forces.



Photo by HM1 Scott Morgan

Naval Hospital Jax frocks new petty officers

Naval Hospital Jacksonville Commanding Officer Capt. Lynn Welling congratulates newly frocked HM3 Keith Anthony as 18 other Sailors stand at attention awaiting their turn during Naval Hospital Jax's frocking ceremony Dec. 1. Naval Hospital Jax frocked 37 petty officers for the fall 2011 cycle.

Mandatory retirement date announced for officers selected by SER

From Chief of Naval Personnel Public Affairs

The statutory retirement date for officers selected for retirement by the FY-12 Selective Early Retirement (SER) board was announced in NAVADMIN 365/11, released Dec. 2.

In accordance with Title 10, United States Code, Section 638, officers selected for early retirement must retire no later than the first day of the seventh month following the Secretary of the Navy's approval of the board's results.

Based on these criteria, the mandatory retirement date is Apr. 1, 2012.

NAVADMIN 365/11 also outlines guidance and procedures for officers to apply for a 90-day deferral of retirement. A deferral of retirement may be made on a case-by-case basis in order to prevent a personal hardship to the officer or for humanitarian reasons. Authority and discretion to grant deferral lies solely with the Secretary of the Navy.

The SER board, originally announced in NAVADMIN 006/11, was convened after high retention, reduction in officer billets and low attrition among senior active duty unrestricted line officers resulted in an excess.

The board was used as a force management measure to balance the force and ensure sufficient senior officers are available at the right times in their careers to serve in critical fleet billets.

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Photo by MCC Yan Kennon

Fiscal efficiencies through teamwork. Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 7, Detachment Jacksonville Seabees work on a \$928K airfield resurfacing project of five miles of taxiways, access and perimeter roads at NAS Jax Outlying Landing Field Whitehouse, a vital naval aviation readiness asset.

CNIC AWARD: Best base Navy wide

From Page 1

NAS Jax team has also enhanced the quality of life for all personnel and the tenant commands. Great job," he concluded.

"I was delighted by the news that Navy Region Southeast's (NRSE) nominee to CNIC for the 2011 Installation Excellence Award was selected as this year's Navy wide winner," remarked Commander, NRSE Rear Adm. Jack Scorby Jr.

"All 16 installations in the region did a remarkable job in 2011 and I'm proud of them all. However, the demonstrated joint commitment of NAS Jax and its tenant commands to the fleet, fighter and family enabled them to be selected for this prestigious award," he added.

Placing second was Naval Base Coronado, Calif., followed by Naval Base Kitsap, Wash.

The Commander in Chief's Annual Award for Installation Excellence was established in 1985 by President Ronald Reagan. The DoD then initiated a service-wide competition on behalf of the president.

The president challenged members of the DoD to search for installations where personnel do the best job with their resources to support the mission, and to seek out solutions to the many complex problems they face.

To quote the president, "I am confident that this search for excellence and innovations will yield many new and better ways of accomplishing our mis-



Photo by MCC Monica Nelson

Energy and Environmental Security. Tactical initiatives and efficiency improvements create a culture essential to mission success, save time, money and lives. Over 1,200 solar panels are being installed at Navy Region Southeast (NRSE) headquarters.

sion and, at the same time, honor those whose dedication has produced the best defense organization in the world."

In meeting the president's challenge, the Navy, Marine Corps, Army, Air Force and DLA conduct their own intraservice competitions. Valuable benefits from this program include recognition for excellence, creative management, problem-solving ideas and innovation leadership.

PROJECT NAVY: Partnering with schools

From Page 1

them along and provide support is critical," he continued.

Also attending the kick-off event was NS Mayport Commanding Officer Capt. Doug Cochrane who gave the students a short history lesson about the Wright brothers and how they fulfilled their dreams doing something they loved.

"On a cold, windswept day on the North Carolina dunes, they changed the world forever. They were dreamers. Their previous business ventures failed because with great achievement there frequently comes failure," he said.

Cochrane also talked about Capt. Scott Speicher, a Forrest High School graduate who was killed during Operation Desert Storm in Iraq and whose remains were recently returned home to Jacksonville. "Like the Wright brothers, he dared to dream too, he dared to be brave and he dared to change the world," said Cochrane. "And, let's talk about the man who wanted a better world for his children - a world where they would be viewed by the content of their character and not the color of their skin - Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. He also was a world changer"

Cochrane then acknowledged the teachers and staff members. "These people have given you nothing more than 100 percent since you stepped into this school. They dream of a better world and that will come from you and their efforts on your behalf," said Cochrane as the students



Photo by Kaylee LaRocque

Members of the Nathan B. Forrest High School AFJROTC Unit present the colors during the playing of the national anthem by Navy Band Southeast as guests render honors.

gave them a hearty round of applause. "They will not let you fail. The community, our Navy personnel, your parents and your own personal initiative will not let you fail."

NAS Jacksonville Commanding Officer Capt. Jeffrey Maclay stated, "We in the Navy do what we do around the world to make sure that our children and all of you inherit a safer and more peaceful world. What you do with that world depends in large part on your teachers and their commitment to making your education the most meaningful they can. We in the Navy, hope to help with that commitment and to promote excellence in yourselves by acting as tutors and mentors."

"The last line of the Sailor's Creed states, 'committed to the excellence and fair treatment of all.' And that's what you can expect from the Sailors who will be mentoring you. They want to see you excel, reach your goals and perhaps raise your goals and be the best you can," continued Maclay.

Forrest High School Principal Dr. Alvin

Brennan closed the ceremony by saying, "I, and I'm sure my colleagues will agree, understand the significance of partnering with the Navy and what it will do for our schools. I know that at Forrest High School, it will bring a wealth of opportunity for our students as they transition out into adulthood. I'm really excited about this collaboration and the benefits it will provide."

The program was initiated by Forrest High School Psychologist Freedom Reid who approached the Navy school liaison officers about having Sailors come into the schools to mentor the students. "We have a real need for this program. The students will meet positive role models and learn about career opportunities. And the Sailors will benefit because they will be invited to the school events and be part of our community," said Reid.

"It's a win-win partnership and really a great idea to get our Sailors involved out in the schools and help these students," added NAS Jax School Liaison Officer Dawn Mills.

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PEARL HARBOR: 'date which will live in infamy'

From Page 1

scout bombers to Midway Island. The last Pacific carrier, USS Saratoga, had departed Pearl Harbor for repairs on the west coast.

At 0600 on Dec. 7, six Japanese carriers launched the first wave of 181 planes composed of torpedo bombers, dive bombers, horizontal bombers and fighters.

Just before dawn, U.S. Navy vessels spotted an unidentified submarine periscope near the entrance to Pearl Harbor. It was attacked and reported sunk by the destroyer USS Ward (DD-139) and a patrol plane. At 0700, an alert operator at an Army radar station at Opana spotted the approaching first wave of the attack force. The officers to whom those reports were relayed did not consider them significant enough to take action. The report of the submarine sinking was handled routinely, and the radar sighting was passed off as an approaching group of American planes due to arrive that morning.

The Japanese aircrews achieved complete surprise when they hit American ships and military installations on Oahu shortly before 0800. They attacked military airfields at the same time they hit the fleet anchored in Pearl Harbor. The Navy air bases at Ford Island and Kaneohe Bay, the Marine Corps airfield at Ewa and the Army Air Corps fields at Bellows, Wheeler and Hickam were all bombed and strafed - as other elements of the attacking force began their assaults on the ships moored in Pearl Harbor. The purpose of the simultaneous attacks was to destroy the American planes before they could rise to intercept the Japanese.

Of the more than 90 ships at anchor in Pearl Harbor, the primary targets were the eight battleships. Seven were moored on Battleship Row along the southeast shore of Ford Island, while the USS Pennsylvania (BB-38) lay in drydock across the channel. Within the first minutes of the attack all the battleships adjacent to Ford Island had taken bomb and or torpedo hits. The USS West Virginia (BB-48) sank quickly. The USS Oklahoma (BB-37) turned turtle and sank. At about 0810, the USS Arizona (BB-39) was mortally wounded by an armor-piercing bomb that ignited the ship's forward ammunition magazine. The resulting explosion and fire killed 1,177 crewmen, the greatest loss of life on any ship that day and about half the total number of Americans killed.

The USS California (BB-44), USS Maryland (BB-46), USS Tennessee (BB-43) and USS Nevada (BB-36) also suffered varying degrees of damage in the first half hour of the raid. There was a short lull in the fury of the attack at about 0830 when USS Nevada, despite her wounds, managed to get underway and move down the channel toward the open sea. Before she could clear the harbor, a second wave of 170 Japanese planes, launched 30 minutes after the first, appeared over the harbor. They concentrated their



The battleship USS Nevada (BB-36) is beached and burning after being hit forward by Japanese bombs and torpedoes Dec. 7, 1941. Her pilothouse area is discolored by fire. The harbor tug Hoga (YT-146) is alongside Nevada's port bow, helping to fight fires on the battleship's forecastle.



The wrecked destroyers USS Downes (DD-375) and USS Cassin (DD-372) in Drydock One at the Pearl Harbor Navy Yard, soon after the end of the Japanese air attack Dec. 7, 1941. Cassin has capsized against Downes. USS Pennsylvania (BB-38) is astern, occupying the rest of the drydock. The torpedo-damaged cruiser USS Helena (CL-50) is in the right distance, beyond the crane. Smoke is from the sunken and burning USS Arizona (BB-39), out of view behind Pennsylvania.

attacks on the moving battleship, hoping to sink her in the channel and block the narrow entrance to Pearl Harbor. On orders from the harbor control tower, the USS Nevada was beached at Hospital Point and the channel remained clear. When the attack ended shortly before 1000, less than two hours after it began, the American forces had paid a fearful price.

Twenty-one ships of the U.S. Pacific Fleet were sunk or damaged: the battleships Arizona,

California, Maryland, Nevada, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Tennessee and West Virginia; cruisers USS Helena (CL-50), USS Honolulu (CL-48) and USS Raleigh (CL-7); the destroyers USS Cassin (DD-372), USS Downes (DD-375), USS Helm (DD-388) and USS Shaw (DD-373); seaplane tender USS Curtiss (AV-4); target ship (ex-battleship) USS Utah (AG-16); repair ship USS Vestal (AR-4); minelayer USS Oglala (CM-4); tug USS Sotomoyo (YT-9); and

Floating Drydock Number 2.

Aircraft losses were 188 destroyed and 159 damaged, the majority hit before they had a chance to take off. American dead numbered 2,403. That figure included 68 civilians, most of them killed by improperly fused anti-aircraft shells landing in Honolulu. There were 1,178 military and civilian wounded. Japanese losses were comparatively light. Twenty-nine planes, less than 10 percent of the attacking force, failed to return to their carriers.

The Japanese success was overwhelming - but it was not complete. They failed to damage any American aircraft carriers - which by a stroke of luck - were absent from the harbor. They neglected to damage the shore facilities at the Pearl Harbor Naval Base, which played an important role in the Allied victory in World War II. American technological skill raised and repaired all but three of the ships sunk or damaged at Pearl Harbor (Arizona, considered too badly damaged to be salvaged; Oklahoma, considered too old to be worth repairing, and the obsolete USS Utah (AG-16) considered not worth the effort). Most importantly, the shock and anger caused by the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor united a divided nation and was translated into a wholehearted commitment to victory in World War II.

Beware of USAA phishing scam

By Staff

In early November, USAA members began receiving email claiming to be from USAA with the subject line: USAA Protection Alert. In an elaborate scheme, the email informs members about a failed usaa.com login attempt and to click on a link to update their identity.

Clicking on the link directs the member first to a counterfeit website to log on. Logging on produces the second website, asking for a PIN. Clicking "Next" produces another website asking for the member to set up security questions and after clicking "Next" again, a final website opens, asking for the member's sensitive information including:

card holder's name, card number expiration date, card verification code, billing address, billing zip code, billing phone number, email address and email password.

Although the e-mail includes a USAA logo and appears to be from USAA, it is not.

This is a phishing scam - targeting USAA members and military personnel. If you get an email or pop-up message that asks for personal or financial information, do not reply. And don't click on the link in the message, either. Legitimate companies don't ask for this information via email. If you are concerned about your account, contact the organization mentioned in the email using a telephone number you know to be genuine, or open a new Internet browser session and type in the company's correct Web address yourself. In any case, don't cut and paste the link from the message into your Internet browser - phishers can make links look like they go to one place, but that actually send you to a different site.

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Shaffield retires after 25 years

From Information Dominance Corps Region Southeast

Cmdr. Larry Shaffield of Information Dominance Corps Region Southeast retired Nov. 19 after 25 years of honorable naval service at a ceremony at the NAS Jax Pavilion. Capt. Kathryn Yates was the guest speaker.

Shaffield enlisted in the Navy in 1986 as an electronics technician and completed the Navy's nuclear power training as a reactor operator.

His first operational assignment was USS Buffalo (SSN 715) where he completed two Western Pacific deployments. He was assigned to Trident Refit Facility Kings Bay in 1992 and during this assignment he was accepted to Officer Candidate School.

After completion of intelligence officer training, Shaffield was assigned to U.S. Atlantic Command as a Caribbean geopolitical analyst. With the transfer of geographic responsibility for the Caribbean to U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM), he was reassigned to the SOUTHCOM Headquarters in Miami, completing the tour as branch chief for Caribbean and Central American Analysis.

His next assignment was VP-45 at NAS Jacksonville. While assigned as the squadron's aviation intelligence officer he made two deployments in support of counter drug operations in the Caribbean and in support of allied operations in the Balkans.

Following VP-45, he was



Photo courtesy of Information Dominance Corps Region Southeast
Cmdr. Larry Shaffield (right) presents the American flag to his son, Jack, a plebe at the United States Merchant Marine Academy, during his retirement ceremony at the NAS Jax Pavilion on Nov. 19.

assigned to the Weapons Tactics Unit of VP-30 as a strike mission planning instructor, providing mission planning and intelligence training to P-3 Orion Squadron strike crews and intelligence support personnel throughout the maritime patrol and reconnaissance force.

In 2004, Shaffield reported to USS Tarawa (LHA-1) as the ship's intelligence officer responsible for the intelligence, cryptologic and electronic warfare divisions. He completed a wartime deployment as part of Expeditionary Strike Group One.

In 2006, he was assigned to U.S. Strategic Command where he played an integral role in the J2's intelligence support to information operations and current intelligence

reporting.

His final assignment was as officer in charge (OIC) for Information Dominance Corps Region Southeast. During his tenure, Shaffield has overseen the integration of both additional geographic regions and additional professional career fields into the national architecture for Reserve Component management of Information Dominance Corps personnel.

Shaffield and his wife, Carol, have two children, Mairead, a sophomore at Troy University and Jack, a plebe at the United States Merchant Marine Academy. Shaffield will return to his hometown of Dothan, Ala. where he will begin a new career in the nuclear power industry.



Photo by ET2(SW) Michael Gunter
Lt. Cmdr. Charles Mayfield of Information Dominance Corps Region Southeast Jacksonville presents Vietnam Veteran Ray Varberry with a certificate of recognition during a ceremony at West Jacksonville Health and Rehabilitation Center on Nov. 9.

Veterans honored at West Jacksonville Health and Rehab

By ET2(SW) Michael Gunter
Information Dominance Corps Region Southeast

Lt. Cmdr. Charles Mayfield of Information Dominance Corps Region Southeast (IDCRSE) Jacksonville joined a regional chapter of The American Foreign Legion at the West Jacksonville Health and Rehabilitation Center/Retirement Home to serve as the guest speaker at a ceremony honoring the resident military veterans Nov. 9.

The ceremony included a rousing rendition of the Pledge of Allegiance, patriotic music, reading of poems, and an awards ceremony.

Against the backdrop of vibrant decorations and smiling faces, Mayfield spoke with infectious energy and presented each veteran in attendance with a certificate, folded American flag, and a proud and heartfelt thank-you.

Mayfield credited the Vietnam-era veterans with being the generation that instilled a "sense of patriotism and duty to God and country" in him.

He also noted how the American Legion was responsible for sending him to Boy's State, a summer program for high-school students sponsored by the American Legion that focuses on state and local government.

Mayfield concluded the ceremony by acknowledging that following generations have big shoes to fill but said that we should all do our best to continue to carry on honorable traditions.

For those interested in volunteering at the West Jacksonville Health and Rehabilitation Center or to find out more information, contact Althea Kensey at Activities@WestJacksonville.com.

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Wear rules for navy working uniforms expanded

From Chief of Naval Personnel Public Affairs

Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Adm. Jonathan Greenert announced expanded occasion for wear and updated policies for the Navy Working Uniform (NWU) Types I, II and III in NAVADMIN 366/11, released Dec. 2.

There has been a lot of interest throughout the fleet regarding expanding the locations that Sailors can wear the Navy's working uniform. Several weeks ago the CNO asked Vice Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mark Ferguson and Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy Rick West to take a look at the Navy Working Uniform policy.

"Following their review, I am proud to report that we are extending the wear policy of the working uniform to improve the practicality while ensuring professionalism and

maintaining its value," said Greenert. "I want my shipmates to look sharp, be uniform and have the quality they deserve."

The NAVADMIN expands the authorized stops for which NWUs may be worn when commuting to and from home and work, and to allow wear of the NWU during selected events when authorized by regional commanders or commanding officers.

These policies will take effect Jan. 1 for all continental United States, Hawaii and Guam commands.

NWU wear is authorized for commuting and all normal tasks, such as stops at child care centers, gas stations, off-base shopping, banking, at the DMV, and dining before, during and after the workday. Since NWUs are not a liberty uniform, consumption of alcohol while off base in the NWUs is not permitted. Area or

regional commanders may further restrict this policy within their geographic limits.

Additionally, the NWU Type I is authorized for wear by all Commander, Navy Recruiting Command (CNRC) recruiters in the continental United States, Hawaii and Guam.

NWUs are not authorized for wear on commercial travel such as airlines, railways, or buses in the continental United States. However, they may be worn on military and government-contracted flights between military airfield installations, as well as commuter transportation such as city and commuter buses, subways and ferries. The uniforms may also be worn at the Pentagon Metro and Pentagon commuter slug lines.

The NAVADMIN also outlines the manner of wear for the NWU off base. The shirt/blouse is required to be worn at all



Photo by MCI Todd A. Schaffer

Cmdr. Wesley R. Guinn, commanding officer of the Los Angeles-class attack submarine USS Scranton (SSN 756), and Chief of the Boat Master Chief Machinist's Mate Steven Nordman inspect the crew in the new Navy working uniform in 2009. Scranton was the first submarine with all crew members equipped with the new uniforms.

times. Commanders also must ensure grooming standards are enforced.

Trousers must be bloused and the only head gear authorized is the eight point cover and the parka hood must be stowed unless being used. The fleece with chest rank tab is also authorized as a stand-alone outer garment.

Regional commanders will stipulate the wear of the NWU for official ceremonies and functions, such as Fleet Week, celebrations and parades, and sporting events with media interest.

NAVADMIN 259/11 wear rules for these uniforms outside of the continental United States remain in effect.

Navy announces results of enlisted retention board selection process

From Chief of Naval Personnel Public Affairs

A total of 12,261 Sailors reviewed by the Navy Enlisted Retention Board (ERB) were selected for retention, the Navy announced Dec 2.

Additionally, a total of 125 Sailors not selected for retention by the ERB were able to stay Navy after qualifying for a rating conversion. Conversion waivers were introduced in NAVADMIN 160/11 to increase options for ERB-eligible Sailors. Conversion applications were held until the ERB had completed deliberations. Only Sailors not selected for retention in-rate by the ERB were considered for conversion and all applicants had to satisfy eligibility requirements to be considered for the limited number of vacancies in undermanned career fields.

"The decision to establish the ERB

was made after careful consideration," said Vice Adm. Scott Van Buskirk, chief of naval personnel. "Our Sailors have served honorably and we are committed to doing all we can to help them transition."

The ERB was announced earlier this year after record high retention and low attrition among active duty Sailors left the Navy overmanned.

The purpose was to help the Navy rebalance the force in terms of seniority, experience and skills.

The ERB reviewed the records of nearly 16,000 selected third class petty officers through senior chief petty officers from 31 overmanned ratings, who had greater than seven, but less than fifteen years of cumulative service as of October 2011.

The quota-based board was held in two phases. Phase I convened in late

August and reviewed the records of 7,625 Sailors in pay grades E4 and E5. Of the Phase I Sailors reviewed, 5,588 were selected for retention. Of the Sailors reviewed in Phase I, 1,922 Sailors were not selected for retention.

The second phase convened in September and reviewed the records of 7,761 Sailors in pay grades E6, E7 and E8. Of the Sailors reviewed in Phase II, 6,673 were selected for retention. Of the Sailors reviewed in Phase II, 1,025 were not selected for retention.

An additional 53 Sailors who were not selected for retention had their ERB results vacated in accordance with NAVADMIN 129/11, after they were advanced in rate from the September 2011 Navy advancement examination cycle. These Sailors will remain in their current rate.

Navy is taking an active role in help-

ing the Sailors not selected for retention through this transition. Specifically, Navy is offering employment outplacement services and enhanced transition benefits for ERB-affected Sailors who will not be able to serve out the duration of their contract.

Sailors transitioning from the Navy through ERB will also have access to the Navy transition assistance programs, are eligible for involuntary separation pay, and will retain commissary and Navy Exchange privileges for an additional two years after separation. Navy Personnel Command (NPC) established a transition assistance information webpage providing Sailors and leadership a central location to find transition assistance information and resources. The NPC customer service center is also available to assist Sailors in locating transition assistance resources.

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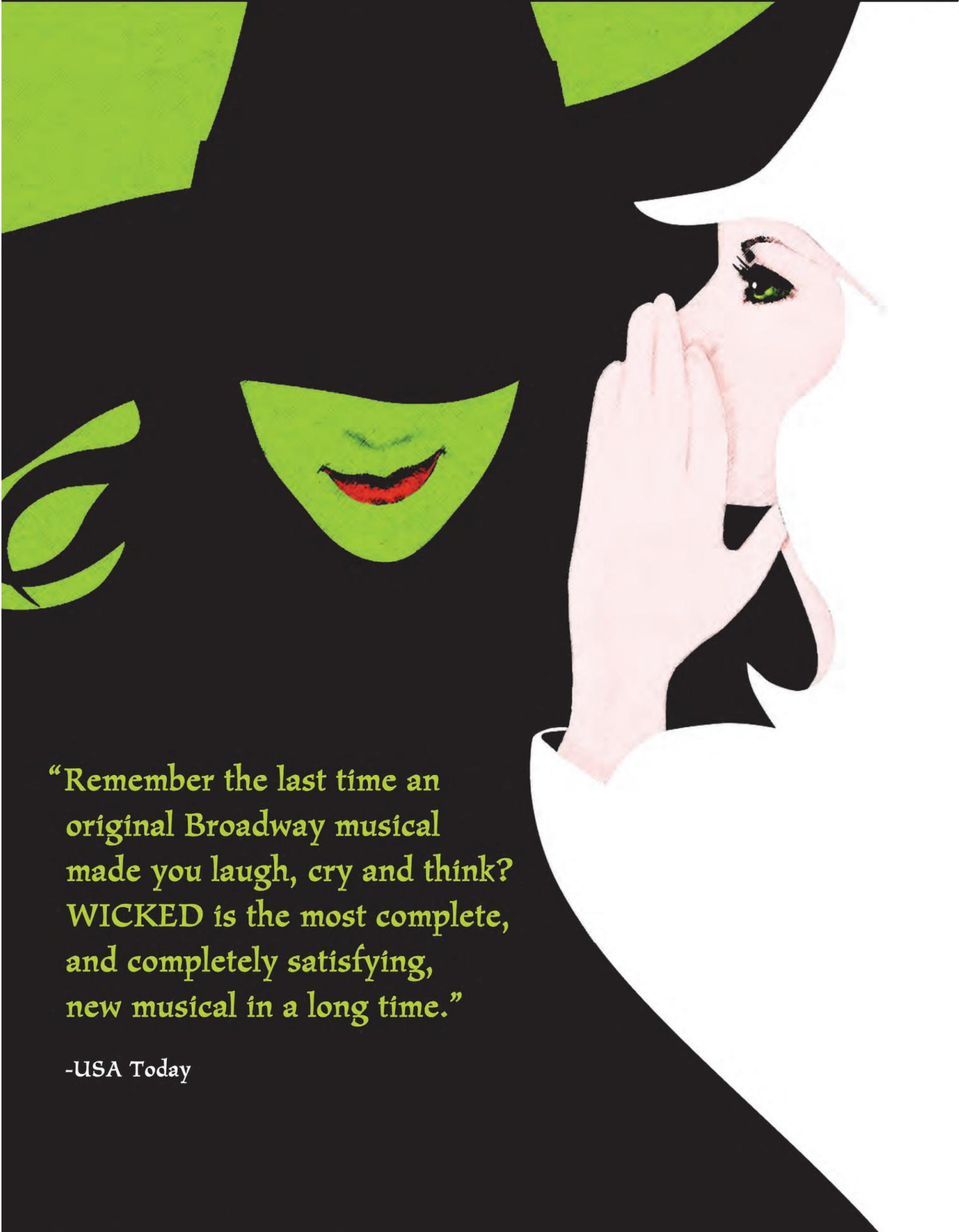


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Photo courtesy of FFSC

Fleet and Family Support Center Financial Specialist Rufus Bundridge gives a class on managing finances to military and civilian personnel Nov. 28. The FFSC offers numerous classes on budgeting and managing money. For more information, call 542-5745.

Watch what you spend during the holidays

By Rufus Bundridge
Fleet and Family Support Center

Thanksgiving is barely over, but the holiday shopping season is in full gear. Consumers previously had a restriction on over spending and imposed a tight grip on their dollars. Every year you find yourself saying, "I will not spend as much money as I did last year." The holidays are a time of year when we all tend to spend too much money. We then find ourselves strapped for cash at the beginning of the year when we should be starting the new year off on the right foot. The following are some tips to save money this holiday season.

Make a budget and stick to it!

Start early - "The early bird catches the worm." In this case the early bird catches the good sales

MWR seeking sponsors

From Staff

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Donate blood, save lives

From Staff

A Florida/Georgia Blood Alliance holiday blood drive on board NAS Jacksonville is scheduled for Dec. 10, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Navy Operational Support Center Jax on Yorktown Avenue.

and you are less stressed towards Christmas time!

Have children make a list of five things they would like to have and choose one to buy.

Instead of buying gifts for the whole family, draw names from a hat and designate established dollar amounts.

Cut costs when planning holiday travel arrangements early. Be flexible on dates and times you are willing to travel.

Find websites with free shipping for you online shoppers.

Do research online to find out where the prod-

uct you are looking for is cheapest.

Think outside of the box for gift ideas like a free yard cleaning or one free car wash.

Remember, the goal is to avoid using credit at all costs. This includes applying for new lines of credit, small loans, or credit cards. Definitely avoid pay day loans to help you make holiday purchases, as it is the downfall which brings future financial burdens.

Finally, by going "cash only" you can stop the overspending trend and begin your New Year on a positive note.

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ERB opportunity: 'Shipmates to Workmates' program

From Naval Sea Systems Command Public Affairs

Now that the Navy is notifying the more than 3,000 Sailors impacted by the Enlisted Retention Board (ERB), six major Navy commands introduced the "Shipmates to Workmates" program to aid transitioning Sailors in competing for job opportunities as federal civilians.

The program - managed jointly by the Naval Sea Systems Command, Naval Air Systems Command, Naval Facilities Command, Naval Supply Systems Command, Commander, Naval Installations, Space and Naval Warfare Command, and the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations - provides information about career opportunities available at partnering commands and actively assists sailors prepare job applications and resumes.

The participating commands will steer separating sailors, command career counselors and transition assistance coordinators to a dedicated Shipmates to Workmates website to facilitate participation. This website will serve as a "one-stop shop" for sailors seeking Navy-related employment.

"Finding out that you are being separated from the Navy, will be a significant blow," said Rear Adm. Clarke Orzalli, vice commander NAVSEA. "The Shipmates to Workmates program is an opportunity to do what we can to soften the blow, as well as continue to utilize their significant skills for the benefit of the Navy."

Through the website and other outreach programs, the effort will attempt to demystify the government service hiring process, match job supply to demand, link existing Navy and Defense Department transition support, and assist qualified sailors with local hiring processes.

"The Shipmates to Workmates program is simply good leadership - this program demonstrates our leadership commitment to our sailors by assisting those being involuntarily separated," said Cmdr. Pat Sanders, NAVSEA's lead for the program.

Each of the participating commands will participate in job fairs and other hiring events for transitioning sailors. Forums are scheduled at fleet concentration areas throughout the country. For more information on the "Shipmates to Workmates" program as well as a full schedule of upcoming career forums, visit the Shipmates to Workmates website at <http://jobs.navy.mil/sm2wm/>.



Photo by Kaylee LaRocque

Holmes retires after 20 years

CSC(SW/AW) Rosalind Holmes of the NAS Jax Flight Line Café is saluted by her sideboys at the end of her retirement ceremony at the base chapel on Dec. 2. Holmes retired from the U.S. Navy after serving 20 years of honorable service.

Winter Holiday Safety

Winter holidays are a time for families and friends to get together. But that also means a greater risk for fire. Following a few simple tips will ensure a happy and fire-safe holiday season.

- HOLIDAY DECORATING**
 - Be careful with holiday decorations. Choose decorations that are flame resistant or flame retardant.
 - Keep lit candles away from decorations and other things that can burn.
 - Use lights that have the label of an independent testing laboratory. Some lights are only for indoor or outdoor use, but not both.
 - Replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections. Connect no more than three strands of mini light sets and a maximum of 50 bulbs for screw-in bulbs.
 - Use clips, not nails, to hang lights so the cords do not get damaged.
 - Keep decorations away from windows and doors.
- HOLIDAY ENTERTAINING**
 - Test your smoke alarms and tell guests about your home fire escape plan.
 - Keep children and pets away from lit candles.
 - Keep matches and lighters up high in a locked cabinet.
 - Stay in the kitchen when cooking on the stovetop.
 - Ask smokers to smoke outside. Remind smokers to keep their smoking materials with them so young children do not touch them.
 - Provide large, deep ashtrays for smokers. Wet cigarette butts with water before discarding.

BEFORE HEADING OUT OR TO BED
Blow out lit candles when you leave the room or go to bed. Turn off all light strings and decorations before leaving home or going to bed.

FACTS

- December is the peak time of year for home candle fires.
- 30% of home fires start in the kitchen.
- Unattended cooking is the leading cause of home fires.

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Balfour Beatty Communities Foundation encourages family housing residents to apply for academic scholarships

By Balfour Beatty Communities

Recognizing the importance of education and its continuing rising costs, Balfour Beatty Communities Foundation is once again offering scholarships for the 2012-2013 academic year to high school and undergraduate students of military members residing in family housing.

“We encourage our family housing residents with high school and undergraduate students to apply for Balfour Beatty Communities Foundation scholarships,” said Chris Williams, president of BBC Foundation, “it’s a difficult economy out there and every bit helps.”

Scholarships are valued up to \$2,500 with the possibility of being larger for exceptional submissions. The application details and requirements can be found at www.bbcommunitiesfoundation.org. The application deadline is April 15, 2012.

The Foundation notes that the requirements for scholarships has changed slightly from years past with new essay questions and the reduction of the number of recommendations students must submit.

Balfour Beatty Communities, responsible for the privatized family housing at **NAS Jacksonville** formed Balfour Beatty Communities Foundation, a non-profit organization committed to honoring military personnel – active, disabled and fallen – and their families in 2009.

One of the primary goals of the Foundation is to promote the pursuit of education and a commitment to community leadership through educational scholarships to the children of active duty military members that reside in family housing.

According to Williams, “Balfour Beatty Communities is committed to providing a quality living environment that supports the diverse interests and needs of our military families. Through Balfour Beatty Communities Foundation, we say thank you for the work that military members do and the sacrifices their families make.”



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■ NASJacksonvilleHomes.com

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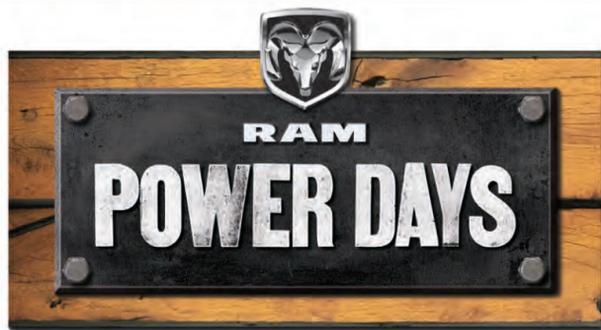


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Military volunteers building homes in Haiti

From Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southeast Public Affairs

Military members from the Resident Officer in Charge of Construction (ROICC) Haiti office spent Veterans Day along side former president and Mrs. Jimmy Carter to work on a Habitat for Humanity project in Leogane, Haiti.

Cmdr. Jeanine Avant, ROICC Haiti and Cmdr. Dewayne Roby along with other volunteers from the U.S. Embassy joined the former President and his wife to complete the construction of 150 "core" homes Veterans Day weekend.

A core home consists of 215 sq. ft. of living space for an average Haitian family of five. The homes have a traditional front porch, combination plywood/concrete masonry block walls with a concrete floor and a corrugated metal roof.

"It breaks one's heart to see the living conditions of Haitian families, especially since the earthquake has forced many of the survivors to live in Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps," said Avant. "I



Photo courtesy of NAVFAC SE

Resident Officer in Charge of Construction Haiti Cmdr. Jeanine Avant and Cmdr. Dewayne Roby spent Veterans Day with other U.S. Embassy workers on Habitat for Humanity projects alongside former President Jimmy Carter and his wife, Rosalyn. The volunteers worked on 150 homes that were built as part of the project in Leogane, Haiti – the epicenter of the January 2010 earthquake.

am happy that we could provide some assistance, although so much more is needed."

Leogane, Haiti is about 20 miles west of Port au Prince where Habitat for Humanity has been involved in con-

structing a permanent housing community near the epicenter of the Jan. 12, 2010 earthquake.

The devastating earthquake killed approximately 300,000 people and destroyed 90 percent of the infrastructure in

Leogane and left thousands of families homeless.

Cmdr. Dewayne Roby, who deployed with the Joint Task Force Haiti immediately after the earthquake in 2010, has seen improvements since that

time, but agrees that there is much more work to be done and is proud to contribute to this effort.

ROICC Haiti was established by Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southeast (NAVFAC SE) in November 2010, as a forward-deployed field office to administer the Haiti Humanitarian Assistance Program (HAP) construction.

Besides ROICC Haiti, a team of project managers, architects/engineers, contract specialists and others support the Haiti HAP projects back at NAVFAC's Facilities Engineering Command in Jacksonville.

The projects are located throughout Haiti to assist the country in preparing for any future natural disasters.

Projects administered by the ROIC include emergency operations centers, disaster relief warehouses, fire stations, and community clusters which will provide the local leaders the ability to coordinate and effectively respond to emergencies and provide necessary relief to the Haitian people.

The Jacksonville Pacers AAU basketball organization is currently seeking serious players. Girls grades 7-11 seeking a tryout, please call Coach Martin at 608-5327.

Planet Fitness 5K and 10K run will be held Dec. 11 at 8 a.m. beginning at the University of North Florida. The event benefits the Wounded Warrior Project. For more information, go to: www.pfjaxroadraces.com.

Fight for Air Climb Jacksonville, benefiting the American Lung Association, will be Feb. 4, at the Bank of America Tower in downtown Jacksonville. This event is the only competitive stair climb on the First Coast and is held in the city's tallest building comprised of 42 floors and 838 steps. To register: www.fightforairclimb.org or call (904) 520-7123.

The USS Iwo Jima Shipmates Reunion will be held June 6-10 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in McLean, Va. For more information, call (757) 723-0317.

Military Officers Association of America N.E. Florida Chapter meets the third Wednesday of each month at 6 p.m. at the NAS Jax Officers' Club. Open to active duty and retired officers of all services. RSVP to Rear Adm. Dan Lestage at 264-6542 or daniel.lestage@comcast.net

National Naval Officers Association

meets the fourth Thursday of each month at 5 p.m. at the Urban League, 903 W. Union Street. Contact Lt. Cmdr. Paul Nix at 422-8480 or email Paul24navy@aol.com.

Disabled American Veterans Chapter 38 meets the second Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. at 470 Madeira Dr., Orange Park. Service officers available Monday thru Friday 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. to help with VA claims, call 269-2945 for an appointment. Bingo every Thursday from 6:30-9:30 p.m. and Saturday from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. The public is welcome.

Navy Wives Clubs of America Jax No. 86 meets the first Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. in Building 857 (at NAS Jax main gate behind Navy Marine Corps Relief Society). Not So New Shop open Tuesday and Thursday (9 a.m. to 1 p.m.). Call 542-1582 for info.

Navy Wives Clubs of America DID No. 300 meets the second Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Oak Crest United Methodist Church Education Building at 5900 Ricker Road. Call 387-4332 or 272-9489.

Fleet Reserve Association Branch 290 monthly meeting is the first Thursday at 8 p.m., 390 Mayport Rd., Atlantic Beach. Call

246-6855.

COMPASS Spouse-to-Spouse Military Mentoring Program by Naval Services Family Line. Help others help themselves. Call Melanie at 904-200-7751 or email: COMPASSmayport@NSFamilyLine.org

Association of Aviation Ordnancemen meets the third Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Fleet Reserve Center on Collins Road. For information, call AOC John Newman at 683-5407 or visit www.aao9.com.

Retired Activities Office (RAO) at NAS Jax Fleet and Family Support Center (FFSC) needs volunteers to assist military retirees and dependents. Work three hours a day, one day per week. Call 542-2766 ext. 126 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. weekdays to volunteer.

Navy Jacksonville Yacht Club meets the first Wednesday of every month at 7:30 p.m. at the clubhouse (Building 1956) adjacent to Mulberry Cove Marina. Open to active duty, reserve and retired military, plus, active

or retired DoD civilians. Call 778-0805 or email commodore@njyc.org.

Orange Park Lions Club meets the second and fourth Monday at 7 p.m. at 423 McIntosh Avenue, Orange Park, Fla. For more information, call 298-1967.

National Active and Retired Federal Employees Westside Jacksonville Chapter 1984 meets at 1 p.m. on the fourth Thursday of each month at the Murray Hill United Methodist Church, (Fellowship Hall Building) at 4101 College Street. Call 786-7083.

National Active and Retired Federal Employees Clay County Chapter 1414 meets at 12:30 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month at the Orange Park Library, 2054 Plainfield Avenue. Call 276-9415.

Ladies Auxiliary of Fleet Reserve Unit 126 meets the second Thursday of each month at 10 a.m. at the Fleet Reserve Building, 7673 Blanding Blvd. Call 771-6850.

Retired Enlisted Association meets the fourth Wednesday of each month at 1 p.m. at the Fleet Reserve Hall at 7673 Blanding Blvd. Call 772-8622 or 771-8696.

Community Calendar

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MA2 Cher Horton of the NAS Jax Security Department makes some adjustments on the NAS Jax Security/Honor Support Team's Christmas tree during the Festival of Trees event Dec. 1 at the Navy Exchange Courtyard.



The Navy Operational Support Center Jax was the first place winner in the Festival of Trees competition earning \$500 for their Morale, Welfare and Recreation Fund.



AT2(AW/SW) Marnicca Perry and AT1(AW/SW) Alfred Arzuagua of the Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training Unit Jax add some finishing touches to their command's Christmas tree.

NAS Jax holds Festival of Trees

By Kaylee LaRocque
NAS Jax Deputy PAO

Twelve NAS Jacksonville commands and departments participated in a Festival of Trees contest sponsored by the Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) Department and Navy Exchange. A short ceremony was held Dec. 1 to announce the three top winners of the competition.

Placing first was the Navy Operational Support Center which received a check for \$500 towards their MWR fund.

The NAS Jax Security Department/Honor Support Team's tree was selected for second place earning them \$300 and the Navy Jax Yacht Club placed third earning them \$200.

The theme for the tree decorating was "patriotism."

The trees were judged on overall presentation, creativity, implementation of the theme and command representation.

"This event has provided a great opportunity to not only participate in a fun holiday event, but also give you and your commands the chance to show your holiday spirit, camaraderie and be represented in a high traffic area," said NAS Jax Commanding Officer Capt. Jeffrey Maclay during the event.

Photos by Kaylee LaRocque



The NAS Jax Security/Honor Support Tree placed second in the Festival of Trees competition with the department earning \$300 for their Morale, Welfare and Recreation fund. From left, NAS Jax Commanding Officer Capt. Jeffrey Maclay, MA2 Cher Horton, GSM1(SW) Wanda Johnson, Navy Exchange representative Joy Turner and Youth Activities Center Director Aaron Long.



The Navy Jax Yacht Club (NJYC) placed third in the Festival of Trees competition earning the club \$200. From left, Navy Exchange representative Joy Turner, NJYC Commodore David Bailey, Jeannie Bailey, Youth Activities Director Aaron Long, NJYC Vice Commodore Bob Quick and NAS Jax Commanding Officer Capt. Jeffrey Maclay.

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Photos by Joe Carreiro

Turkey Trot Golf Tournament



(From left) The winners of the NAS Jax Golf Course annual Turkey Trot Golf Tournament Roasted Flight: Scott Close, Les Hatfield, Steve Rawson and Lyndle Franklin.

Nearly 50 golfers participated in the annual NAS Jax Golf Course Turkey Trot Golf Tournament on Nov. 23.



The winners of the Turkey Trot Golf Tournament Smoked Flight were (from left) Tom Carpenter, John Curran, Chuck Ayars and John Adams.

NAS Jax Sports

Captain's Cup 3-on-3 Basketball Tourney – Dec. 12

Open to active duty, selective reservists command DoD and DoD contractors from NAS Jax. Teams are comprised of a maximum four players from their respective commands and can enter multiple teams. The tournament starts at 5 p.m. at the NAS Jax Gym. Sign up by Dec. 9.

Jingle Bell Jog 5K – Dec. 15, 11:30 a.m.

Run is free to all authorized gym patrons and is also a Captain's Cup event. Sign up at the NAS Jax Gymnasium or the Fitness Source by Dec. 9 and you may receive a T-shirt for registering early. The run starts on Perimeter Road before the Antenna Farm at the end of Mustin Road at 11:30 a.m. Registration will also be held at the race site from 10:30-11:15 a.m.

4-on-4 Flag Football League forming

Open to all NAS Jax active duty, command DoD, DoD contractors and selective reservists. Stop by the base gymnasium to get the rules and the required paperwork. The league starts at the end of January and will play in the evenings.

For more information, call Bill Bonser at 542-2930/3239 or e-mail bill.bonser@navy.mil.

Team	Wins	Losses
NAVFAC 5	1	4
NAVFAC 6	1	5
MWR – Red	0	1
VR-58	0	6

Intramural Fall Basketball Standings

Team	Wins	Losses
CNRSE	3	0
VP-30 AV/ARM	3	0
ASD	2	0
Naval Hospital 300	2	0
Naval Hospital	2	1
VP-8	2	1
VP-30 O's	2	1
BHC	1	1
VP-5	1	1
HSL-42	1	2
NMC	1	2
FRCSE 400	0	2
125 FW	0	3
FRCSE 900	0	3
VP-30 E's	0	3

Greybeard Fall Basketball Standings

Team	Wins	Losses
Naval Hospital	1	0
NCTS	2	1
SERCC	2	1
VP-8	2	1
CNATTU	1	2
HSM-74	1	2
FRCSE	1	3

Standings

As of Dec. 2

Badminton Doubles Standings

Team	Wins	Losses
Naval Hospital	5	1
MWR – Blue	5	1
NCTS	5	1
CNATTU	3	1
NAVFAC 2	3	1
NAVFAC 4	3	2
NAVFAC 3	4	3
NAVFAC 1	1	3

Hot shot at NAS Jax Golf Club

From Staff

Hole in one
Keith Hall: No. 9 Blue, 136 Yards, 9 iron



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Texas Hold'em Tournament
Monday & Thursday at 7 p.m.

Bean Bag Toss
Wednesday at 7 p.m.

Play Bingo at lunch
Monday - Friday at 11:15 a.m.
Evening sessions are Sunday, Monday, Tuesday and Thursday at 6:30 p.m.
Cash prizes!

New Year's Day Bingo
\$150 per person
Doors open at 11 a.m., games begin at 1 p.m.

NFL Sunday Ticket
At the Bud Brew House
12:30 p.m. - close
\$.50 wings! Beverage specials!

FREEDOM LANES BOWLING CENTER
Call 542-3493.

Wednesday
Free bowling for active duty
11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Wednesday Bowling Special
\$.95 all you can bowl 4 - 10 p.m., shoe rental not included

Rising Stars Youth League
Begins December 10
League plays on Saturday mornings at 10:30 a.m.

New Year's Eve Extreme Bowling Party
December 31, 7 p.m. - 1 a.m.
\$15 per person, \$20 after Dec. 29
Includes bowling, shoe rental, music, party favors, pizza, midnight toast and breakfast buffet!
Full lanes may be reserved by purchasing 6 tickets.

New Year Bowling Specials
January 1, 1- 6 p.m.
\$1.50 games all day
Shoe rental not included
January 2, 4 - 10 p.m.
\$.95 all you can bowl, shoe rental included

FITNESS & AQUATICS
Call 542-2930

Indoor pool is now open regular hours
Monday-Friday
5:30 - 8 a.m.
11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
4:30 - 8 p.m.
Weekend hours
11 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Command Circuit Training
Tuesday & Thursday
7 - 8 a.m. in the Base Gym
45 Minute high intensity group training

Jingle Bell Jog
December 15 at 11:30 a.m.
Pre-register ends December 9
Day of race registration 10:30 - 11:15 a.m.

40,000 Calories of Christmas
Now through January 22
Two person teams! Prizes awarded!

I.T.T. EVENTS
Call 542-3318.

Ringling Bros. Barnum & Bailey Circus
January 20 - 22
\$13 per person

ITT is now booking Sandals Resorts, all inclusive vacations!

The Gaylord Palms Resort is now offering a preferred rate for ITT customers. The resort is located just 1 mile from Walt Disney World theme park! Rates include Ice and Snow tickets.

St. Augustine "Nights of the Lights"
Adult \$7 - Child \$4

Amelia Island Attractions
Holiday Home Tour - \$20; Ghost Tour

Adult \$8 - Child \$4; Pub Crawl \$23;
Museum Family Pass \$10

College Bowl Games - Gator Bowl \$35 and Capital Bowl \$74

Jax Zoo Train, Carousel tickets and Jax Zoo Spooktacular - now available at ITT!

Jacksonville Zoo - Adult \$12, Child \$7
Jacksonville Symphony - \$27.50
Wild Adventures Theme Park - 1 day pass - \$28.25
Stone Mountain Georgia - \$20.75
Georgia Aquarium \$16.50-\$22
Jacksonville Symphony - \$27.50

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Blue Man Group in Orlando - \$48, includes free admission to select CityWalk venues.

Disney World - Orlando, Florida
Due to the success of the Disney Salute, the expiration dates of the tickets have been extended until September 27, 2012. If you have already purchased and used the six allotted 2011 salute tickets, you may purchase an additional six tickets.

Disney ITT prices for military families:
\$135.50 for a 4 Day ticket with Park Hopper Option
\$135.50 for a 4 Day ticket with Water Park Fun & More
\$162 for a 4 Day ticket with both Park Hopper AND Water Park Fun & More

The Artist Series - Broadway in Jacksonville
2011-2012 Season (First Orchestra seating) - Wicked, Beauty and The Beast, Jersey Boys, and Les Miserables.

Jacksonville Jaguar tickets - Section 146 and 147
\$58.50
Jag Game Day Shuttle - \$12 per person

Legoland 1 day \$39.50; 2 day \$48.50

Daytona 500
February 18 - 26, 2012 - \$27 to \$199

Daytona Bike Week
March 10 & 17 2012 - \$25

Monster Jam - March 3, 2012
\$25 - \$41

Gator Bowl Patches \$5
Includes saving at local restaurants, amusement parks, golf course and more!

MOSH \$7 - \$12

LIBERTY COVE RECREATION

Trips, activities and costs may be restricted to E1-E6 single or unaccompanied active duty members. Call 542-3491 for information.

FREE Airport Shuttle
December 14 - January 12
Sign-up at Liberty Vault

Indoor Rock Climbing
December 10
Departs Liberty Vault at 1:30 p.m.

Free Jaguars Game
December 11
Departs Liberty Vault at 11 a.m.

Dave & Busters Trip
December 15
Departs Liberty Vault at 6 p.m.

NAS JAX GOLF CLUB
Golf course info: 542-3249
Mulligan's info: 542-2936

Military Appreciation Days
\$18 per person, includes cart & green fees
December 13 & 27 for active duty
December 15 & 29 for retirees & DoD personnel

Mulligan's Kids Night
Thursday - Purchase a regular priced meal and kids (12 and under) receive a regular item at 1/2 price or a free kid's menu item.

December Special
Play 18-holes with cart for only \$17
Monday - Friday after 12 p.m.
Not valid on holidays

Monday & Tuesday December Special
Play 18-holes for \$20
Cart and green fees included
Not valid on holidays

Winter Solstice Special

December 22
Play 18-holes for \$17
Cart and green fees included

Santa Sez Golf Tournament
December 22, 10 a.m. shotgun start
\$45 military, \$55 civilian guests

MULBERRY COVE MARINA
Call 542-3260.

Free Kayak & Canoe Rental
Every Thursday for active duty

AUTO SKILLS CENTER
Call 542-3227

YOUTH ACTIVITIES CENTER
Call 778-9772

Holiday Camp Dates
Week 1 - Dec 19 - 23
Week 2 - Dec 25 - 30

Movie under the Stars featuring The Polar Express
December 9 at dusk
Patriot's Grove
Free admission & popcorn!
\$.50 drinks

Tropical Freeze
December 17 at the Mulberry Cove Marina
Noon - 4 p.m.
Free snow sledding, musical entertainment, snacks and beverages

Children's Holiday Bingo
The Zone
December 17
Doors open at 4 p.m., games begin at 5 p.m.
\$10 per person
Children must be able to daub on their own
Gift cards awarded as prizes

FLYING CLUB
Call 777-8549 /6035

Flying Club
Ground School
January 9 - February 15
\$500 per person

December Special
20% discount on aircraft rentals
Monday - Thursday
Cannot be combined with other discounts
New member's initiation fees waived! A saving of \$75 - \$125!

TROPICAL FREEZE
December 17
12 - 4pm
FREE
Snow Sledding, musical entertainment & Refreshments
Call 778-9772 for more details.

Then head on over to The Zone for

Children's Holiday Bingo
Doors open at 4pm
Games start at 5pm
\$10 per child
Ages 17 and under must be able to daub on their own.
Includes Bingo cards, dauber, hot dog, chips and a drink.
Gift cards awarded as prizes!
For more information call 542-5007.

THE Daily Commuter Puzzle by Jacqueline E. Mathews

ACROSS
1 Walking on ___; elated
4 Pinnacles
9 "Get lost!"
13 Very dry
15 Bird's tweet
16 Vagabond
17 Conceal
18 Cuban dance
19 On ___ toes; alert
20 Isolation
22 Understands
23 At ___; relaxed
24 African antelope
26 Posture; position
29 Settler residing in a new land
34 Explorer ___ de Leon
35 Assumption; thing taken for granted
36 Poor grade
37 Opie's pa
38 Dwelt
39 Norton & Berry
40 Even score
41 Start
42 Bread ingredient
43 On cloud nine
45 Cereal grass
46 Word of disgust
47 Rotate
48 Heroic story
51 Lawyers
56 Filthy buildup
57 Public uprisings
58 Go first
60 In the past
61 Muse with vengeful delight
62 Wise man
63 Celebrity
64 Shouts
65 Hee-___; bray

DOWN
1 Ooh and ___ over; admire
2 Often-purple showy flower
3 Go by car, e.g.
4 Point the finger at
5 Selected
6 Very short skirt
7 Therefore
8 "The Star-___ Banner"
9 Japanese military governor
10 Ice cream scoop holder
11 Aid in crime
12 Fling
14 Respectable behavior
21 "Arsenic and Old ___"
25 Prefix for fat or profit
26 Large amount rushing in
27 Pick-me-up
28 Chile's range
29 Do one's ___ duty; vote, e.g.
30 Microwave ___
31 Perfect
32 Intelligence
33 Quick to anger

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13			14		15				16		
17					18				19		
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60					61				62		
63					64				65		

Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews 12/8/11

THIS WEEKS ANSWERS

M	V	H	S	T	T	E	A	R	V	I	S					
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T	A	V	S	C	A	S	S	E	M	A	V	H	I	A		

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35 Oscar-winning Leslie Caron movie
38 Listlessness
39 Pieces of corn
41 Sack
42 Tale
44 ___ out; get tired
45 Explodes
47 Sum
48 Personalities
49 Football kick
50 Peruvian Indian
52 Flooring piece
53 Chisel or saw
54 Slangy reply
55 Long story
59 Morning drops

Panetta, defense leaders celebrate naval aviation

By Donna Miles
American Forces Press Service

Defense Secretary Leon Panetta commemorated the 100th anniversary of naval aviation Dec. 2, praising military aviators' boldness and courage and expressing hope that Congress will draw inspiration from it in tackling the nation's financial challenges.

Speaking at the Naval Aviation Centennial Gala here, the secretary expressed concern about additional, automatic across-the-board cuts the Defense Department could face if Congress doesn't take action in the next year.

Those cuts, if implemented, would undercut all of the department's strategy-driven efforts, he said, and he called on Congress to draw inspiration from the aviation community and put partisanship aside to find a solution to the country's fiscal problems.

"If our aviators, if our men and women in uniform, are willing to put their lives on the line, are willing to fight and to die for this country, then surely our elected leaders should be able to take a small risk in order to do what's right for this country," he said.

Panetta joined a long list of aviation luminaries and military and defense leaders in paying tribute to the achievements naval aviators have made since aviation pioneer Eugene Ely first launched from the bow of the Navy test ship Pennsylvania in 1911.

"Boldness has been at the heart of our aviators ever since," he said, and remains critical as aviation assets provide a capability "absolutely essential to projecting power overseas."

While providing "an unrivaled force" on the seas, the secretary noted, their contribution also extends inland. "In Afghanistan, hundreds of miles from the nearest sea, carrier aviation assets account for fully half of all air combat missions and one-third of close air support for our troops in contact with the



DOD photo by Erin A. Kirk-Cuomo

Secretary of Defense Leon E. Panetta delivers the keynote address at the Centennial Commemorative Gala for Naval Aviation at the National Building Museum on December 1, 2011 in Washington D.C. Secretary Panetta spoke of the leadership and valor that naval aviators from the Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard have shown over the last 100 years.

enemy," he said.

Meanwhile, aviation assets provide critical relief in times of crisis, he added, recalling his visit last month to USS Blue Ridge, which dispatched helicopters loaded with food, water and supplies via helicopter after Japan's devastating earthquake and tsunami.

"All this takes a talented team of more than just pilots," Panetta said. He recognized the forward air controllers, logistics specialists, maintainers, rescue swimmers, crew chiefs and weapons system specialist who are integral parts of the naval aviation community.

"They, too, are the heroes we celebrate tonight," he said.

That boldness will remain critical to maintaining air superiority into the future, he told the group. "We need the entire military to be bold - to take the offensive, to innovate, to embrace risk," he said.

That, Panetta said, includes adapting - not only to a changing strategic

environment, but also to a new period of fiscal constraint.

As the department focuses on building a strong military for the future while meeting its fiscal responsibilities, Panetta offered assurance that it will remain the world's best military while keeping faith with troops and their families.

Navy Secretary Ray Mabus, Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Jonathan W. Greenert, Assistant Marine Corps Commandant Gen. Joseph Dunford Jr., Coast Guard Commandant Adm. Robert J. Papp Jr. and Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Adm. James A. Winnefeld Jr. all joined Panetta last

night in paying tribute to a century of naval aviation.

Mabus noted the vision that has guided naval aviation for the past century. "[It] has adapted, grown and evolved over the past 100 years," he said. "It is continuing to do so, and due to the courage, skill and professionalism of every sailor and marine, naval aviation will remain an integral part of the most formidable expeditionary fighting force the world has ever known."

Greenert recognized that people - not equipment or technology - are the heart of naval aviation. "As we turn our focus to the future, it is important that we remain focused on winning today and in the future, always work together to provide offshore options for our nation, and utilize our diverse and talented force responsibly when employing our resources," he said.

Dunford, who said he has witnessed aviators flying into harm's way to support troops under attack or provide lifesaving medical evacuation support, thanked the community for its strict code of honor to its comrades.

Papp recognized the commitment aviators repeatedly demonstrate as they put themselves into harm's way to protect or save others.

Winnefeld, a career aviator, congratulated the aviation community for its first century of successes and looked to the future with a live video feed from USS George H.W. Bush as it transits home after its first deployment.

"You are the best," Panetta summarized in his address to the aviation community. "You are great citizens. You are great warriors. You are great patriots."

First lady kicks off holiday season with military families

By Elaine Sanchez
American Forces Press Service

In a gesture of gratitude for their service and sacrifice, First Lady Michelle Obama invited military families, including families of the military fallen -- to be among the first to see the White House decked out for this year's holiday season.

This holiday season, she said, the White House is offering a special tribute to those who serve.

Among the White House's 37 Christmas trees scattered along the visitor tour route are two special Christmas trees intended to honor service members and their families.

The official White House Christmas tree is a towering 18-foot balsam fir in the Blue Room and is a salute to service members of all branches.

The tree is decorated with holiday cards created by military children around the world; service medals, badges and patches; and military images adorned with pinecone frames and ribbons.

Some of those cards are inspiring, Obama said, sharing one of the written messages. Five children in Medical Lake, Wash., wrote, "No matter how many Christmases our dad misses, he makes every Christmas special and we love him."

In another card is a more matter-of-fact message, the first lady noted. "Hey Dad, it's cool you're in Italy. So when are you coming back, because I already know what I want for Christmas."

A Gold Star Christmas tree, bright with gold star ornaments and framed Purple Heart medals, graces the visitor's entrance on the East Wing landing. The tree was decorated by families of military fallen and features photos of fallen heroes and messages from their loved ones.

A mom from Anchorage, Alaska, wrote this note to her son, Obama said: "I love and miss you, son. Thank you for all of the great memories we shared."

The tree is surrounded with photos and stories from more than 800 Gold Star families, the first lady noted.

"Each one showcases the strength and resilience that characterizes our Gold Star families," she said.

In the coming weeks, visitors to the White House will be able to write notes to service members to express their gratitude, and Gold Star families will be invited to inscribe a ceramic gold star ornament with a personalized note.

These families deserve the gratitude of a thankful nation, the first lady said, particularly in light of the sacrifices they make each day. Spouses are raising kids alone while their loved ones are deployed and their children are taking on extra responsibilities to help. And she's been inspired, she said, by the survivors of the fallen who continue to give back to their communities.

Americans need to hear these stories, she said, and to understand what it's like to be a military family.

The Joining Forces campaign is intended to do just that, she said. The first lady and Dr. Jill Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden, started the initiative earlier this year to raise awareness of military families' sacrifices and to rally Americans around them.

"We wanted to make sure that never again would someone have to ask the question: What is a Gold Star family and what does that sacrifice mean," she said.

"We all should know."

Obama said that's one of the reasons the troops and their families are highlighted at the White House this holiday season.

The first lady wrapped up with her own message of gratitude.

"I want to thank all of the Gold Star families for your enduring strength and commitment to this country," she said.

"And I want to thank all of the troops, all of our veterans, all of our military families, whose service and sacrifice inspires us all."

The first lady then invited the military children lining the front rows to decorate holiday cookies and ornaments with her in the State Dining Room. She iced cookies alongside them as she praised their festive creations.

The military families also toured holiday decorations in several of the White House's ornate rooms. A big attraction was the White House gingerbread house, which is made up of 400 pounds of gingerbread, white chocolate and marzipan.

But Obama's dog, Bo, upstaged even the gingerbread house. Scattered throughout the tour route are five Bo topiaries made of various materials such as felt, buttons, pom-poms, candy, and even trash bags.

As the children did their crafts, they had the opportunity to compare the fake first dogs with the real deal when the first lady brought Bo to the State Dining Room for a visit.

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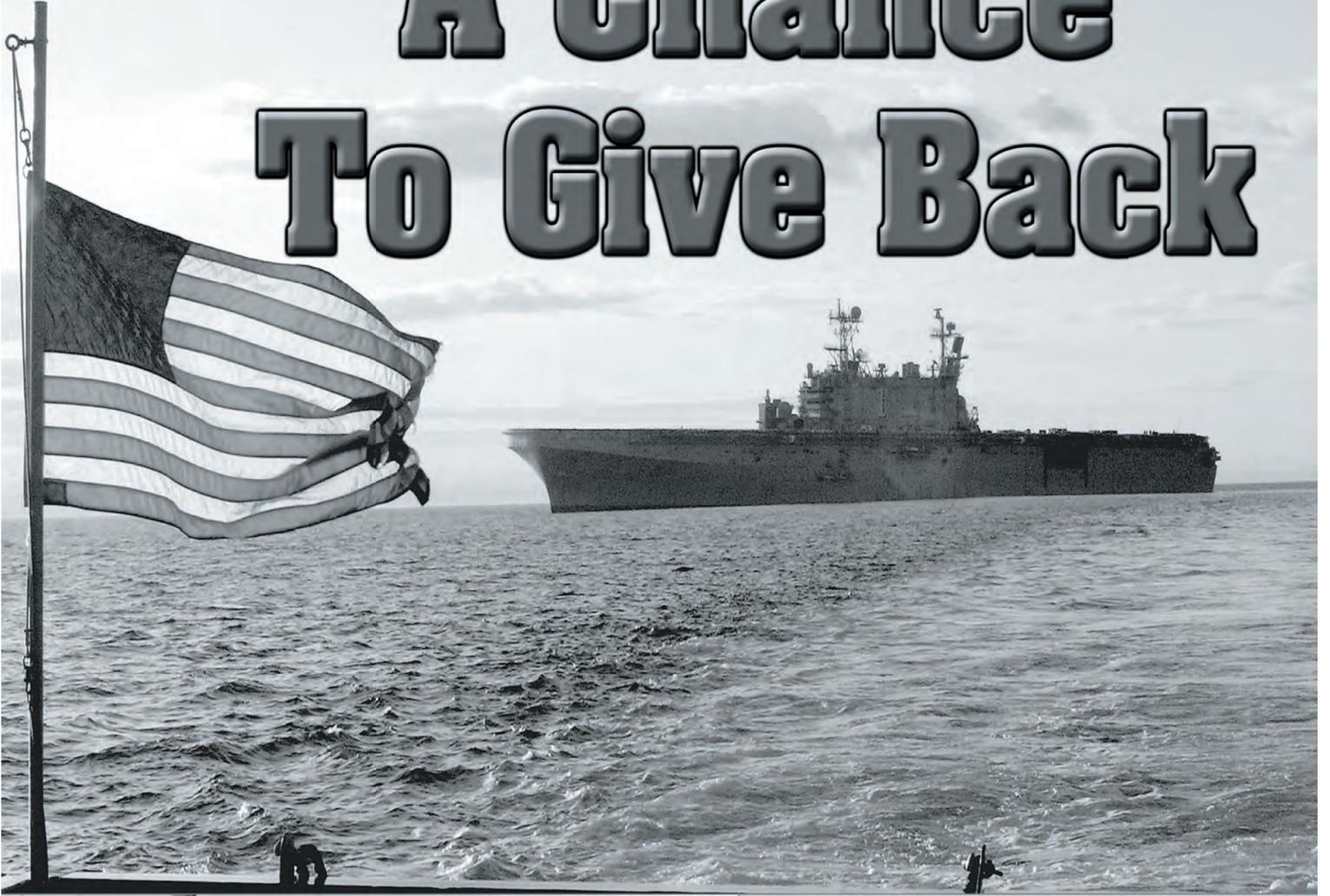
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ARLINGTON Adobe Apts - 1 Br \$455, 2BR \$655. Call 904-745-0450 Near Town & Country Shop Center

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ORANGE PARK 3/2 garage, close to shopping, small pet ok. \$875. Call 904-215-1270

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4br/2ba, 2cg, w/d hkup, all appl's stay, lg front & back yd, fncd bck yard. Orange Park close to NAS JAX. \$1100m+dp. 904-403-4914

ARGYLE - 3/2, Living Room, Dining Room, Split BR, ceiling fans, fenced yard. \$895mo + dep. 904-403-4914

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