

ALL HANDS

Celebrating One Hundred Years

MAGAZINE OF THE U.S. NAVY

FEBRUARY 2022



A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR AND STAFF

Every month, we focus on the Navy's mission-focused people and technologies. As we survey how our naval forces continue to train, fight and equip the world's toughest Sailors, we look at our advantage at sea and the capabilities of Sailors deployed around the world.

It is our mission to reach Sailors, so please share this issue, scan the QR codes, and follow our social media channels for the latest information for Sailors by Sailors.



ALL HANDS MAGAZINE

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ENAVFIT ANNOUNCED FOR THE ACTIVE COMPONENT OF THE FLEET

From Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Chad Swysgood



The Chief of Naval Personnel (CNP) released NAVADMIN 004/22 announcing eNavFit for the active component of the Fleet starting in February 2022.

With eNavFit's release to both the active and reserve force, the Navy's Talent Management Task Force (TMTF) has delivered the first in a series of Performance Evaluation Transformation and Talent Management (PET-TM) programs designed to better develop, assess and retain top talent in the Navy.

Upon release, active component Sailors can access eNavFit through BUPERS Online (BOL) within Navy Personnel Command Document Services. eNavFit enables Sailors to draft, edit, electronically route, and digitally sign performance evaluations with electronic submission to the Sailor's Official Military Personnel File in a matter of days. eNavFit was designed to operate in both traditional office and disconnected environments. The functionality of eNavFit will improve report accuracy, timeliness, and quality as well as reduce evaluation processing, submission errors, and routing delays. NAVFIT98A is scheduled to sunset in late fiscal year 2022.

"Currently, Sailors have to wait up to two weeks after the report reaches PERS-32 to see their evaluations appear in their official records," said CDR Beau Bennett, eNavFit team lead. "eNavFit is poised to reduce that time down to a matter of days. And because it has robust policy validation built into the interface, we should see a dramatic decrease in the number of rejected reports."

In addition to being a technological improvement, eNavFit is also a critical bridge to future improvements. "eNavFit is an important step toward modernizing the Navy's performance management system overall," said CAPT Ben Baran, PET-TM coordinator. "We are also working hard on steadily improving our performance management system into one that truly incentivizes, develops, and assesses the behaviors needed throughout the Navy to outthink and outfight any adversary while cultivating a culture of warfighting excellence rooted in our core values."

Led by RDML Michael Schwerin, Deputy Commander, Navy Personnel Command, the TMTF is working several key talent management initiatives focused on improving the Navy's performance evaluation system and re-invigorating our culture for Sailor development through timely, honest, and actionable performance feedback and developmental conversations. The end state of the TMTF is to ensure effective Sailor development that retains the best and fully qualified Sailors, in the right assignments, to maximize the warfighting effectiveness of the Navy.

Performance evaluation training materials including an eNavFit user guide, video tutorials, and quick reference cards can be found via the MyNavy HR [website](#).

For more information, the full NAVADMIN can be found [here](#).

NAVY EXTENDS BOOT CAMP TRAINING TO 10 WEEKS

From Naval Service Training Command Public Affairs



RECRUIT TRAINING COMMAND (RTC), THE NAVY'S ENLISTED BOOT CAMP, HAS EXTENDED THE DURATION OF ITS BASIC MILITARY TRAINING (BMT) PROGRAM FROM EIGHT TO 10 WEEKS.

Recruits who arrived Jan. 3 and thereafter will be enrolled in the 10-week BMT program.

"We've added more leadership and professional development to the basic training toolkit, which Sailors can rely on throughout their careers," said Rear Adm. Jennifer Couture, commander, Naval Service Training Command. "This additional training reinforces character development with a warfighting spirit so our Navy is strong, lethal and ready."

"Sailor for Life," a new training phase in the additional two weeks, provides recruits with more training in mentorship, small-unit leadership, advanced Warrior Toughness training, and professional and personal development through the Navy's MyNavy Coaching initiative.

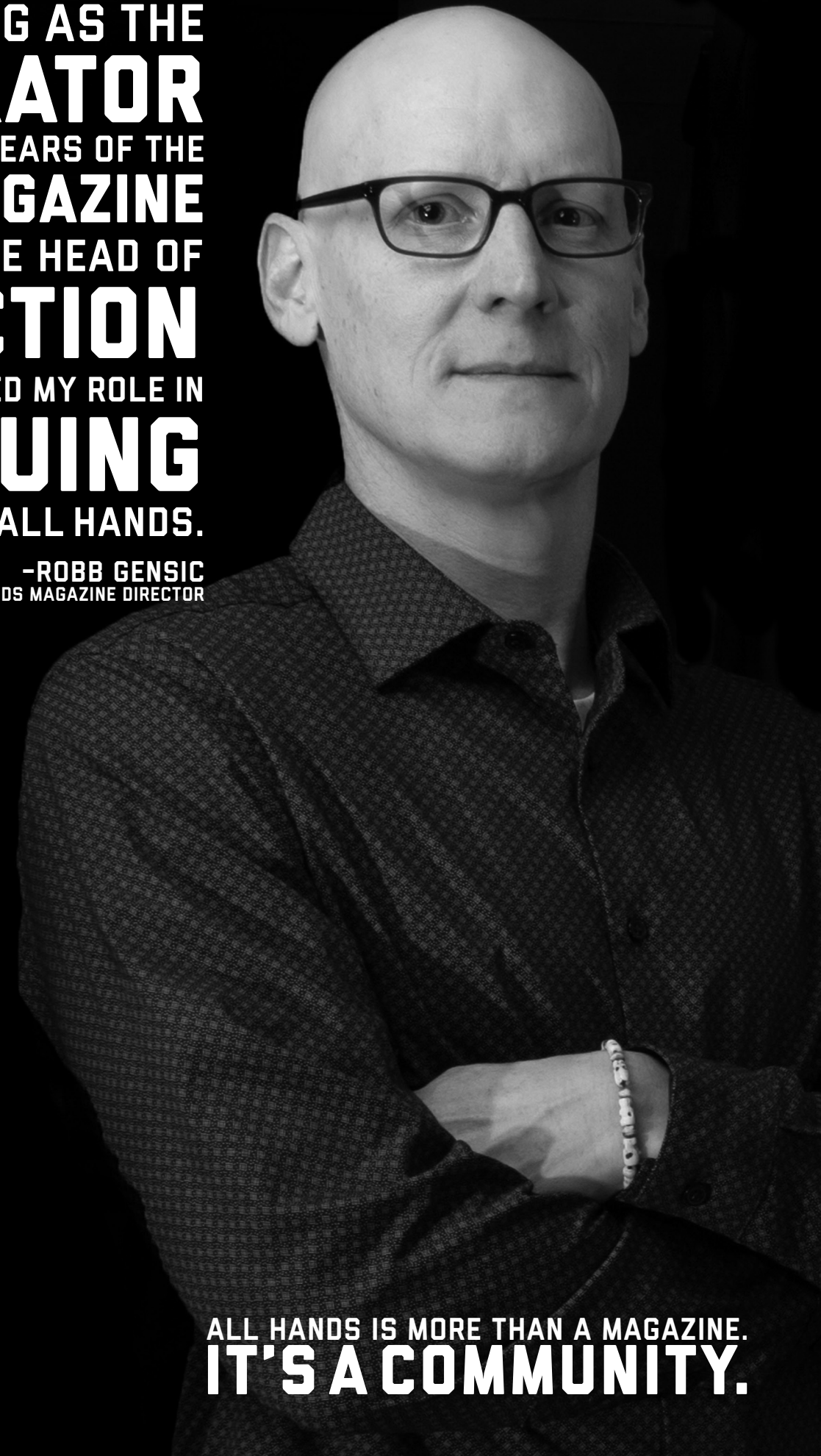
"The additions were the result of fleet feedback and the hard work of all the staff here at RTC and throughout the Navy," said Lt. Cmdr. Katy Bock, military training director, Recruit Training Command. "Every recruit now graduates with more tools and skills to make them more effective and combat ready Sailors."

Recruit Training Command continually builds on what it means to be a basically trained Sailor. The 10-week BMT program enhances Recruit Training Command's ability to supply the Navy with basically trained, engaged and connected warfighters.

For more information about Recruit Training Command, click [here](#).

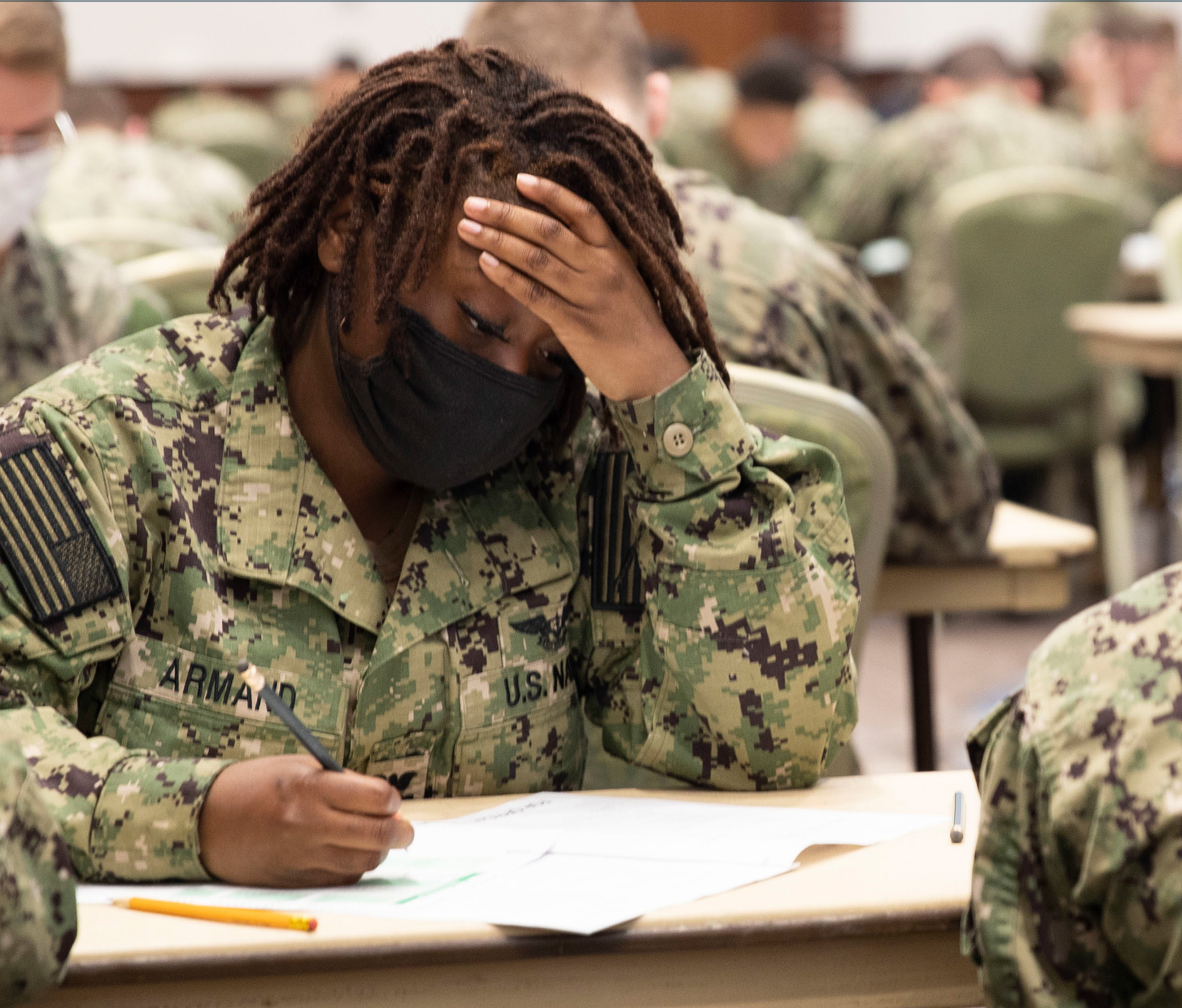
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DURING THE FINAL YEARS OF THE
PRINTED MAGAZINE
TO BECOMING THE HEAD OF
PRODUCTION
I HAVE TRULY ENJOYED MY ROLE IN
CONTINUING
THE TRADITION OF ALL HANDS.

-ROBB GENSIC
ALL HANDS MAGAZINE DIRECTOR



ALL HANDS IS MORE THAN A MAGAZINE.
IT'S A COMMUNITY.

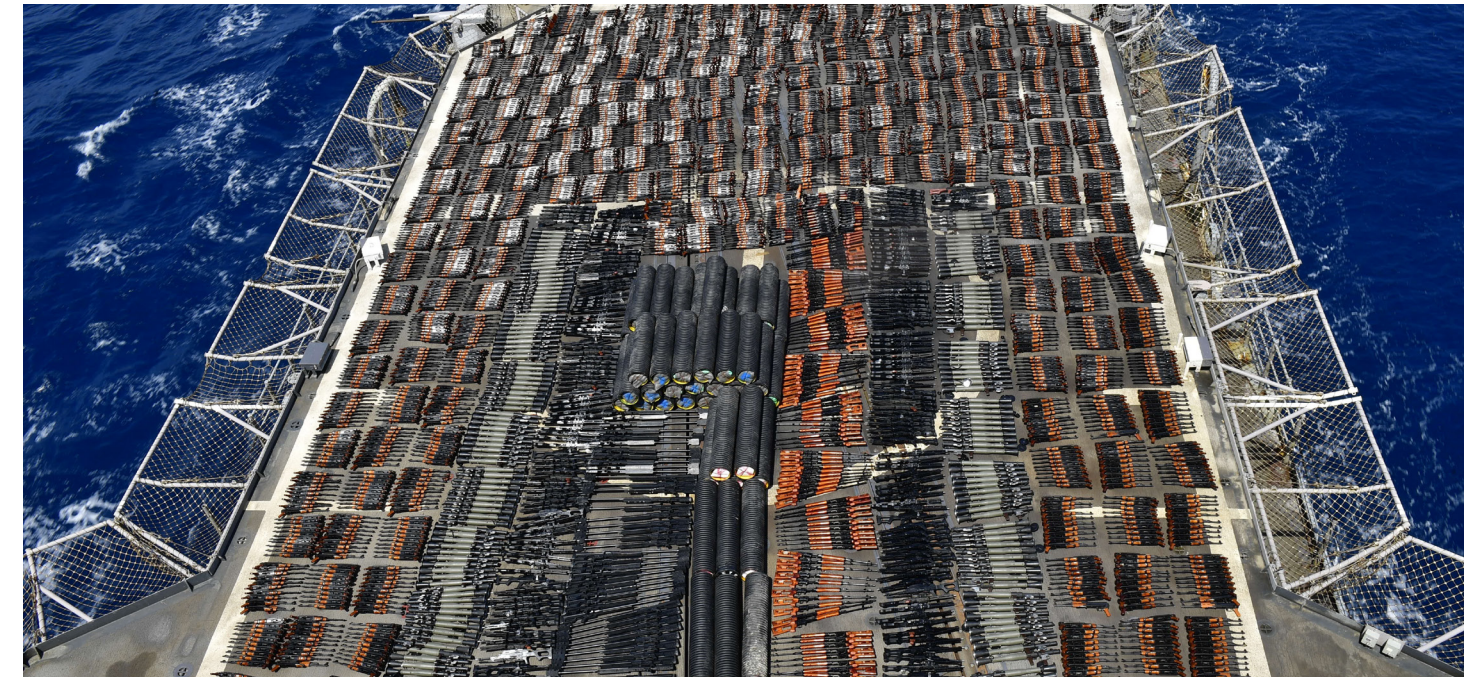
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RECORD SEIZURES AFTER NAVCENT AND CMF INCREASE PATROLS

From NAVCENT Public Affairs, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command / U.S. 5th Fleet



U.S. AND INTERNATIONAL FORCES OPERATING UNDER U.S. NAVAL FORCES CENTRAL COMMAND, U.S. 5TH FLEET AND COMBINED MARITIME FORCES (CMF) HAVE SEIZED RECORD AMOUNTS OF ILLICIT CARGO DURING MARITIME INTERDICTIONS IN 2021.

Led by Vice Adm. Brad Cooper, the maritime organizations conducted more seizures in 2021 after increasing patrols in the Gulf of Oman and Arabian Sea.

CMF seized illegal drugs worth more than \$193 million (at regional wholesale prices) during counter-narcotics operations at sea in 2021. This is a higher total value than the drugs CMF interdicted in the previous four years combined.

CMF is the world's largest multinational naval partnership and includes 34 nations. It is headquartered in Bahrain with U.S. Naval Forces Central Command and U.S. 5th Fleet.

U.S. 5th Fleet warships seized approximately 8,700 illicit weapons in 2021, including 1,400 AK-47 assault rifles confiscated from a stateless fishing vessel in the North Arabian Sea, Dec. 20.

The stateless vessel was assessed to have originated in Iran and transited international waters along a route historically used to traffic weapons unlawfully to the Houthis in Yemen. The direct or indirect supply, sale or transfer of weapons to the Houthis violates U.N. Security Council Resolutions and U.S. sanctions.

Guided-missile cruiser USS Monterey (CG 61) seized dozens of advanced Russian-made anti-tank guided missiles, thousands of Chinese Type 56 assault rifles, and hundreds of PKM machine guns, sniper rifles and rocket-propelled grenade launchers from a stateless vessel transiting the North Arabian Sea in May.

In February, guided-missile destroyer USS Winston S. Churchill (DDG 81) seized a cache of weapons off the coast of Somalia, including thousands of AK-47 assault rifles, light machine guns, heavy sniper rifles, rocket-propelled grenade launchers and crew-served weapons. The inventory also included barrels, stocks, optical scopes and weapon systems.

Since mid-July, U.S. and international maritime forces under CMF have conducted more than 50 boardings of vessels suspected of smuggling illicit cargo in the Gulf of Oman and Arabian Sea, resulting in 14 narcotics seizures and the Dec. 20 weapons seizure.

"We have enhanced our presence and vigilance across regional waters," said Cooper. "This reflects our continued commitment to confront destabilizing activities that disrupt the rules-based international order which underlies maritime security in the Middle East."

U.S. and international naval forces regularly conduct maritime security and counter-terrorism operations across the region to disrupt criminal and terrorist organizations and their related illicit activities, including the movement of personnel, weapons, narcotics and charcoal. These efforts help ensure legitimate commercial shipping transits the region free from non-state threats.

NAVY KICKS OFF MATERNITY UNIFORM PILOT PROGRAM

From MyNavyHR

Having a baby is a joyous time that can also be stressful and expensive. To relieve some of that stress, the Navy and the Department of Defense launched a pilot program to provide maternity uniforms at no cost to the Sailor.

Announced Dec. 15 in NAVADMIN 284/21, this pilot program will test the idea of issuing expectant mothers maternity uniforms, fully hemmed with all required sewn-on accouterments and shipped at no cost to the Sailor. The program officially started on Jan. 2.

"The pilot will run for the next five years," said Robert Carroll, head of Navy Uniform Matters. "The program can support up to 400 Sailors annually starting in calendar year 2022. It's open on a first-come, first-served basis to officers and enlisted in the active and Reserve components worldwide."

Sailors will be issued the uniforms at no cost, and have the uniforms shipped to them free of charge from the Navy Exchange (NEX). However, Sailors will be required to turn the items in once their maternity period is over. Participating in the pilot program more than once over the five years is allowed.

Issued maternity uniforms will be the Navy Working Uniform Type III and Service Khaki for E7 and above, and the Navy Service Uniform for E-6 and below. If needed, Service Dress Whites and Blues and the Cardigan Sweater will also be issued.

Only the main uniform items, such as blouses, shirts and pants will be issued along with hemming and all required sewn-on accouterments attached as needed.

Participation starts with Sailors routing a request through their chain of command. Once approved, their local NEX uniform shop will measure each for their uniform items. Sailors then forward the request and measurements to the points of contact listed in the NAVADMIN, who will review the Sailor's request for final approval.

Once given final approval, the Sailor's information is forwarded to the NEX Call Center by the Uniform Matters team, which will contact the participants directly.

The complete process, details and points of contact are in [NAVADMIN 284/21](#).



TIME REQUIREMENTS CUT TO ATTEND NAVY OFFICER CANDIDATE SCHOOL

From MyNavyHR

Navy Recruiting Command (NRC) has improved opportunities for enlisted Sailors to earn a commission through the Unrestricted Line Officer (URLO) In-Service Procurement Program (ISPP), reducing time in service (TIS) requirements for qualified applicants from years to as little as six months.

Rear Adm. Dennis Velez, who commands Navy Recruiting Command, said the program would help reflect America's diversity within the officer community.

"This program draws directly from the fleet's Task Force One Navy feedback, and I am excited to see the expanded opportunity for all junior enlisted personnel who qualify," said Velez.

"ISPP will enable our leaders in the fleet to identify and fast-track the best of the best from their deckplates into the direction of greater responsibility, a key element to retaining our brightest talent in today's highly competitive job market."

Recruiting command fully supports long-term enlistments, however, this program will expedite the opportunity to transition from enlisted to commissioned URL officers earlier in a Sailor's career. Lt. Cmdr. James Barfoot, Branch Head of General Officer Accessions, said the URLO ISPP not only retains Sailors who want to excel as naval officers, but it expedites the process, allowing them to stay in the officer community longer.

"We have been working on this for months, and I'm excited about this NAVADMIN release," Barfoot said. "OPNAVINST 1420.1B requires Sailors to have completed years of TIS, but this NAVADMIN allows us to reduce that time to six months TIS. The Sailor does have to have completed their initial training pipeline to apply."

Barfoot said that starting the process sooner mitigates several problems, such as Sailors leaving the Navy because they had to wait too long for the opportunity to apply.

The new process helps "the Sailor who is close to the end of their contract, or senior Sailors who had aspirations of being an officer but became more invested in their enlisted careers."

URL officer designators include Explosive Ordnance Disposal, Naval Aviation, Nuclear Submarine and Nuclear Surface Warfare Officer, Special Warfare and conventional Surface Warfare Officer.

"ISPP is open to all active-duty Sailors who meet Officer Candidate School and URL designator specific requirements," Barfoot said.

Read the full story in [Sailor to Sailor](#).



PROGRAM CHANGES, UPDATES AND NEW INITIATIVES FOR 2022

From MyNavyHR

As MyNavy HR moves into 2022, Sailors will see program changes, updates and entirely new initiatives during the coming year.

"Shipmates, for the past five years, we have been laying the groundwork to maximize putting your career development decisions where they belong, in your hands," said Vice Adm. John B. Nowell, Jr., the chief of naval personnel.

"This year, we begin to roll out the Detailing Marketplace Assignment Policy, which will incentivize sea duty to benefit our Sailors and their families. This continued service at sea, in turn, benefits the fleet with the people necessary to stay mission ready."

But that's not all; updates and improvements are coming across the MyNavy HR enterprise from training and education to policies and programs impacting transfers and uniforms.

Detailing Marketplace Assignment Policy (DMAP)

DMAP improves fleet manning by rewarding Sailors in sea-intensive ratings who stay Navy and stay on sea duty longer than the current five-year maximum, specifically for four years as an Apprentice (E4 and below) and three years as a Journeyman (E5).

Developed with input from fleet focus groups and comprehensive surveys, DMAP provides Sailors with more options, greater flexibility and incentives that include special pay, priority in the assignment process and increased advancement opportunities.

Announced Dec. 9 in NAVADMIN 280/21, Phase I launches on March 1 with four ratings – ABF, ABH, GSM and CS.

Government Travel Charge Card (GTCC)

Using the GTCC during your Permanent Change of Station (PCS) travel is now mandatory for O-6 and above and E-9 service members.

The move eliminates out-of-pocket costs for Sailors and their families during transfers while streamlining the submission of travel claims using the MyPCS Travel Voucher app.

Starting on July 1, the GTCC becomes mandatory for PCS among all remaining paygrades. Details are available in NAVADMIN 286/21 released Dec. 15.

Warrior Toughness

Warrior Toughness training will make its fleet-wide debut in 2022. These skills have been taught during Recruit and Officer Training accession for the past several years with marked success.

The fleet-wide rollout presents these psychological and character development skills to all Sailors, in an effort to help maximize their performance in challenging environments.

Ready Relevant Learning (RRL)

RRL has been changing how we train our Sailors by leveraging technology to fuel career-long learning, providing Sailors with the training they need for their following assignments and advancements. Five additional ratings will launch into Ready Relevant Learning in 2022 – APACK, ABE, ABF, ABH, LS and LSS.

Read the full story in [Sailor to Sailor](#).

HISTORIC GLORY

From Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Brent Pyfrom/All Hands Magazine



The Navy is said to be a melting pot of different cultures and a resemblance of the country. The nation's history is rich in achievements and growth in diversity. One culture that has had an incredible journey of acceptance in the Navy and the country itself is African Americans. The history of Black people in America is widely known. The slave trade from Africa, brought on by immigrants to a land they didn't originate, is still a sore spot for many. Today's Navy is always looking to demonstrate that a Sailor is a Sailor despite the color of the skin, the belief of religion, the sex of, or the sexual preference of any Sailor.

How did the Navy get from the slave trade time to today's Navy? This story is the timeline of Black Americans rising to normalcy. This is the story of why the Navy is the greatest Navy on Earth.

During the American Revolution, The Royal Navy already had Black people serving aboard their vessels. Acknowledging the experience of those Sailors, the Continental Navy decided to recruit free and enslaved Blacks. Both navies used freedom as bargaining chips but African American's felt more compelled to help the Royal Navy because they felt the Royal Navy came to liberate the

slaves from those who thought they were inferior. During the following years, even through a ban on Black Americans in 1798, African Americans remained consistent in the Navy, being involved in wars after the revolution.

In 1813, the ban was reversed, allowing Black Americans to serve on public vessels. In 1839, the acting Secretary of the Navy issued a policy stating no more than 5% of the Navy's population would be of "people of color". No slaves were allowed to join, no matter what. Then came 1842, when the actual Secretary of the Navy issued a racial quota stating "no more than one-twentieth part of the crew of any vessel" in the growing Navy. He created this policy because of the allegiance to southern lawmakers and stakes in slaveholding.

This policy would be troublesome for African Americans until 1861, the Civil War. With the nation bubbling up in disputes between north and south, the country went to war with itself. Secretary of the Navy, Gideon Welles authorized that freed slaves and escaped slaves can work in the Navy during an Atlantic blockade. Because of the war, eight African Americans received the Congressional Medal of Honor: Aaron Anderson, Robert Blake, William H. Brown,

Wilson Brown, Thomas English, John Henry Lawson, James Mifflin, and Joachim Pease. These were eight Sailors but many Black Sailors helped turn the tides of the Civil War.

In the 1870s, the U.S. Naval Academy admitted three Black Americans. James H. Conyers is the first. Racism, grades, hazing, and other issues prevented any of them from graduating.

Segregation increased, problems increased but the numbers of Black Americans and even other minorities at this point continued to grow. Most of the jobs weren't too admirable but some held jobs like firemen, storekeepers, and carpenters, yet each job gave the Black Sailors something to be proud of during the times of unrest in the country. During the Spanish-American war, another Black hero became a Medal of Honor Recipient. His name was Fireman 1st Class Robert Penn.

1917 was a major year for the Navy as it opened its doors to women under the job of yeomen. Among the first women was the first Black woman to join, followed closely by 13 others. These Black female yeomen became known as "The Golden Fourteen". Though history doesn't definitively say who the first was, the names of the Black ladies were: Armelda H. Greene, Kathryn E. Finch, Pocahontas A. Jackson, Fannie A. Foote, Ruth A. Davis, Olga F. Jones, Sarah Davis, Sarah E. Howard, Marie E. Mitchell, Anna G. Smallwood, Maude C. Williams, Carol E. Washington, Josie B. Washington, and Inez B. McIntosh.

*However, some historians and nursing websites argue the first woman was actually Ann Bradford Stokes in 1863. A runaway slave who became the first African American nurse in the Navy and the first woman to receive a pension: www.catalog.archives.gov has her official approved Veteran status of pension.

Civil unrest continued for Black Americans both in the Navy and in the country. The road to equality was hard

for the Sailors and there was even a time when the first enlistments of African Americans were suspended because officers believed that Filipinos made better messmen than Blacks. Still, recruitment of black Sailors continued. Then came 1941...

The infamous attack on Pearl Harbor shook the nation to its core. It's a day that still makes some current day Sailors cry. One Sailor that made a difference on the day of the attack was Mess Attendant Second Class Dorris Miller, who was the first African American to be awarded the Navy Cross for his heroism on the battleship USS West Virginia (BB 48). Still, Black Sailors weren't given better jobs in the Navy.

The jobs in the Navy for Black Americans didn't change for some time though history continued to change. In 1943, the Navy launched its first ship named after a Black Sailor. The USS Harmon (DE 678), a Buckley-class destroyer, was named after Mess Attendant 1st Class Leonard Roy Harmon. Harmon tended to the wounded during the Battle of Guadalcanal when a Japanese battleship shell exploded near him and other Sailors. Harmon shielded another Sailor with his body, he died shortly after.

Equality grew slowly, it grew oddly --- however, it grew. It grew so much that in 1944, the first Black officers were commissioned. The Golden 13, made up of 12 ensigns and one warrant officer: Jesse Walter Arbor, Phillip G. Barnes, Dalton L. Baugh, Sr., George Clinton Cooper, Reginald E. Goodwin, James E. Hair, Charles Byrd Lear, Graham E. Martin, Dennis Denmark Nelson, John W. Reagan, Frank E. Sublett, Jr., and William Sylvester White. They were why the first Black women were referred to as the Golden Fourteen (they didn't have an original group name). 64 African Americans were commissioned in World War II.

Continuing with 1944, the Navy did something else to diversify itself. The Navy allowed Black women to serve



through the Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service (WAVES). This is when the Navy commissioned Harriet Ida Pickens and Elizabeth Wills as the first Black women officers. They also enlisted 70 Black women to serve in different jobs throughout the Navy. Even though the Navy disassembled WAVES after the war, times were changing. WAVES still laid a significant foundation, allowing Ruth C. Issacs, Katherine Horton, and Inez Patterson to become the first African Americans to enter the Hospital Corps School at the National Naval Medical Center.

By the end of the war, the Navy had over 187,000 Black Sailors, equaling about 5.5% of the Navy's manpower. These numbers led to Ensign John Wesley Lee, Jr. becoming the first African American to commission in the regular Navy, serving on USS Kearsarge (CV 33).

The following year, 1947, was a year when women gained more ground in becoming a force in the Navy. First, came the Army-Navy Nurses Act that gave Navy nurses a position in the fleet as commissioned officers. Then came the Women's Armed Services Integration Act which allowed women to serve in the regular Navy and Army on a permanent status but not allowed in combat positions. These acts created the chance for another first –Chief Yeoman Edna Young became the first African American enlisted woman in the regular Navy to reach the rank of chief petty officer.

The Navy was making waves. Yes, the pun is intended.

In 1948, after President Truman issued Executive Order 9981, which abolished discrimination based on race, color, religion, or national origin in the armed forces, Ensign Wesley Brown became the first Black American to graduate from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1949.

The years continued to go by with the nation taking a new form of life as a people, the Navy finally received its first Black commanding officer of a Naval vessel. In 1961,

Samuel L. Gravely Jr. assumed command of USS Theodore. E Chandler (DD 717).

The Navy seemingly looked to bolster racial equality between 1961-1970 by implementing numerous policies and programs despite racial tension in the country. There were people on both sides for and against the blending of white and Black Americans but the Navy continued correcting racism, slowly.

Carl M. Brashear broke ground when he became the first African American master diver in the Navy. To achieve this goal, he had to mentally block out the negative comments and actions aimed at him. He suffered an injury that caused his left leg to be amputated but he refused the bow down to the idea of retiring. He pushed through and demonstrated that he could still dive and perform his duties and in 1970 he qualified as a U.S. Navy Master Diver. Hooyah.

Shortly after Master Chief Brashear's accomplishment, it was time for Samuel L. Gravely Jr. to make another move. After commanding the USS Chandler, USS Taussig (DD 746), USS Falgout (DE 324), and USS Jouett (DLG 29) he was selected as the Navy's first Black rear admiral in 1971. While serving as commander of Third Fleet, he would go on to become vice admiral and serve as the first African American to command a numbered fleet.

With the progression of many Black Sailors, racial tensions reached a new high since the integration of the Navy. Riot after riot, hatred and anger kept their places in the front of the tension but there were groups of people remaining focused on the advancement of the Navy. There were still many places in the Navy where Black Americans could become the first of something.

1978, Joan Bynum became the first Black American woman to promote to Captain. Closely behind her accomplishment, in 1979, Brenda E. Robinson became

the first African American woman to earn wings of gold as a Naval aviator and the second woman to become carrier qualified.

Time was moving and momentum in Black ethnicity was strong. The 80's came, and it didn't fall short in being the decade of firsts. In 1980, Janie Mines was the first Black American woman to graduate from the Naval Academy as part of the first class of women to graduate from the academy.

1983 was the year when the "Centennial Seven" showed up. Seven African Americans which included Tony Watson, Will Bundy, Mel Williams, Bill Peterson, Cecil Haney, and Bruce Grooms were African American officers that commanded Navy submarines within the first 100 years of the submarine force. Pete Tzomes was the first, which landed him a spot in history as the first African American to command a nuclear-powered submarine, the USS Houston (SSN 713).

Two years later in 1985, Donnie L. Cochran became the first Black American to serve in the Blue Angels. He returned to the unit in 1994 to serve as its commanding officer.

Right after that, in 1989, Matice Wright became the first Black American female Naval flight officer.

What a time to be alive! Some argue the '80s were the best years in American history, the Navy sure did its part to fuel the debates. Then came the 90's with three major first-time events for Black Sailors.

The first major step to continue history with Black Sailors came in 1996 when Joseph Paul Reason became the first Black four-star admiral. Two years later, Lillian E. Fishburne was promoted to rear admiral thus becoming the first Black woman to achieve flag rank as a communications officer. The same year another African American first, Michelle Howard became the first Black woman to command a Navy ship when she took command of USS Rushmore (LSD 47).

By the year 2000, some could think there would be no more such things as firsts to do anything on such a grand scale. The Nation was in a better racial position but for the Navy, there was still much more to achieve.

2001, David L. Brewer III became the first African American commander of the Military Sealift Command (MSC). During his time as commander, MSC ships supported major wars and humanitarian efforts. Brewer, like many others before him, has done many events in his tenure as firsts of the positions for Black Americans, there was one who has done many firsts.

This history timeline has reached Fleet Master Chief April D. Beldo. In 2006, she was selected as the first female Command Master Chief (CMC) of Recruit Training Command, Great Lakes, Illinois. She later became the first African American CMC to be assigned to an aircraft carrier, USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70), in 2009; the first female and first African American Force Master Chief for Naval Education and Training Command in 2012; and the first female Manpower, Personnel, Training, Education (MPT&E) Force Master Chief in 2017.

Following all those footsteps and hats was Vice Admiral Adam M. Robinson, Jr. who became the first Black Sailor appointed as Surgeon General of the Navy in 2007.

A few years later, women were allowed to serve



aboard submarines. Then came the first all-female Seabee Construction Team. Among the Seabee women were four African American Sailors. So many doors were opening but there was still one more to unlock and that came in 2013 when the ban on women in combat came to an end, which allowed women to serve in the front-line combat units.

Remember Admiral Michelle J. Howard? Well, she became the first Black Vice Chief of Naval Operations in 2014, giving her two major firsts on a global scale in the Navy.

In 2018, Steffanie Easter, an African American, became the first civilian Director of the Navy Staff in the office of Chief of Naval Operations.

Then in 2020, Lieutenant Madeline Swegle became the first Black woman selected as a Navy tactical fighter pilot as a Lt. J.G.

And then finally, in 2021, Midshipman 1st Class Sydney Barber became the first Black female brigade commander at the U.S. Naval Academy.

The Navy's history is rich with heroic stories, emotional moments, and periods of growth and development. The opportunities it gave to Black Sailors are testaments of leaders understanding that change is good and those who want more can get it, making a change.

There are many other firsts for Black Sailors not mentioned here because this article is for firsts that shaped the way the Navy operates. Black History isn't a time remembered as just an era of civil unrest. Black History is still happening today. The sweat, blood, and tears of Black ancestors laid the foundation for Black Americans in the Nation. The Navy grew stronger and more unified with Black Sailors. [Here's to diversity and history—here's to Black Sailors in the world's finest Navy.](#)





Robert Smalls
1862

Former slave turned Pilot of the CSS Planter



Chief Yeoman Edna Young
1948

First African American woman to enlist in the U.S. Navy and achieve the Chief Petty Officer rank



Samuel Gravely Jr.
1971

First African American fleet commander and first to become a flag officer



Fleet Master Chief April D. Beldo
2006

First female Command Master Chief at Recruit Training Command. First African American CMC to be sent to an aircraft carrier

Golden 13
1944



13 enlisted men who became the first African American commissioned and warrant officers in the U.S. Navy

Theodore E. Chandler (DD-717)
1961



First U.S. Navy ship commanded by an African American officer, Samuel Gravely Jr.

Admiral J Paul Reason
1996



First African American officer in the U.S. Navy to become a four-star admiral

Admiral Michelle Howard
2014



First African American Vice Chief of Naval Operations (VCNO)

1
7
5
5

Phyllis Mae Dailey
1945



First Black nurse to serve in the Navy Nurse Corps

Carl Brashear
1970



First Black American master diver in the U.S. Navy, despite losing his left leg in 1966

Rushmore (LSD-47)
1998



First U.S. Navy ship to be commanded by an African American woman, Michelle Howard

Midshipman 1st Class Sydney Barber
2021



First African American female brigade commander at the U.S. Naval Academy

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2



Doris Miller
1941

First Black American to be awarded the Navy Cross



Jesse L. Brown
1950

First African American aviator to complete the U.S. Navy's flight program. First African American officer killed in the Korean War



Matice Wright
1983

First African American female naval flight officer



Vice Admiral Adam Robinson Jr.
2007

36th Surgeon General of the U.S. Navy. First African American in the position



SERVING PRESIDENTS

From Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Brent Pyfrom/All Hands Magazine

Stories of how the Navy has been used in America's history is known to many in the country, events like the Great White Fleet and the Battle of Midway are milestones in the country's life. There was always a President to command the Navy and time stamp these events.

The President of the United States of America. Some call them the most powerful person in the world. There are six that the world could also call a U.S. Navy Sailor. John F. Kennedy, Jimmy Carter, George H.W. Bush, Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford, and Lyndon B. Johnson all served in the fleet.

"Any man who may be asked in this century what he did to make his life worthwhile, I think I can respond with a good deal of pride and satisfaction, 'I served in the United States Navy.'" ~John F. Kennedy.

As Presidents' Day approaches, the Navy keeps these presidents in memory. The 39th President is the only President to join the Navy for active duty.

Jimmy Carter started in the Navy serving two years on surface ships before he decided to apply for submarine commands. Carter steadily rose in the ranks and held many different officer positions in the submarine world that led to him eventually being selected to assist Admiral Hyman G. Rickover in the program that created nuclear-powered submarines and the development of nuclear propulsion plants for naval vessels. The lieutenant served in the Navy from 1946-1953 (active) and from 1953-1961 (reserved).

We move on to 1 of 2 Presidents who made the rank of commander in the Navy.

Richard Nixon was appointed as a lieutenant junior grade in the United States Naval Reserves. He bounced around multiple commands and reached the rank of commander before departing the Navy. The commander served from 1942-1946 (active) and 1946-1966 (inactive).

The next President had a service dog that was honorably given the rank of hospital corpsman 2nd class. Though the dog has nothing to do with this story, his owner was a "dog" in his own right.

George H.W. Bush joined the Naval Reserve the day after his 18th birthday, six months after the attack on Pearl Harbor. He was one of the youngest pilots at the time and got assigned to Torpedo Squadron (VT-51) as a photographic officer. After surviving one forced water-landing in his career, the would-be 41st President took to the skies again and flew in missions against Japanese enemies. Bush was flying a mission when his aircraft was hit by anti-aircraft bullets, igniting his engine. Despite the damage to his aircraft, he continued the mission and successfully dropped bombs over his target. Afterward, he flew over the water and ejected out of his plane. He waited hours for rescue with his peers flying above him, in a protective state, until he was recovered. After he boarded the submarine, USS Finback, he spent the rest of his time (approx. a month) participating in rescuing other downed pilots. He eventually was reassigned as an instructor for new torpedo pilots. The lieutenant served from 1942-1945 (reserved).

The determination of some Sailors is undeniable. Speaking of determination, the next President is already a fan favorite to some but after reading about his determination, there may be more people joining the band.

John F. Kennedy joined the Naval Reserve as an ensign. In his second year, he was re-assigned to the training squadron, Motor Torpedo Squadron FOUR, as the commanding officer of a motor torpedo boat, PT 101. The following year he took command of PT 109 where he eventually set sail to intercept Japanese warships in the Solomon Islands. On Aug. 2, 1943, Kennedy's ship was struck in a collision by a Japanese destroyer. After the impact, Kennedy called out to his crew members who were launched into the sea, badly injured. Once he heard their cries, he swam out to rescue them while an ensign of another ship and Kennedy's executive officer helped the remaining Sailors who were also in the water. It took Kennedy three overall hours to rescue the two Sailors and get them to a piece of the boat large enough to hold onto. Afterward, it

took another five hours for all survivors, 11 in total, to swim to a small island three miles from their location. Kennedy towed one of the survivors by holding the strap of a life vest the survivor wore in his teeth while he swam.

As fate would have it, there was no food on the island all the survivors made it to. Kennedy and another officer decided to swim the route the PT ships cruised hoping to find one from their squadron. Seeing no boats, the men decided all survivors should swim to a larger island that had coconuts on it. It was four days since the collision when they made it to Naru Island and encountered some natives. Kennedy carved a message on a coconut and said "Rendova! Rendova!" Which the natives took the coconut to the PT base in Rendova. The natives returned the next day with a letter from a New Zealand camp instructing the Americans to make their way there. After arriving, the boat PT 157 rescued them on Aug. 8. Kennedy was awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Medal for rescuing the crew of PT 109, and the Purple Heart Medal for his injuries in the accident. After he became President, he met with his rescuers. At the meeting, he received a toast by some of the crew of the Japanese destroyer. The lieutenant served from 1941-1945 (reserved).

Kennedy's vice president, Lydon B. Johnson, was already a congressman when he became a lieutenant commander in the United States Naval Reserve in June 1940. In 1941, Johnson was assigned to the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations. He bounced around a few commands. While stationed in New Zealand and Australia, he was an observer of bomber missions in the South Pacific. This tour led to him being awarded the Army Silver Star Medal. After President Roosevelt ordered all members of Congress in the Armed Forces to return to their legislative duties, Johnson was discharged. The commander served from 1940-1941 (inactive), 1941-1942 (active), and 1942-1964 (reserved).

Lyndon B. Johnson is a prime example of what being fit for duty as far as being flexible of any sort looks like.

Versatility is a trait that every Sailor should have. The last President on this list displayed that well.

Gerald Ford received a commission in the U.S. Naval Reserve as an ensign following the attack on Pearl Harbor. He reported to be a V-5 instructor in Annapolis and then assigned to Navy Preflight School in Chapel Hill, N.C. He instructed students in navigation skills, ordnance, gunnery, first aid, and military drill and coached all nine sports available. Afterward, he was assigned to the pre-commissioned Monterey (CVL 26) and battled Japanese forces. In Dec. 1944, Typhoon Cobra damaged the Monterey, and aircraft aboard the carrier broke loose in the hangar bay, causing a fire. On his way to the bridge, during general quarters, the ship listed hard, which caused Ford to slip off the edge of the deck. The rim of the deckplates slowed him down enough that he was able to grab hold and swing to the lower deck underneath him. He said he could have easily gone overboard. After the Monterey was deemed unfit, Ford was sent to the Athletic Department at Pre-Flight school, St. Mary's College. He got reassigned two more times throughout his career before being honorably discharged. He served the rest of his time back in the Naval Reserves. The lieutenant commander served from 1942-1946 (reserved).

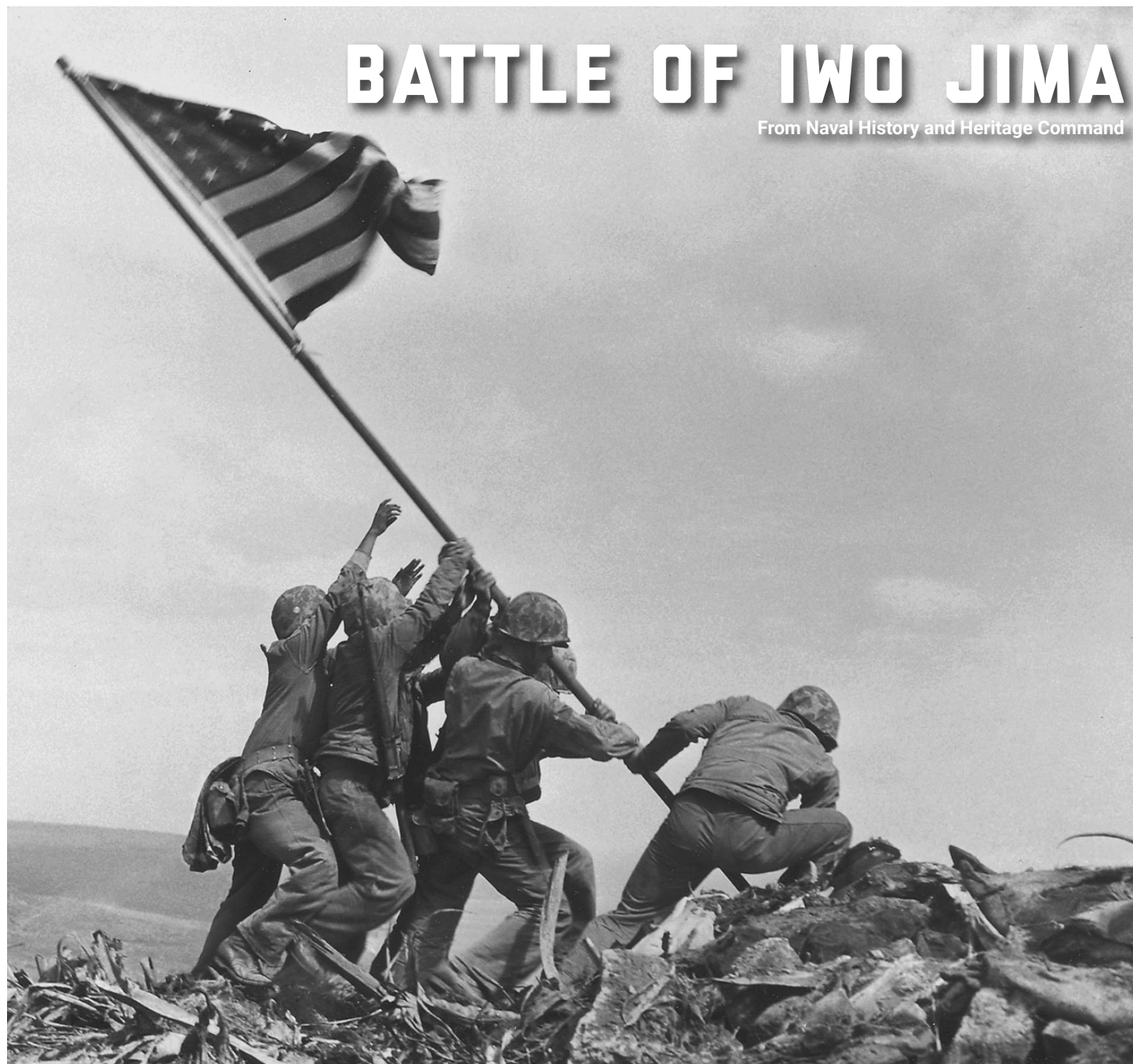
So, there you have it. Six commanders-in-chief that demonstrate what selfless service exemplifies and have served their country in the same waters we do today.

Not all these Sailors had amazing stories, not all current Sailors do either, but the one thing they all had was the right to say, "I am a United States Sailor" and "I am the President of the United States of America." Hooyah Navy!

Happy Presidents' Day.

BATTLE OF IWO JIMA

From Naval History and Heritage Command



Iwo Jima is eight square miles in area and shaped like a pork chop, its widest part oriented toward the northeast. The island's narrow southwestern tip is dominated by a small mountain, Mount Suribachi, which is a dormant volcano vent. Two completed airfields and one under construction were located respectively from the southwest toward the northeast on Iwo Jima's centerline towards the end of World War II. Kuribayashi had divided the island into five defensive sectors with central reserve areas. U.S. planners had designated landing beaches along both southern and northern shorelines between Suribachi and the wider part of the island, but only the southern beaches (from southwest to northeast: Green, Red, Yellow, Blue) were used in the assault.

Bombing raids and occasional naval bombardment had been carried out against Japanese facilities on Iwo Jima since June 1944 and this bombing intensified in the weeks

leading up to D-day. Although the air raids damaged some Japanese fortifications, Navy underwater demolition teams landed for a beach reconnaissance overestimated the bombing missions' impact and did not note the full extent of the Japanese underground fortifications.

V Amphibious Corps requested a concentrated shore bombardment for 10 days prior to the landings. However, citing ammunition supply issues, Task Force 52, the amphibious support force providing fire support, only provided three. Adverse weather curtailed bombardment operations on 16 February, the first day. Ultimately, only 13 hours of effective bombardment were carried out over the three-day period. Fifth Fleet also began minesweeping operations around the island, specifically of the approaches to the designated landing beaches. Prior to the operation, Spruance had detached Task Force 58, his fast carriers

(which also carried eight Marine Corps fighter squadrons), to strike strategic targets on Honshu in wide-ranging support of the Iwo Jima landings. The Marines, already unhappy with the shortened duration of naval gunfire support and believing continuous close air support of the ground forces should take priority, hardly welcomed this decision.

Almost precisely at H-hour, 0900 on 19 February, the first assault wave, with 5th Marine Division units on the left and 4th Marine Division units to the right, landed on the assigned beach sectors. The Japanese held their fire until 1000, after the Marines' first wave was on the beaches and the covering naval gunfire had momentarily eased. The sudden, unexpected volume and accuracy of artillery and mortars clearly indicated that bombing and naval bombardment had not markedly affected the enemy. This had a devastating effect on the buildup on the beaches. All of the sectors suffered casualties, although Green and Red beaches, flanked by Japanese positions on Mount Suribachi, and the Blue beaches, fronted by enemy emplaced in the cliffs of a rock quarry, were perhaps hardest hit. Further handicapping the Marines was the unstable beach, composed of steep terraces of constantly shifting black sand, volcanic cinders, and ash. This made digging in very difficult and bogged down wheeled and even tracked vehicles, causing pile-ups of men, amphibious tractors, tanks, and supplies at the waterline. These were subjected to constant Japanese artillery, mortar, and machine-gun fire. The steep beach gradient also caused a violent surf zone with which landing craft and tractors had to contend.

These difficulties notwithstanding, the landings were successfully executed and, under cover of a rolling naval gunfire barrage and close air support mainly provided by Fifth Fleet's escort carriers, the Marines began moving off the beaches. The 5th Marine Division pushed to the northwestern shore in order to isolate Mount Suribachi, and accomplished this task within ninety minutes of the initial landings. The 4th Marine Division's progress was much slower, however, as it proceeded toward the airfields. One of these lay directly in front of the Marines, but the second, more centrally located field, required a wheeling movement toward the northeast, which brought most of this division into a bowl-like area completely exposed to heavy Japanese fire.

By the end of D-day, nearly 30,000 personnel had been landed on Iwo Jima despite rapidly deteriorating weather conditions, the difficult terrain, and stubborn, well-coordinated Japanese resistance. Although the Marines had managed to cross the island at its narrow width and had cut off Mount Suribachi, the day's planned phase line had not been reached while casualties mounted at an alarming rate. The beachhead remained concentrated in a triangular area roughly 4,000 yards long, and from 700 to 1,100 yards wide from north to south.

D+1 saw the landing of 3rd Marine Division, the corps reserve, and later took up battle space between the two previously committed Marine divisions. Meanwhile, the 5th Division's 28th Marine Regiment began its assault of Mount Suribachi, which was garrisoned by 2,000 Japanese troops and extensively honeycombed with defensive positions and tunnels, one of them seven levels deep. Bolstered by

reinforcements from 3rd Marine Division, other 5th Marine Division units and the 4th Marine Division slowly continued to force their way northwest and northeast. Navy destroyers, many assigned to specific Marine units, provided direct gunfire support. Although frequently the targets of Japanese guns, Marine tanks, amphibtracs and artillery did the same, providing mobile firepower to the engaged infantry units. Fifth Fleet aircraft continued to fly close-support missions, often dropping napalm on the deeply dug-in enemy.

Ultimately, however, small teams of Marines—or even individuals—armed with flame throwers, satchel charges and hand grenades (“blow torches and corkscrews”) were those who were instrumental in destroying Japanese strong points. The cost was commensurate: By the end of D+1, many Marine rifle companies had lost up to 50 percent of their pre-assault strength in killed and wounded. Operational momentum remained extremely slow and progress was measured in yards of ground taken.

From 21 February (D+2) into March, despite Japanese tenacity and ingenuity, U.S. forces were gradually able to make significant advances. During the night of 21–22 February, ships on the outer periphery of the amphibious landing area were subjected to the only kamikaze attack experienced during the operation. The escort carrier Bismarck Sea (CVE-95) was lost and fleet carrier Saratoga (CV-3) was so badly damaged that she had to return Stateside for repair and never returned to combat. Ashore, while the Marines reached the summit of Mount Suribachi on the morning of 23 February soon after the initial landing, the rest of the battle for the island would take the month that followed in heavy fighting. Despite the iconic and certainly morale-boosting flag raising, hidden pockets of enemy continued their resistance on the mountain—a blow to Kuribayashi's defenses. Airfield No. 1, the southernmost air facility, was captured after hard fighting by D+1 while the Marines continued to move northward, aided by an armored task force of several Marine tank companies.

As they advanced, they encountered well-coordinated and -led counterattacks by the Japanese—a surprise to those U.S. service members who had experienced chaotic enemy banzai charges in the past. Tanks were put out of action by mines, suicide squads or well-camouflaged antitank guns, and the Marine rifle companies were subjected to constant artillery, mortar, and small-arms fire. To the frustration of the ground forces, many Japanese positions proved impervious to close air support bombing and strafing and had to be taken by direct ground assault or by sealing off entrances. After nine days, the drive north had progressed 4,000 yards at a cost of 7,000 U.S. casualties but by 4 March, Airfield No. 2 had been secured after hard fighting and the Marines had degraded General Kuribayashi's defenses to the point at which many Japanese heavy weapons were out of action. Also on 4 March, the 9th Bomb Group B-29 “Dinah” made an emergency landing on Airfield No. 1. It refueled and departed, demonstrating the potential use of the island by XXI Bomber Command. On 14 March, the island's occupation was officially announced, although fighting continued for two further weeks. Finally, on 26 March Iwo Jima was declared “secure.”

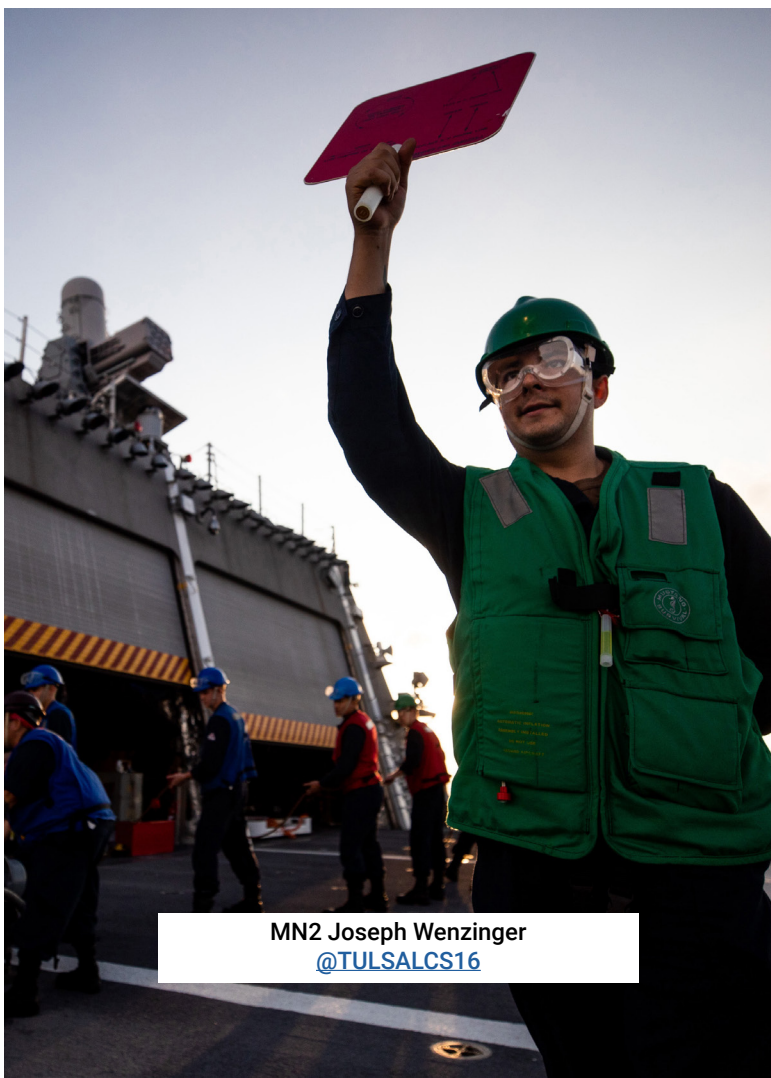
To read more about the history of Iwo Jima, click [here](#).

PHOTOS FROM THE FLEET

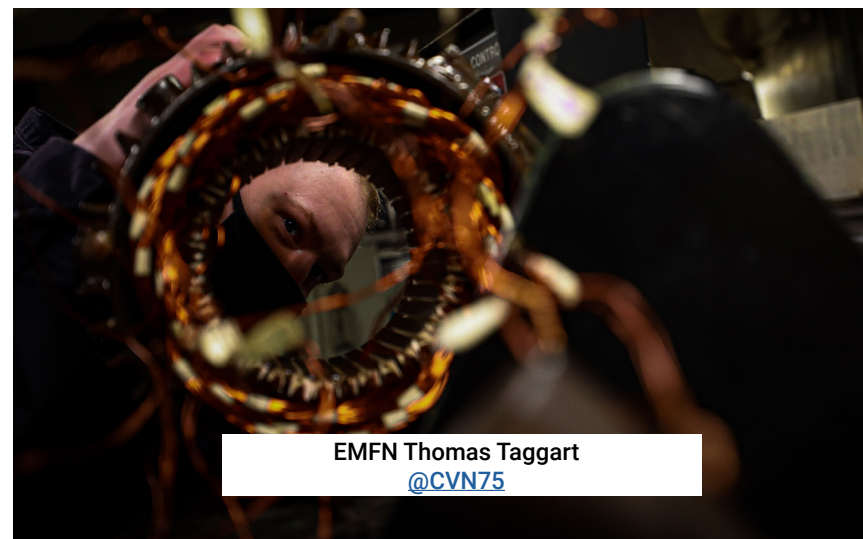
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A HOLLOW HISTORY: THE LEGACY OF THE COMMANDS IN THE CAVES

From Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Codie Soule/ American Forces Network-Pacific



Underneath the layers of bedrock and sandstone where Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka sits, are vast labyrinths of tunnels. Covered by mud and sludge and saturated with years of rain, these caves were home to people who worked, slept and survived during the height of World War II.

Much like the handmade caverns themselves, there is more to their history than what sits on the surface. Countless hands carved and created the vast tunnels that have been heavily relied on throughout history.

"By 1943 the Americans started bombing the Japanese home islands, and the Imperial Japanese Navy decided they needed bomb shelters in case any of these bombs hit any of the bases," explained Lt. Cmdr. Ryan Sisler, Destroyer Squadron 15 materials, readiness, and training officer. "The Japanese Imperial Navy told their tenet commands to start construction, so commands looked at their nearest hillside and just started digging."

Throughout most of the Yokosuka area, there are only a few feet of topsoil and foliage over a sand and rock composition covering the surrounding hills. This made the digging of large rooms impossible without extensive

supports put in place. Many of the existing caves began as small caverns that were later expanded to provide immediate shelter and exits in case of emergency.

"There is very little rhyme or reason to how all of the tunnels on base are constructed. Very few of them actually connect between the different commands, but the caves that DESRON 15 occupies are some of the few that do connect. They were used as an administrative center, base hospital and acted as the command-and-control center for Yokosuka during World War II," Sisler said. "The DESRON 15 tunnels stretch about two kilometers if you were to walk their entirety."

During the war these tunnels provided areas in which work could be done in secrecy, safe from air attacks. The tunnels housed a 500-bed hospital, large electrical power generating facility and midget-submarine factory and warehouse. During World War II more than 800 people lived and worked in the caves.

"You can find carved out desks where personnel would conduct their daily duties," said Sisler. "Imagine sitting at a rock desk while bombs shake your workstation and the

lights flicker out, leaving you in the pitch black, the builders of these caves were prepared for this exact situation. You can find candle notches dug out into the walls placed overhead the desks, so workers could continue their operations while the power was out through the caves."

Much of the cave's history was classified during the Imperial Japanese Navy time of occupancy, so its functions before and during World War II are not completely clear. Following Japan's surrender 75 years ago, the U.S. Navy began sending personnel and setting up commands on what is now known as CFAY. The caves started being used primarily for storage and emergency shelter by the U.S. Navy and Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force as the two military forces began working together.

"Once the Korean War started, the Americans started using them as bomb shelters," Sisler said. "As the war progressed, the number of casualties couldn't be supported by the base hospital, so the remnants of the cave hospitals began being used for wounded service members as a field hospital."

The hospital sections of the command caves could shelter 500 service members during the height of the Korean War and active surgical rooms were built to provide emergency aid to critical patients and support the wounded. Following the Korean War, the primary commands using the caves started moving out of the tunnels and the caves were once again used for storage and as emergency shelters.

In 1971, towards the end of the Vietnam War, the U.S. Navy began using the current DESRON 15 caves as the command-and-control center for all U.S. naval forces in Japan.

"We still have a map from 1972 that covers one of the large walls of the DESRON 15 command caves, Sisler said. "The map is totally original from when we (U.S. Navy) used the command caves as the main control center."

Most of the cave systems on base eventually deteriorated from earthquakes and rain, resulting in closure due to safety concerns.

"In 1962, CFAY directed a Marine 2nd Lt. and six of his Marines to begin a survey of the multiple cave systems on base," Sisler said. "They were basically cave diving, spelunking and just seeing what was down there. Some of the caves could be used, but some of them were potential death traps, so CFAY sealed most of them off and made them unreachable."

Following years of decay and erosion, more than 1,200 of the originally dug caves were sealed away with only three still functioning.

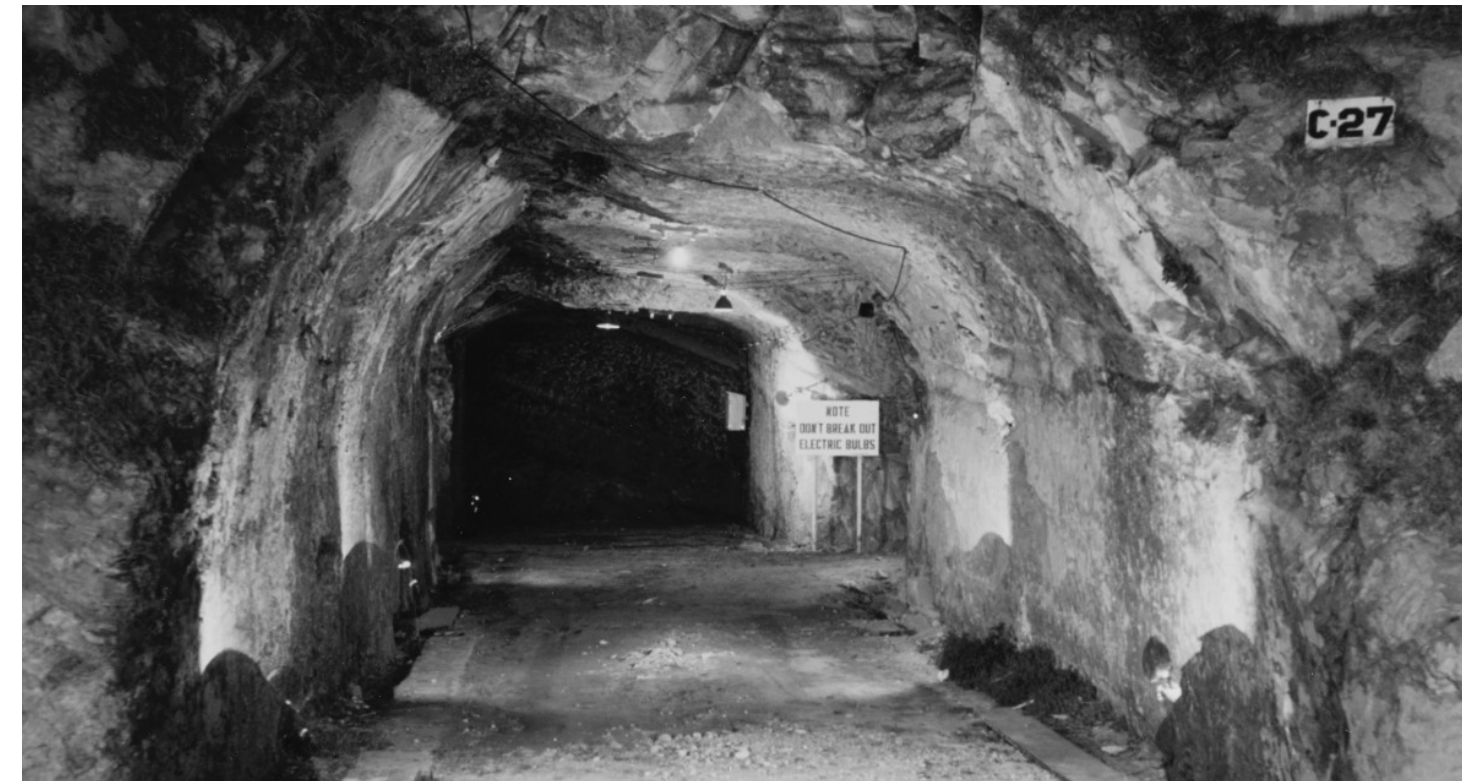
Destroyer Squadron 15, the Sea Combat Commander of Battle Force 7th Fleet, occupied the main cave network in 1992 and continues to conduct operations in this historic location today.

"Working in the caves is a unique environment," said Capt. Chase Sargeant, DESRON 15 commodore. "Everyone goes to work somewhere, and in the Navy most of the time it's on ship and sometimes a building, but we might be the only ones that get to say we work in a cave."

The DESRON 15 cave has been a command-and-control facility for the last 80 years, from the Japanese Imperial Navy to the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force to the U.S. Navy.

Sargeant also explained the amount of respect he has when he comes to the caves to conduct his work every day, and how he thinks about the history and the time it took to build the cave infrastructure and how it has been utilized for major conflicts throughout the area of responsibility.

Even buried under topsoil and foliage, the caves have been an integral part of operations for major conflicts in the Indo-Pacific since World War II, and they will continue to provide shelter and support for decades of future operations.



FIT FOR THE FIREFIGHT

From Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class James Wilson/All Hands Magazine



The Vietnam War was in full force. It was a costly war that would take the lives of 2,559 Sailors. It was a war that would cost a total of 58,220 American service members. While it's impossible to quantify the value of even a single life, we take pride in knowing each and every one of these people laid down their life for their country.

It's easy to assume all these lives were lost in the heat of battle - typical imaginings of our men far from home—fighting in a war unlike any other in the jungles of Vietnam.

Those assumptions weren't always the case.

On the morning of July 29, 1967, USS Forrestal (CVA-59), operating in the Gulf of Tonkin, commenced air operations in preparation for the launching of a 24-plane alpha strike. At 1050, a McDonnell F-4B Phantom II aircraft began pre-flight procedures.

Suddenly, multiple electronic malfunctions on the aircraft caused one of its four 5-inch Mk-32 "Zuni" unguided rockets to fire across the flight deck, striking another aircraft, tearing it to shreds and rupturing its fuel tank. The fuel bled from the Douglas A-4E Skyhawk and sprayed the surrounding area, creating a pool below.

One spark was all it took to ignite the fuel, creating an inferno that caused a chain reaction of nine bomb explosions across the flight deck.

The disaster lasted 18 hours, crippled the ship and claimed 134 lives. Compare that to the numbers above: more than 5% of all Navy lives lost in the Vietnam conflict were due to this one event.

"I've heard different people say, 'everybody in the Navy is a [damage controlman]," said Damage Controlman 1st Class Brent George, an instructor at Farrier Firefighting School. "That is not true, but everybody in the Navy, absolutely 100%, is a firefighter."

During basic training, every Sailor is exposed to the fundamentals of shipboard firefighting - one of the many classes during the seven exhausting weeks often called boot camp. While there, Sailors learn about the Forrestal and watch video clips from the actual fire. It's a harrowing moment that forces Sailors-in-the-making to witness a firsthand account of the dangers they may face serving aboard a ship.

These basics learned at Recruit Training Command create the foundation on which all Sailors must build their knowledge of firefighting and damage control. It's a building block on a journey to live on a ship and learn to protect Navy lives and assets.

Named for the heroic deeds of Chief Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Handling) Gerald Farrier, who led one of

the fire parties during the initial moments of the Forrestal disaster, this school serves the critical need of more advanced firefighting and damage control training. During the training, Sailors are exposed to simulations designed to recreate real shipboard emergency scenarios.

"When you get sent to your ship, you learn more and more," said George. "When you come here, you take that stuff that you learned from your ship and you can put it into action. Here, you actually get to put the water on the fire."

There is little that can substitute the value of realistic simulation when it comes to training. At Farrier, Sailors attend the school to face different classes of fire inside mock-ship compartments that reach temperatures of around 200 degrees.

"It really puts it into perspective for them what it would be like to fight a main-space fire," said George. "We're talking about 200 degrees. That is nothing compared to some of the temperatures you could see inside an actual main space. It is hot! Even though we're instructors, we still are in the hot spaces with the students the whole time, sometimes even longer."

Most training courses run the entire day for about a week. They start early, especially in the summer, so they can avoid the naturally higher temperatures of the Virginian sun. The spaces get hot enough without the help of the southern climate.

If training runs long, it's not uncommon to see a Sailor succumb to dehydration during the simulations. The ambulance is basically on standby because the schoolhouse

has them on speed dial. This ensures safety for students and instructors, which is the school's number one priority.

"Students leave here with a better sense of knowledge of how to combat various classifiers with the appropriate agents," said Chief Damage Controlman Kelly Blum, Senior Instructor, Farrier Firefighting School. "[They learn to] think outside the box. Not every situation is a perfect situation. We're always open to new ideas here at Farrier when they come up with them. It surprises us, but we push it forward to the fleet to give it more tools for their toolbox."

In this way the school acts as a sort of feedback loop. On one hand, the school sees 10,000 to 15,000 students a year - training them and equipping them with the knowledge and fundamentals needed to properly manage or take part in a repair locker aboard a ship. On the other hand, students can sometimes provide new insights into shipboard firefighting, which can make a real difference on a fleet-wide level.

"The fundamentals of firefighting are generally the same: put wet stuff on hot stuff," said Lt. Natalie Harper, Officer in Charge, Farrier Firefighting School. "There is a little more science behind it; we understand a little bit more, and the training has changed. Ten years ago, they used to just burn diesel fuel in a pit and put water on it. Now, it's a little bit more controlled. We have more safeties in place, but the fundamentals are all still there. Ultimately, I would definitely feel comfortable going back to a ship with any of these Sailors."

To watch the video, click [here](#).





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