February2012

USS GEORGE H.W. BUSH (CVN 77)

AVENGER

VOLUME 3 ISSUE 1

Battle "E"

Plus:

Know your rate: ITs

This is the JEA

and

New doc checks in

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Command Corner

From the Commanding Officer

Greetings GHWB Families and Friends!

February is behind us and we're off to a great start in 2012. Your Sailors continue to answer the nation's call each and every day as they support the ship and its mission. We've already achieved so much this year and I look forward to more of the same as we continue on.

So far this year, your Sailors have been recognized for their outstanding work ethic and dedication during our recent combat deployment, and were the reason why our ship was awarded the 2011 Commander, Navy Air Force Aircraft Carrier Battle Efficiency Award.

The Battle Efficiency Award, or Battle "E", recognizes superior operational performance, assessing the command's accomplishments during training exercises and various command inspections. Thanks to your Sailors, the USS George H.W. Bush completed a clean sweep of every category, winning all 13 departmental awards. For your Sailors efforts, our ship is now recognized as the top aircraft carrier in the Atlantic Fleet for 2011.

We also had two Sailors recognized for their superior job performance and leadership qualities. I'd like to congratulate Electrician's Mate 1st Class (SW/AW) Daniel J. Kliche and Lt. Ryan P. Kelly on becoming the 2011 Commander, Naval Air Force Atlantic (COMNAVAIRLANT) Engineer of the Year and Propulsion Plant Watch Officer of the Year, respectively.

2012 is really shaping up to be another outstanding year for our ship and Sailors and I cannot thank you enough for your continued support of your Sailor and our Navy. You are the reason our Sailors are who they are, and I am truly excited to watch them grow into the future leaders of our great Navy.

I wish you all well and we'll see you soon.

Sincerely,

CMDCM(SW/AW) Dave Colton
Command Master Chief

2011 BATTLE "E"

E E CS DC M E E S S E W E

"THAT'S HOW WE ROLL"

On the cover:

De-energized electric cables lay on the flight deck in preparation for a magnetic treatment (DEPERM). The DEPERM process reduces the electromagnetic signature of a ship in order to limit its exposure to undersea mine detection. Photo by MC2(SW) Brian M. Brooks.

THIS IS THE

Story by MC3 Derrik Noack
Photo by MC2(SW) Brian M. Brooks

The USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) Junior Enlisted Association (JEA) is currently seeking highly motivated Sailors, E-1 to E-5, who want to make a difference at the command and in the community.

While the JEA has become known for its work with Sailors on the ship, they will soon be spreading out with a number of new volunteer and fundraising opportunities that will provide members a way to give back to the community.

Through a mentorship program that can be compared to Big Brothers, Big Sisters, Sailors will pair up with at-risk teens in local high schools to bring a positive influence into their lives. The JEA also hopes to bring some optimism with them as they visit homeless shelters, to serve food and talk with those there. The association has also been asked to help out with the Special Olympics, and members are eager to participate. In addition, car washes both on and off base are planned in April, with profits going toward a BBQ picnic for the crew.

JEA Vice President Legalman 2nd Class Tiffany Williams said that these new community projects will provide Sailors with a solid direction and a feeling of fulfillment.

"With these new opportunities we'll be able to see the differences we can make in our community and receive a higher sense of purpose," said Williams. "If people invest a little of their time, they can get a lot in return."

Becoming a member of the JEA is as simple as showing up to one of their bi-weekly meetings, and with elections for the president and vice president positions approaching, there is no better time to join.

"Anyone can run for a JEA position," said Williams. "It requires a little more work, but it gives you something to put your energy into."

The JEA welcomes any E-5 and below Sailors who would like to participate in their upcoming events.

Currently, JEA members are busy starting a project for the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society (NMCRS), in which areas will be set up around the ship where Sailors can drop off their soda cans. Instead of getting tossed in the trash, these cans will be taken to a local recycling plant and all proceeds will be donated to the NMCRS.

For more information on the JEA or any of their projects, email LN2 Williams at williatl@cvn77.navy.mil or call J-5724.

Story by George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) Public Affairs

WET WHITE RED GREEN BLACK BLUE PURPLE PAINT EVERYWHERE

Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Handling) 3rd Class Abel Fabian paints a "Yellow E" on the island. Photo by MCSN(SW/AW) Brian Read Castillo.

USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) was named the top aircraft carrier in the Atlantic Fleet in the 2011 Commander Naval Air Force Aircraft Carrier Battle Efficiency and Departmental Awards program, Feb. 10.

The Battle Efficiency Award, or Battle "E", recognizes superior operational performance, assessing the command's accomplishments during training exercises and various command inspections. The crew of George H.W. Bush won the honors on the heels of the ship's first combat deployment. It was a clean sweep for the Navy's newest aircraft carrier, with a full 13 departmental awards and an additional nod to the combined USS George H.W. Bush/Carrier Air Wing EIGHT carrier maintenance team, making George H.W. Bush the only operational carrier to win honors in all categories.

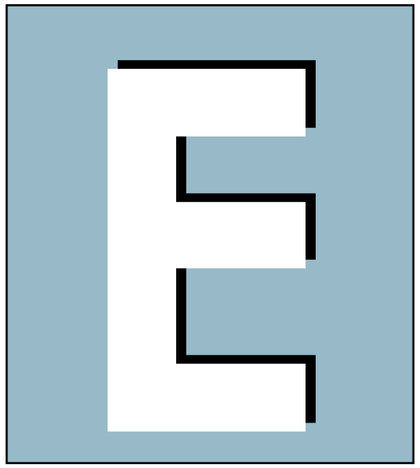
"Winning the Battle "E" is a great accomplishment and a testament to the skill of any crew, but it's all the more meaningful when you consider the fact that our crew earned it during the ship's maiden deployment - the first deployment ever for 40 percent of our Sailors," said commanding officer Capt. Brian "Lex" Luther.

The Battle "E" Award is based on a comprehensive overview of the ship's battle readiness, assessing a variety of factors from the number of days the command spent at sea to its performance in competitive exercises such as precision anchoring evolutions to the ship's safety record.

"Congratulations to USS CARL VINSON (CVN 70) and USS GEORGE H.W. BUSH (CVN 77) for your selection as the 2011 Battle "E" winners. Congratulations as well to all departmental winners on your hard work and demonstrated performance. The Sailors and officers of these carriers continue to achieve and surpass the high standards of those who have gone before. We are proud of the operational excellence and sound fiscal execution that you have displayed. You have our personal congratulations on a job well done," read a combined message from Commander, Naval Air Forces Vice Adm. Allen G. Myers and Commander, Naval Air Forces Atlantic Rear Adm. Ted N. Branch.

"I think the very essence of our success was teamwork. We had a common goal and we worked together to achieve that," said Command Master Chief (SW/AW) David Colton. "A key element of that is leadership. We train ourselves and we train our subordinates, and that's culminated in the clean sweep. I'm exceptionally proud of every member of this crew, because every one of them played a role in this, from the Sailors launching the aircraft up on deck to the Sailors working in the ship's laundry, it was truly an all hands effort that paid off."

Battle



"To the Sailors of USS GEORGE H.W. BUSH, congratulations on winning the 2011 COMNAVAIRLANT Carrier Battle "E" Award. Your sustained leadership led your team through a highly successful combat deployment in support of our continued war on terror, and has also culminated in your selection as the CNAL Battle "E" winner. Your commitment to excellence cannot be understated," read a separate message from Rear Adm. Branch. This is an incredible achievement for a ship that has just completed her maiden deployment and I look forward to future accomplishments. Please extend my heartiest congratulations to each member of your ship for a job well done."

USS George H.W. Bush was also named a recipient of the U.S. Fleet Forces FY-11 Retention Excellence Award, also known as the "Golden Anchor," which recognizes the command's career information program, minimal attrition among junior Sailors, and exception management in support of retention programs. Ships winning the Retention Excellence Award are authorized to paint their anchors gold.

"Your successes represent your command's commitment to the growth and development of your Sailors and will serve as the foundation of fleet readiness. Congratulations and well done," read the message from Commander, Fleet Forces Command Adm. John C. Harvey.

USS George H.W. Bush was the only operational carrier to sweep the departmental "E" competitions, earning the following honors:

Air Dept. - Yellow E
Aircraft Intermediate Maintenance Dept. - Black E
Combat Systems Dept. - Green CS
Damage Control - Red DC
Deck Dept. - White Crossed Anchors with Black D
Health Services Dept. - Blue M
Navigation Dept. - White Ship's Wheel
Operations Dept. - Green E
Reactor Dept. - Red E
Safety Dept. - Green S
Security - Black S
Supply Dept. - Blue E
Weapons Dept. - Black W
Carrier Maintenance - Purple E

New doc Checks in

Introducing the ship's new Psychologist

Story and photo by MC3 Derrik Noack

At the age of four, Lt. Lisseth Calvio and her mother left her home country of El Salvador and moved to New Jersey in search of a new life and new opportunity. Since then, she devoted her time to helping others and serving a country that provided her more than she ever thought possible, and now Calvio is doing that as the ship's new psychologist.

"I would have never had the opportunities I did, if I hadn't immigrated to America," said Calvio. "So, I felt it was important for me to give back to my country, and I signed up for the Navy as soon as I could."

Calvio's Navy career began at the age of 18 when she enlisted as a Nuclear Power Machinist's Mate. Shortly after completing her basic training and "A" school, she was selected to be an officer through the Navy's ROTC program.

Upon earning her bachelor's in psychology from George Washington University in 2001, Calvio was stationed in San Diego as a Surface Warfare Officer. Before she could continue to pursue her dreams of being a psychologist, she first had to pay back the Navy for the ROTC college program, so she chose to be a ship driver for three years onboard USS Belleau Wood and USS Pearl Harbor.

After returning to school and earning her doctorate in psychology at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences in 2009, Calvio was sent to work at a trauma center in Kandahar, Afghanistan.

"Working in Afghanistan was very intense, but rewarding," said Calvio. "My main goal while there was working on unit cohesion, for both the injured service members and my crew."

That same unity is something she hopes to carry over to her new assignment. Calvio said she plans to establish solid programs and resources for anyone who may need them.

"The crew here is very close-knit," said Calvio. "You can tell the chain of command cares about their Sailors. I just want to build on that."

Advancement preparation classes are first on her agenda, and each of them will teach new techniques to Sailors who may find tests intimidating. She also hopes to build onto the ship's existing programs, with a focus on suicide and depression prevention, as well as some of the more common problems, such as relationships, anger, and adjustment problems.

"There are so many resources on a carrier," said Calvio. "We can develop great programs by combining forces and pulling all of those resources together."

Calvio also emphasizes that although some Sailors may not feel comfortable talking about their problems, anyone who comes to see her will be treated with respect.

"I'm not here to judge anyone," said Calvio. "I come from a humble background."

Above all, Calvio hopes to inspire all who may find themselves going through a hard time.

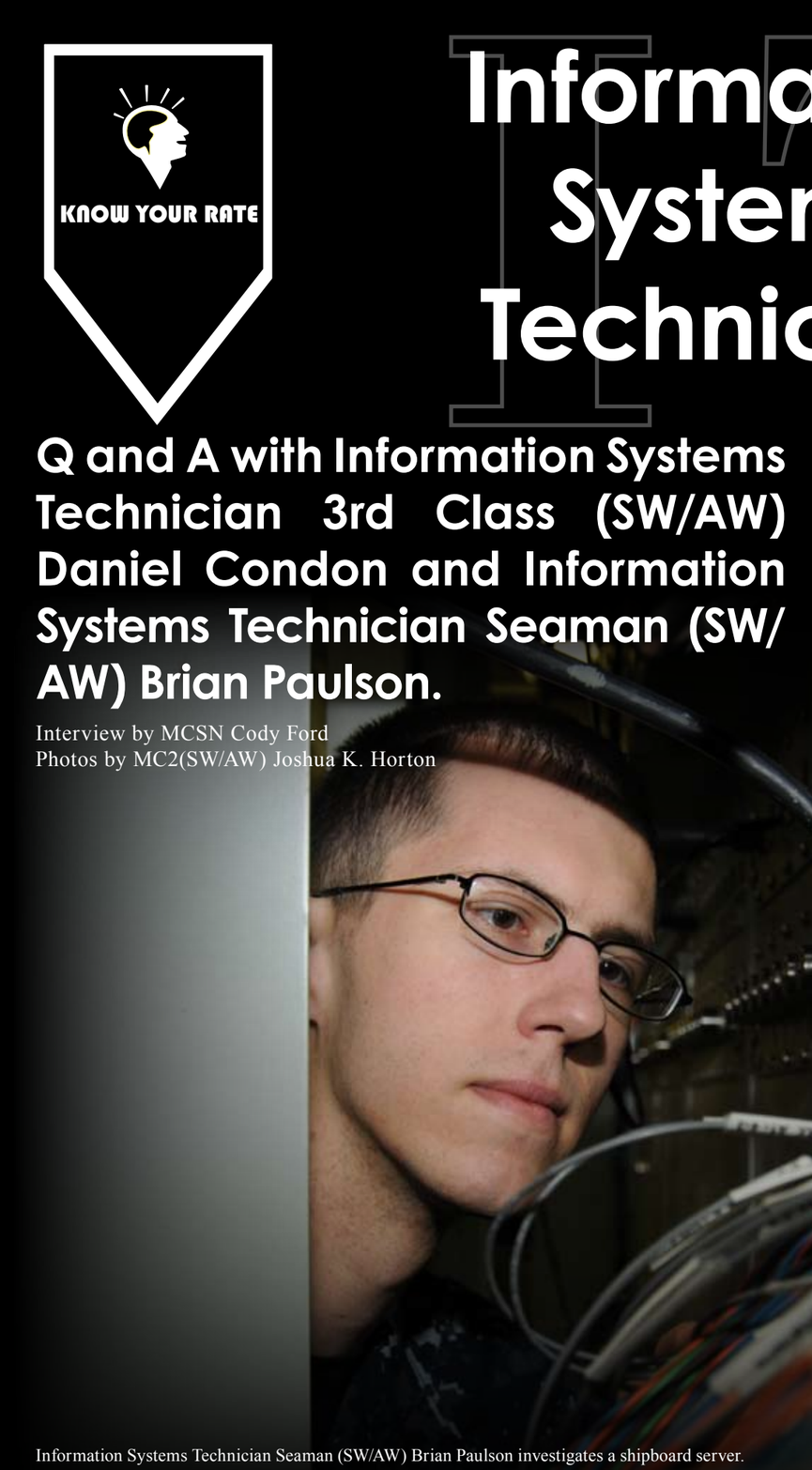
"No matter what your background or where you come from, if you set goals you can accomplish them," said Calvio.

KNOW YOUR RATE

Information Systems Technician

Q and A with Information Systems Technician 3rd Class (SW/AW) Daniel Condon and Information Systems Technician Seaman (SW/AW) Brian Paulson.

Interview by MCSN Cody Ford
Photos by MC2(SW/AW) Joshua K. Horton



Information Systems Technician Seaman (SW/AW) Brian Paulson investigates a shipboard server.

What do ITs do?

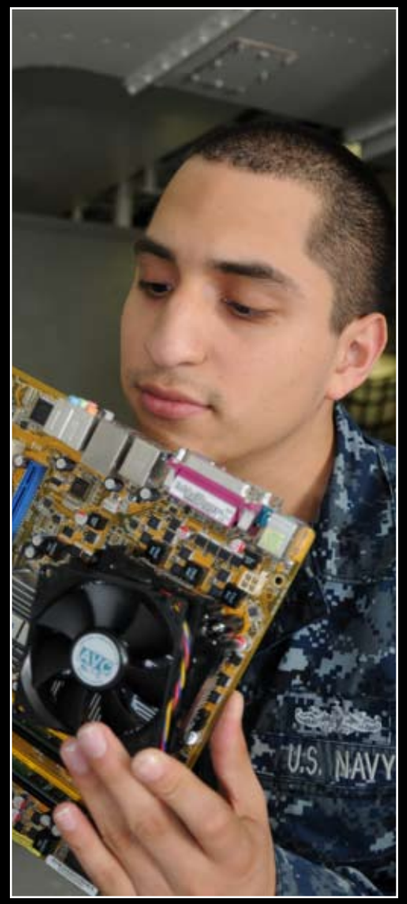
Condon: In Automated Data Processing (ADP) we take care of customer's computer accounts as well as fix computers and other peripherals on board. We also have ITs up in radio who deal with cryptology as well as connections off-ship. Then we have ITs in network security that secure our ship's computer network to make sure no one hacks into the network.
Paulson: Our main job is to maintain the ship's network. We make sure that it's up and running efficiently.

What is a typical day like for an IT?

Paulson: I work nights, so for me, my day starts at 1800. The first few hours are the busiest because that's when the most trouble tickets come in. The rest of the night is spent performing maintenance on the system and ensuring that the network is backed up correctly.

What is the most interesting part of your job?

Condon: We get to go around the ship and see everyone. I've been all the way up to the 09 and as far down as the 8th deck; all the way forward, all the way back in the jet shop. All over the ship.



What's the hardest part of your job?

Paulson: The hardest thing about being an IT is repairing a downed network. If the network goes down, we have to work until it's up and running again. Sometimes, the process takes quite a while.

What is the most common issue you face on a daily basis?

Paulson: We deal with corrupt profiles and broken email accounts all the time. It's definitley the most common issue.
Condon: Printers are also a constant problem.

Can you get me faster internet?

Condon: No, we can't.

Top left: Information Systems Technician Seaman (SW) Gilberto Palacios examines the internal components of a computer. Top right: Information Systems Technician 3rd Class (SW/AW) Daniel Condon researches a trouble call made to ADP.

Information Systems Technician 3rd Class (SW/AW) Daniel Condon troubleshoots a shipboard server.

"Battle E" Brothers

Story by MC2(SW) Byron C. Linder, USS Carl Vinson and MC2(SW/AW)Joshua K. Horton, USS George H. W. Bush.

The Navy's Battle Efficiency (Battle "E") honor is awarded annually to the small number of U.S. Navy ships that win their battle effectiveness competition. The top aircraft carriers for 2011 were announced Feb. 10 as the San Diego-based Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70) and the Norfolk, Va.-based USS George H. W. Bush (CVN 77).

The Battle "E" is designed to measure and recognize a command's sustained superior performance and battle efficiency in an operational environment through the calendar year. And on the two ships - separated by the length of the United States - serve two life-long friends, each a winner in the competition.

Carl Vinson's Culinary Specialist Seaman Phillip Collins, assigned to Supply Department's S-2 division, grew up with Bush's Aviation Ordnanceman Airman Ryan Cowan, assigned to Weapons Department's G-1 division, in their hometown of Los Angeles. Though not related by blood, the "godbrothers'" relationship runs deep throughout the years spent together.

"We grew up together, went to all four years of high school together, and our parents are really good friends," Collins said. "I've known him all my life."

Throughout their lives, the spirit of competition has and will always be a key element in their relationship.

"We're always competing with each other," said Cowan. "Whether it's sports, video games, or professional accomplishments, we're constantly trying to out-do the other."

In high school, the brothers' thoughts turned to the future. Both had their eyes set on joining the Navy together as Hospital Corpsmen. But Collins elected to go to college, while Cowan chose to join the Navy straight away.

"At the time he joined, he wanted to leave immediately. But HM wasn't open, and AO was, so he took that," Collins said. "When I finally decided to go about a year later, CS was open, and I didn't want to wait to be an AO or HM."

Their families' reaction to the brothers' decision was initially of concern.

"They wanted both of us to go to college. They were kind of scared, they didn't want us to get hurt or anything like that," Collins said. "But now they're very proud of us."

Collins reported to Carl Vinson Sept. 2010, and contributed to the effort in Supply Department's earning the highest recorded score of 99.3 for the ship's Supply Management Inspection three months later. The inspection was worth 40 of 100 points for the "Blue 'E'" Battle "E" departmental award.

Although the distance separating them is great, both Collins and Cowan make it a priority to communicate with one another on a regular basis.

"We send emails regularly to stay in touch, but anytime I have an opportunity to travel back to California, we get together," said Cowan.

It's through those e-mails and occasional vacation time, that they keep their competitive streak alive, incorporating the achievement of professional goals.

"We battle about warfare pins. I'm working on my surface pin and he's working on his air pin. I'm winning right now, because I'm about to take my murder board," Collins said with a smile.

For Collins, the Battle "E" represents a personal and professional point of pride and a well-deserved acknowledgement for Vinson's back-to-back combat deployments.

"It's a great accomplishment. I'm proud of my chain of command, my ship. It's pretty cool. We worked really hard these two deployments. We haven't been home a lot, and we're being recognized for those sacrifices," he said.

Cowan says that for him, the Battle "E" is a culmination of the hard work and sacrifice that he and so many others put in during deployment.

"This award reflects the dedication to success that we have on board the ship," said Cowan. "Our Weapons Department worked really hard for this, and I'm happy to be a part of something special."

And the award goes to...

CVN 77 Engineer and PPWO of the Year

Story by MC2(SW/AW) Joshua K. Horton

USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) Sailors Electrician's Mate 1st Class (SW/AW) Daniel J. Kliche and Lt. Ryan P. Kelly were announced as the 2011 Commander, Naval Air Force Atlantic (COMNAVAIRLANT) Engineer of the Year and Propulsion Plant Officer of the Watch of the Year, respectively.

As the Leading Petty Officer for Reactor Department's Electrical Division (RE), Kliche demonstrated solid deck plate leadership and expert technical skills. Kliche's efforts helped his division earn a strong performance grade during the ship's most recent inspections, and significantly improved the ship's ability to conduct combat operations during the ship's first combat deployment in 2011. Despite earning the award as an individual, Kliche gives credit to his team for the honor.

"I give the credit to my peers and crewmembers around me," said Kliche. "Without their help, I wouldn't have been able to accomplish something like this."

Similarly, Kelly, who serves in the Reactor Department's Electrical Division, believes that the awards he and Kliche received are a direct result of focus and dedication- an example of what can be achieved when a department works together to achieve a common goal.

"This award is really a tribute to the entire department," said Kelly. I wouldn't be where I am today if it wasn't for the hard work and prowess of the crew."

Both Kliche and Kelly acknowledge that these awards didn't come easy. Over the course of the year, the George H.W. Bush Reactor Department conducted countless drills and spent many hours in the classroom learning the specifics of their jobs in order to prepare each of them for any situation that might come their way.

Electrician's Mate 1st Class (SW/AW) Daniel J. Kliche reviews maintenance packages. Photo by MC3 Derrik Noack.

"Because of the announcements made over the 1MC, everyone hears the drills we do, but that's only a small part," said Kelly. "The drills, the time spent in the classroom, it's all designed to keep the reactor safe and keep the ship operating at 100 percent."

"We're constantly trying to improve on what we do," said Kliche. "We're never satisfied because we all know that we can do better."

According to Kelly, the awards reflect the culture onboard the ship, setting it apart from other ships.

"I think that winning these awards two years in a row says a lot about who we are and what we bring to the waterfront," said Kelly.

This is the second year in a row that a GHWB Sailor has won the Engineer of the Year award. It is also the second time a GHWB Sailor has earned the Propulsion Plant Watch Officer distinction.

Lt. Ryan P. Kelly, 2011 COMNAVAIRLANT Propulsion Plant Watch Officer of the Year.

ORANGE & WHITES: T-45 GOSHAWKS TOUCH DOWN

1. Air-Traffic Controller 2nd Class Gregory Clemmons stands the departure position watch in the carrier air traffic control center. Photo by MC3(SW) Kasey Krall. 2. Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Equipment) 2nd Class Eric D. Carlyon, right, trains Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Equipment) 3rd Class Jordan T. Koepke on arresting gear equipment. Photo by MC2(SW/AW) Tony D. Curtis. 3. Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Handling) 3rd Class Sara E. Cruz directs a T-45 Goshawk, from Training Wing 1, on the flight deck. Photo by MCSN(SW/AW) Brian Read Castillo. 4. Sailors refuel a T-45 Goshawk, assigned to Training Wing 1, on the flight deck. Photo by MC3(SW) Kasey Krall.

Sailors handle de-energized cables on the flight deck in preparation for a magnetic treatment (DEPERM). The DEPERM process reduces the electromagnetic signature of the ship in order to limit its exposure to undersea mine detection. Photo by MCSN(SW/AW)Brian Read Castillo.