

USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77)

THE AVENGER

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THIS MONTH:

Warrior Challenge | CENTCOM aboard | Bahrain

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From the Command Master Chief



Greetings GHWB families and friends,

During the past month, your Sailors were able to enjoy a port visit in Manama, Bahrain and, for many, experience Islamic culture for the first time. Dozens of Sailors made it a point to participate in one of the three community relation projects that were offered. The Bahraini people that our Sailors chose to visit were grateful to meet them and I truly feel we made a difference in their lives. The experience certainly helped to broaden the knowledge and understanding of the crew, as well as provide a chance

for some unique souvenirs, which you will be able to see soon enough. In fact, we are already approaching the half-way point of the deployment.

Up until then, however, we have a lot of work to do. We have been actively supporting our ground troops as part of Operation New Dawn and Operation Enduring Freedom. In doing so, we have asked a great deal from your Sailors. And while some of the past days were spent in port, many days have been challenging and long, and even more days were unbelievably hot. But throughout it all the crew has displayed just how much pride and professionalism they possess. We would not have been as successful as we have been without the contribution of every member of the crew, regardless of rank or where he or she worked. Whether it was the green shirts working the catapults to launch our planes or the machinist's mates keeping our propulsion system operating, your Sailors did their part.

Our crew is made up of tremendous people with a work ethic that continually amazes me both during and after working hours. Recently, we began a competition on board called Professional Pursuit, where Sailors test their knowledge of naval trivia and military requirements. Teams face off in the evening on the mess decks and I have had the honor of helping to oversee many of the competitions. The knowledge and motivation of

the participants is truly encouraging. These Sailors could use their time in many other ways but they choose to improve themselves. It is evident every week when I see the growing list of newly qualified surface and air warfare specialists. Your Sailors' dedication to improving themselves mentally makes our ship stronger and better prepared to face any challenge that may come our way.

Sailors are also taking the opportunity to improve physically. The 77-Day Warrior Challenge has been very successful in helping many to make healthy changes to their lifestyles. Every night the hangar bay is full of Sailors participating in one of the half dozen fitness classes offered through the ship's Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) services program. For some classes, we simply don't have enough room.

Overall, I couldn't be happier with the conduct of the crew and their motivation to excel. They are making our country proud with each port call and every day at sea. They are ambassadors wherever they go and they continue to execute the nation's tasking with pride and professionalism. The days ahead may be long but we are ready. We have trained for this mission and we are truly freedom at work. †

Sincerely,

CMDCM (SW) D.R. Colton
Command Master Chief

ACCOMPLISHMENTS FROM JULY:

- Successful completion of first port call to Bahrain
- Participated in three community relations projects during Bahrain port visit
- George H.W. Bush Carrier Strike Group flew 2035 sorties for 5529.7 hours in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation New Dawn and maritime security operations



On the cover:

A Sailor fires a .50 caliber machine gun during a live fire exercise on the fantail aboard USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) July 19. Photo illustration by MC3 Joshua Sheppard and MC3 Michael Smevog.

77-Day Warrior Challenge

Part 1 of 4

Story and layout by MC2(SW) Timothy Walter

Some were exhausted. Some barely struggled. But all the Sailors who completed the initial assessment for the 77-Day Warrior Challenge aboard USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) left the ship's hangar bay equally on track to achieving their personal goals in the program.

Those goals were just as varied as the ranks and backgrounds of the 330 people who chose to dedicate the next 11 weeks of their deployment to the self-improvement program, which addresses the mind, body and spirit through class-based training, exercise and religious encouragement.

One Sailor wanted to improve his temper and help a shipmate. Two airmen from Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 15 joined so they could stay motivated while working night shift, as well as learn about proper nutrition. And at least one limited duty officer joined so that she could retire after 26 years in the Navy both healthy and strong.

Lt. Cmdr. Carrie Dreyer, the ship's physical therapist and health promotion program manager, helped design the program so that all these Sailors could tackle each one of their different goals in some way through the program.

"I wanted it to be different," said Dreyer. "I wanted a program that addressed the whole person and not just weight loss."

While other aircraft carriers often conduct a "Biggest Loser" competition during deployment, she said Sailors deserved a program that tackled every aspect of a person's fitness. With that idea, she and other members of the ship's health promotion committee designed the 77-Day Warrior Challenge. After many hours of work from Medical Department and a crew of volunteers, Sailors were able to begin the challenge on either June 20 or 27. Due to operational conditions, Sailors began the initial assessment in two groups separated by one week.

As part of the program, Sailors will track their progress in a provided book to monitor nutritional intake, daily exercise, religious activities and attendance in the weekly classes. The scores that Sailors logged during the initial battery of physical tests will serve as a baseline for their records. They will have the option of undergoing the same test at weeks four and eight to monitor their progress.

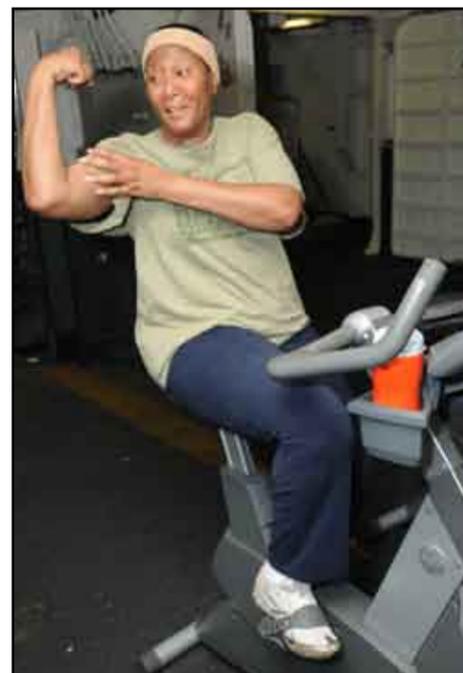
"We are generally working with a healthy and fairly young population in the military, but it may be an eye-opener for some," Dreyer said.



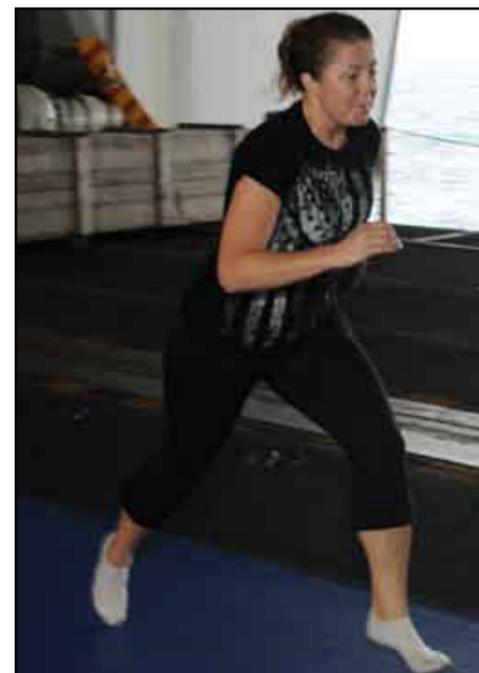
Fire Controlman 2nd Class (SW/AW) Will Agoras performs the standing broad jump. Photo by MCSN Molly Treece.



Electronics Technician 3rd Class Matt Turner pedals the stationary bike. Photo by MC2(SW) Timothy Walter.



Lt. Sandra Roberts pedals the stationary bike. Photo by MC2(SW) Timothy Walter.



Aviation Structural Mechanic Airman Erin Robinson performs the pro-agility drill. Photo by MC2(SW) Timothy Walter.



Aviation Machinist's Mate Airman (AW) Megan Kehoe performs the one-leg prone plank. Photo by MC2(SW) Timothy Walter.

At week 11, the test will be held again to show how much the participants have improved. Those marks will count for two-thirds of their overall score. Participation in the other portions of the program will make up the remaining third.

The participants will receive a t-shirt and water bottle as prizes for keeping on track with the follow-up assessments. However, she said the true prize will be the fulfillment of achieving the goals each person has set out to meet.

"It is about making a change that can become a habit which continues beyond the 11 weeks," she said.

Among the participants, Fire Controlman 2nd Class (SW/AW) Will Agoras from Combat Systems Department's CS-6 Division stands out. For him, losing weight is clearly not the goal. In fact, most days of the week, he can be found in the hangar bay pushing others to their physical limit during his aptly-named Beatdown class – a modified hour-long circuit training session.

During the initial assessment, he set the day's record time for the one-leg prone plank. When he stepped on the stationary bike and began to pedal, there was little strain as he easily reached the three-mile mark. And during the stand-

ing broad jump, he clearly showed his ability to leap. Yet he still chose to take up the challenge so that he could attain goals beyond visible endurance.

"I have a bad temper, so I am going to take this time to find stress-relieving classes that I wouldn't have known about before," he said.

He is also motivated by the opportunity to help others. As the leader of the Beatdown class, he noticed that the number of people that join his workouts has grown as a result of the challenge. By joining them, he felt he would be able to motivate and mentor those he teaches.

"It is the camaraderie of the warrior next to me," he said, adding that he wants to take advantage of the nutritional classes being offered so that he can pass along the knowledge. "If they're doing the program I want to be doing the program with them. The more I know, the more I can help other people."

Most importantly, he wanted to help his partner in the challenge, Electronics Technician 3rd Class Matt Turner, who used to attend the Beatdown class but fell out a few months ago.

"It's just as much about him as it is me," he said. "I think the best thing about the challenge is that we are not doing it alone. We are all a part of a team."

Turner said he is ready to get back into shape after several months of eating junk food and smoking. He said having a partner to keep him in check will make a difference during the 11 weeks.

"Every day I slack off, I'm not just letting myself down but letting him down as well," Turner said, adding that he is trying to schedule his meals with Agoras so that he maintains his diet. He plans to lose at least 10 pounds and finally conquer his nicotine addiction.

Partners were not a prerequisite to join the challenge. However, they were highly encouraged. Dreyer said she wanted Sailors to find what worked for them and not exclude anyone.

"People like the idea of having a partner to encourage and work out with them," she said. "They tend to be more diligent and consistent in keeping with the program. But we realize that some people just work better alone."

Aviation Structural Mechanic Airman Erin Robinson and Aviation Machinist's Mate Airman (AW) Megan Kehoe, both from VFA-15, found that working together helps them stay motivated. They met while working together in the line shack and have maintained a schedule of exercising for one hour five

days a week during the deployment. They joined the challenge as a team and felt it would provide a nice change of pace to the regular work day.

"The Warrior Challenge keeps your mind off of the hectic job you just did and gives you a goal to strive for," Robinson said. "We both enjoy working out, so this gives us one more reason to stay with it."

Kehoe is excited about the nutritional classes being offered as part of the challenge. She is less excited that they are being held during the day, especially since they both work from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m.

"We're trying to figure that out," Kehoe said. "Catnaps and 5-hour Energy should work."

Regardless of the classes, both Kehoe and Robinson showed their motivation in simply showing up for the initial assessment, which was held in the middle of the day.

"We can shower, eat and then it's back to work," said Kehoe after only a couple hours of sleep.

Carrier Air Wing 8 Administration Officer Lt. Sandra Roberts did not have a partner when she signed the initial assessment in Medical but she was confident that the people around her would help see her through the challenge.

"I have a lot of coaches who I told about

the program and they are already encouraging me," Roberts said. "I'm happy to be in the program because there are a lot of people in it with me."

After 26 years in the Navy, 9 of which as a limited duty officer, Roberts said she was happy to be spending her last deployment on the ship's first before she retired and she wanted to make the time she had left count.

"I'm trying to be healthy going into retirement," she said. "This program gives me the opportunity to practice lifting weights in addition to my regular workouts. Ultimately the goal as you get older is to defy gravity."

Despite participating in several workout programs weekly, including Zumba and Turbo Jam, she was nervous as she approached the test course in the hangar bay but she completed each test and made her way to the stationary bike. She struggled and nearly stopped. But each time the corpsmen and bystanders cheered her on. When she made it to three miles, those nearby began to congratulate her. Hospital Corpsmen 3rd Class Gibbi Johnson was among them and gave Roberts a fist bump as she started to mount the bike for her own test.

"You made the corpsmen proud," Johnson said. †

Liberty Call

Khalifa Bin Salman, Bahrain

Story and layout by MCSN(SW) Jessica Echerrri

George H.W. Bush Carrier Strike Group (CSG) resumed underway operations in the Arabian Sea July 14 after completing a four-day port visit to Khalifa Bin Salman, Bahrain.

Sailors participated in nine recreational and cultural tours sponsored by the ship's Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) services program and volunteered in four community relation projects (COMREL).

More than 750 Sailors purchased tickets for discounted tours offered by the ship's MWR. Sailors experienced both the cultural side of Bahrain with food tastings and a tour of the Grand Mosque as well as the recreational side by swimming with dolphins, fishing, golfing and going to a local water park. MWR subsidized more than 30 percent of the costs of tours.

"The water park tour was a great way to stay cool in the heat," said Damage Controlman 3rd Class (SW) Laron Cooke. "Everyone got together after riding the slides to play water volleyball. It was a blast."

Naval Support Activity (NSA) Bahrain offered George H.W. Bush CSG Sailors use of the sports fields, available computers, WiFi areas, and shopping at the Navy Exchange. MWR set up tournaments on base for Sailors to

play basketball, softball and flag football.

"Playing pick up games of basketball with fellow Sailors on base at NSA Bahrain was exciting and enjoyable," said Electrician's Mate 2nd Class (SW) Fernando Landeros, assigned to the ship's Engineering Department's E-division.

The ship's Command Religious Ministries Department organized several COMRELS during the port visit. George H.W. Bush's soccer team competed in a friendly soccer match with a local Bahraini soccer team July 10. Sailors tutored children in math, English and arts at the Regional Institute for Active Learning July 12. The institute specializes in teaching students with special needs but also incorporates a learning program for non-needs children without the means for an education. The Embassy of the Philippines in Manama, Bahrain, offered George H.W. Bush Sailors the chance to socialize with residents of a local women's shelter July 11.

"It's important to give back to the community, no matter what community you're in," said Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Kendrah Agostini, who participated in a COMREL at the women's shelter. "It's rewarding to take some of our limited liberty time and give to a good cause."

This was the fourth scheduled port visit for George H.W. Bush, which entered the 5th Fleet area of responsibility, June 18. †



Sailors pose for a group photo at the Al Bander Hotel and Resort while on a Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) services program-sponsored tour in Bahrain. Photo by MC3(SW) Leonard Adams.

STEAM & HEAT TEAM

Story, photos and layout by MC3 Derrik Noack

Machinist's Mate 3rd Class Bryan Keast and Machinist's Mate 3rd Class Austin Murphy walk into the Steam and Heat Engineering shop, wrenches in hand, after tightening valves on a steam kettle in the aft galley. Before they can put their tools away and close the tool box, there's a knock at the door and the phone starts to ring.

A garbage grinder in the forward galley stopped working and a dryer in the laundry room is leaking. Keast and Murphy head back out the door toward the galley while Machinist's Mate Fireman Benjamin Bagwell grabs his tools and leaves for ship's laundry.

Within minutes all three return, ready for the next knock at the door or phone call asking for something to be fixed.

Bagwell, Keast and Murphy are three of the eight Sailors who make up the Steam and Heat portion of the ship's Auxiliary Division, or "A" Gang, which is responsible for hundreds of pieces of equipment on board.

"We monitor and maintain all hotel services," said Keast. "It's our job to take care of all of the cold potable water, hot water heaters, laundry equipment, galley equipment, pumps that supply head pressure, and steam throughout the ship. We also supply the water used to wash down aircraft."

"We get calls from all over the ship," said Machinist's Mate 2nd Class (SW) Jeff Brandow. "We get excited when we get to do something new. It may not be the most glorious work, but we get a feeling of satisfaction when we complete a job."

When a washer springs a leak or a presser suddenly stops working in Ship's Laundry, the members of the "A" Gang are quick to respond, especially since their shop is located a just

few steps away.

"They know how backed up laundry can get if something breaks," said Aviation Electronics Technician Airman Rebecca Ste. Croix, who is assigned to Ship's Laundry. "We generally call them once a day. They grab their tools and fix it right away."

Before pulling out in May, the "A" Gang spent four weeks repairing laundry machines and making sure they would be durable enough for the thousands of Sailors using them during deployment.

"It was a long process," said Brandow. "We had to order new parts, install them and then haul the broken equipment off."

Brandow said a perk of the job is getting to see the parts of the ship that other Sailors normally cannot view.

"I get to go everywhere because we own equipment in almost every compartment," said Brandow. "Some of the inner piping looks like a jungle gym. I like getting in there and finding out how to fix it all."

With the ship going into different climates, the Steam and Heat team have a lot of work ahead of them.

"The piping contracts or expands depending on the temperature," said Brandow. "When that happens seals can break and they need to be replaced quickly."

The job can be stressful, hot and difficult, but the members of the "A" Gang take pride in the family-like bond they have with each other.

"I genuinely enjoy working with these guys," said Machinist's Mate 2nd Class (SW) Jamie Eichenlaub. "We're a tight-knit group and we all enjoy the job." †



MM3 Bryan Keast and MM3 Austin Murphy tighten a valve on a steam kettle in the aft galley.



MMFN Benjamin Bagwell fixes a steam leak on an industrial tumbler dryer in ship's laundry.

LIVE FIRE

Photos and layout by MCSN Greg Wilhelmi

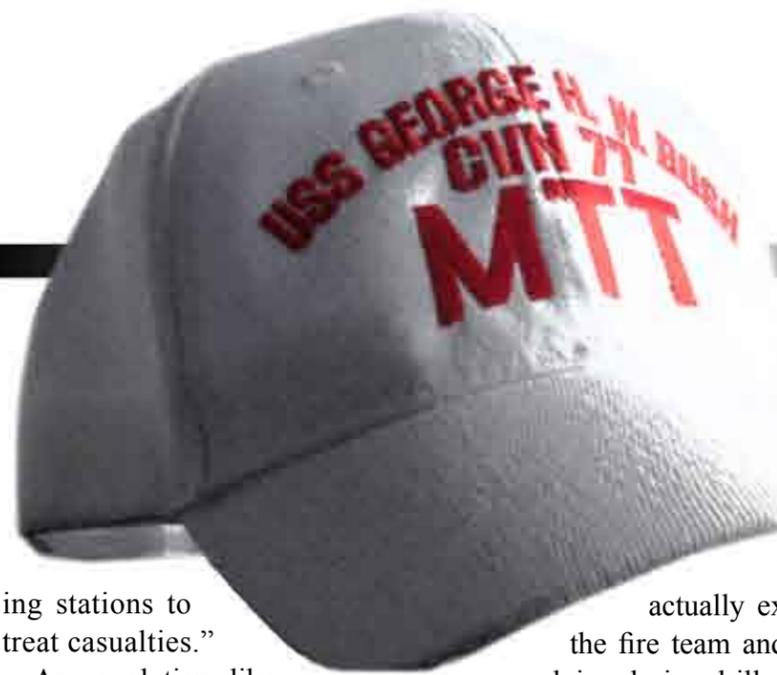


1. Aviation Ordnanceman Airman Ryan Grant shoots at a target during live fire training.
 2. Aviation Ordnanceman 2nd Class Jeremy Rooks sets up for live fire training.
 3. Aviation Ordnanceman 2nd Class Jeremy Rooks gives bullets to Chief Boatswain's Mate Tommy Cox.
 4. Aviation Ordnanceman 1st Class Robert Thompson, left, and Aviation Ordnanceman 2nd Class

Jeremy Rooks set up targets for live fire training.
 5. Sailors prepare for live fire training.
 6. Sailors shoot at targets during live fire training.
 7. Gunner's Mate 3rd Class Cody Hayden tallies a shooter's score.
 8. Aviation Ordnanceman 2nd Class Jeremy Rooks, right, and Aviation Ordnanceman 1st Class Robert Thompson set up targets for live fire training.

TRAIN LIKE WE FIGHT

Story, photos and layout by
MCSN(SW) Jessica Echerrri



MEDICAL TRAINING TEAM

When mass casualty is called away over the IMC, every corpsman aboard USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) immediately springs into action. They report to their designated stations to prepare for triage and treatment in the hangar bay and mess decks. Stretcher bearers bring wounded Sailors to the holding area where the triage officer decides

what kind of treatment is needed and sends the patient down the elevator to be treated by doctors and corpsman in the mess decks.

Every Sailor involved in the evolution is focused on his or her part of the mission. Amid the chaos of work being done to keep the ship and crew safe, the 16 members of the Medical Training Team (MTT) observe every

response by the ship's crew in order to guide and correct with an organized understanding.

"We are here to make sure everyone knows how to do the job right," said Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class (FMF) Robert High, a member of the ship's MTT. "If they're making mistakes, they could be harming themselves or their shipmates."

The MTT monitors and evaluates three types of evolutions: general quarters (GQ), mass casualty drills and medical response team drills. Team members plan with other ship training teams and departments to create a realistic scenario and to set up safety guidelines before every evolution.

Lt. Cmdr. Tracy Vincent, the ship's nurse, has been the lead team member of MTT for nearly one year. She said MTT's evaluations ensure the integrity of the ship's medical response teams and stretcher bearers.

"During a GQ, the goal is to continue to fight the ship while saving as many lives as possible," Vincent said. "Hose team members need to stay on the hose. They can't stop for a casualty; that's why we have personnel in repair lockers and battle dress-

ing stations to treat casualties."

Any evolution, like a mass casualty or GQ drill, require support from all over the ship.

"We can't do anything alone," said Vincent. "Anytime we do a mass casualty drill, it's the whole ship's effort. Weapons Department helps with the elevators, Supply secures the mess decks, Damage Control Central tracks

casualties, and Media is there to document for training and forensics."

After each evolution, team members brief with all parties involved to talk about improvement – MTT's main goal.

"There's always room for improvement," Vincent said. "That's why we keep doing the drills, because we want to get better each and every time."

Vincent said being a part of the MTT gives herself and other team members an opportunity to learn about other areas of the ship's mission they wouldn't have seen before. Knowing how other teams on the ship are responding to casualties can help them to treat casualties during an actual emergency.

"They get to actually experience what the fire team and shoring team are doing during drills," Vincent said. "My team needs to know and understand everything that goes on."

The MTT is responsible for ensuring all personnel on board are properly trained in their medical response duties. At the very least, ev-

ery Sailor must be able to administer basic first aid as a first responder on the scene of a casualty. High said the crew members who are tasked as first responders have improved during each training evolution.

"The crew does a really good job with their responses," said High. "Our Sailors are really motivated and always improving." +

"Our Sailors are really motivated and always improving."

HM2 (FMF) Robert High
Medical Training Team



Hospital Corpsman 1st Class (SW/AW/FMF) Mark Gornitzka evaluates members of the medical response team as they treat a patient in medical.



Hospital Corpsman 1st Class (SS) Walter Shields, center, observes Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class (SW/AW) Marc Maribao and Lt. Cmdr. John Balentine during a medical emergency drill.



SECURITY

Reaction Force Basic

Story, photos and layout by MCSN Molly Treece



Gunner's Mate Seaman Chelsea Lindblad participates in security training in the hangar bay.



Master-at-Arms 1st Class Brian Wright demonstrates a proper hold during security training in the foc'sle.

Twenty-one Sailors aboard USS George H.W. Bush graduated from the Security Reaction Force Basic (SRF-B) course July 8.

Those Sailors will be quickly integrated into the Security Department and will be responsible for overall Force Protection and Anti-Terrorism efforts of the ship, said Master-at-Arms 1st Class Brian Wright, security leading petty officer and lead SRF-B instructor.

The course is the first step in security for members who have been selected to serve in the ship's security department for a one-year term. SRF-B involves classroom and hands-on training in tactical team movements, weapons, Navy Use of Force, Deadly Force policy and rules and regulations in basic law enforcement duties.

During this course, members will also learn and qualify in the use of non-lethal weapons and oleoresin capsicum. This course will give each member the basic tools and techniques to perform their job while in Security.

Temporarily assigned duty (TAD) Sailors work hand-in-hand with MAs assigned to the ship. Wright said that aside from the fact from MAs are rated in law enforcement, there is no difference between the two.

"Our job cannot be completed without the help and augments provided by TAD personnel," he said.

The security division is not only responsible for overall protection but is responsible for operation of the ship's Brig, the command urinalysis program, and the Force Protection Training Team (FPTT). During patrols of the ship, they also report any identified safety issues to Safety and Damage Control.

"We take extreme pride in what we do for others," said Wright. "Our purpose is selfless."

During their time in security, TAD personnel will ex-

perience a range of opportunities that will allow for both personal and professional growth, said Wright.

"I'm always excited to learn in new areas," said Air Traffic Controlman 3rd Class Catherine Serrett, graduate of SRF-B course and TAD to security for one year. "The security training that I received will help me when I go TAD; however, the skills I have learned will be beneficial in my everyday life as well."

In addition to security training, Wright said that going TAD allows Sailors to learn about other rates and become a well-rounded sailor. Most importantly, it let's them take an active part in protecting the ship.

"We are a diverse team with various experience levels with one goal -- defending the ship and its crew against all threats," said Wright. "We adapt. We overcome. We succeed."

The next SRF-B class is scheduled for July 25. †



Master-at-Arms 1st Class Brian Wright observes Aviation Support Equipment Technician 2nd Class David Murray fight off an attacker after being sprayed with oleoresin capsicum during a security training class in the hangar bay.



Master-at-Arms 1st Class Kenyatta Hayes sprays Aviation Ordnanceman 2nd Class Mark Gill with oleoresin capsicum during security training in the hangar bay.



Cryptological Technician (Technical) 3rd Class Nathan Troyer stands security lookout watch on the flight deck.

Celebrating freedom At Work

Story and layout by MCSN Gregory Wilhelmi

The temperature was hot, the sales at the store were steep, and the fireworks – albeit from the end of a flare gun on the fantail – glowed brightly in the evening sky.

Despite being miles apart from their country's soil, the crew of USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) celebrated the Fourth of July in a manner similar to their families and friends back home. Cake, burgers, cotton candy, and enough barbecue and hot dogs to feed a family of over 5,000 Sailors filled the serving lines of the mess decks.

"It's usually a tradition to have a barbecue at ma's house," said Ship's Serviceman Seaman Apprentice Ashley King. "This is a good way to build morale."

Even though much was the same, some Sailors could not escape the vivid memories of the past.

"It's totally different than being home," said Ship's Serviceman 3rd Class (SW) Hakeem Henderson, "Right now, I'd be setting up picnic tables and getting everything ready."

Instead, Henderson was setting up the ship's store, Big Texas, for the discount electronic and emblematic sale at 9 a.m. The store started with about 25 computers, 50 to 60 cameras, 50 iPods, 40 pairs of headphones and numerous amounts of George H.W. Bush blankets and t-shirts. After 15 minutes, the iPods and headphones were sold out. After 20, the blankets and shirts were gone.

"People wanted what they could send home," said King. "They were at the door at 7:30 asking to help clean

just to get into the store early."

By the time it opened, the line stretched from the store through the mess decks.

In the galley, Sailors had been preparing for the all-day barbecue since 5 a.m.

The galley crew had to arrange decorations, set up for a cake-cutting ceremony and ice cream social, and serve food from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

"It definitely breaks the monotony of the daily routine," said Air Traffic Controller 2nd Class Jeremy Kruchten.

The galley crew members weren't the only Sailors on the ship putting up decorations early in the morning.

The ship's coffee shop, The Lone Star Café, decorated their shop in red, white and blue paper chains and stars while Sailors from the ship's Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) Services Program handed out cotton candy.

"It's really cool that we get to enjoy Independence Day, even at sea," said Ship's Serviceman Seaman Apprentice Omari Fair.

Rear Adm. Nora W. Tyson, commander Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 2, used the cake-cutting ceremony as an opportunity to thank the crew for their efforts.

"There is nowhere I'd rather be



Interior Communications Electrician Fireman Jose Silvadelacruz, left, and Interior Communications Electrician 3rd Class Nicholas Negron enjoy the Fourth of July Barbeque meal aboard George H.W. Bush. Photo by MC2 Jeffrey Richardson.

than out here with some of the greatest patriots to serve our country, and our fellow man," said Tyson. "So thank you. Congratulate each other. You guys have a great birthday, enjoy your chow, and thanks for what you guys do every day."

Later, Capt. Brian E. Luther, George H.W. Bush commanding officer, also took time during his daily announcement to read the first part of the Declaration of Independence and to outline some important information to take away from the celebration.

"Remember that one day, many years from now, we will link our grandchildren to the memories of the past," said Luther. "And the ones sitting at home, your friends, family and neighbors, they won't have those stories to tell. No matter where you were born or raised, you are an American. The responsibility was passed down to us by our forefathers and we will pass it down to our grandchildren." †

CENTCOM aboard

Commander, U.S. Central Command

By U.S. Naval Forces Central Command
Layout by MC2 (SW) Timothy Walter



Gen. James N. Mattis, Commander, U.S. Central Command, speaks to the crew of George H.W. Bush during an all hands call. Photo by MC2 Jeffrey Richardson.



Gen. James N. Mattis, Commander, U.S. Central Command, speaks to the crew of George H.W. Bush during an all hands call. Photo by MC3 Billy Ho.

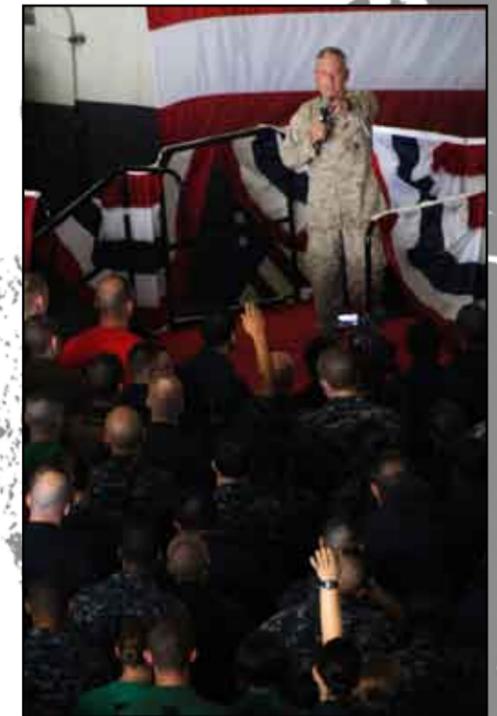
Commander, U.S. Central Command, accompanied the Sailors of the aircraft carrier USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) as it transited the Strait of Hormuz, July 15.

"The United States has critical interests in the continued safety and security of free trade in this region," said Mattis. "The professionalism of the Sailors aboard the George H.W. Bush is testimony to our military commitment to ensuring those interests are protected."

Gen. James N. Mattis, Commander, U.S. Central Command, embarked the Navy's newest aircraft carrier, visited with crewmembers and expressed his appreciation for their efforts in the region conducting maritime security operations and supporting Operation New Dawn.

"We can expect our nation to continue a presence in and near the Gulf for years to come," Mattis told the crew of the Bush. "The U.S. and our partners have a long history of cooperation and support for security and stability in the region."

George H.W. Bush is on its first operational deployment conducting maritime security operations and supporting Operations Enduring Freedom and New Dawn in the U.S. 5th Fleet AOR. †



Gen. James N. Mattis, Commander, U.S. Central Command, calls on a Sailor assigned to George H.W. Bush during an all hands call. Photo by MC2 Jeffrey Richardson.

BEATDOWN

A FUN NEW WAY TO GET FIT

Story by MC2 Sandi Grimnes
Photos by MC3 Michael Smevog

Five nights a week, Sailors gather in the hangar bay of USS GEORGE H.W. BUSH (CVN 77). They crowd around a man with a whistle around his neck and motivation flying off his tongue. Some nights there are 30 Sailors, other nights more than 50. They all come with the same goal – to get beat down.

Fire Controlman 2nd Class Will Agoras is the man in the middle. He leads this group of Sailors who are dedicated to improving their fitness in a class he titled Beatdown – a reference to both the method and intensity of the workout.

Beatdown is a modified circuit training class that combines cardio kickboxing, core and strength training, and cardio, Agoras said. The difference between his class and traditional circuit training classes is the “beatdown” that happens periodically between the stations. The class begins with everyone warming up as a group on the mats with the circuit station surrounding them. Once the warm-up is complete, the group breaks off into smaller groups of three or four and starts on the stations. After a few stations or when Agoras deems necessary, he calls them back to the middle

for a more intense workout, similar to an intense training session in boot camp.

“Beatdown is a combination of P90X and Insanity,” he said. “It’s not for everyone, but it is for all levels.”

He started teaching Beatdown nearly two years ago after becoming a certified instructor in circuit training. Agoras is also a certified instructor in cycling, cardio kickboxing and TRX Suspension training. He uses techniques from all the programs that he is certified in during Beatdown.

The class began with modest attendance but has gain in popularity since the beginning of deployment, he said. Prior to the Navy’s physical readiness test he would have around 20 people show up and on short underways that number could be as little as five.

“I just kept it going because if you’re steady and consistent people will show up,” Agoras said. “Now it’s just blown up with deployment



Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 9 Command Master Chief (AW/SW) Stephen Murray performs a lateral press using stretch bands.

and the 77-Day Warrior Challenge.”

“I go three to four times per week out of the five times offered,” said Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 9 Command Master Chief Stephen A. Murray. “My motivation is simple: I want to spend my deployment getting into great shape and form, as well as strengthen my knees and back after injuries in the past few years.”

Agoras said he thinks that most people who attend Beatdown come because they need other people to help motivate them. And Agoras is there to keep them on course with an aggressive but motivational method to make every participant work harder.

“He’s a complete nut and at least

four to five times per night, I despise him,” Murray said. “He takes things to a physical level that most of us don’t think we can meet, and then he takes it higher!”

Circuit training is the most efficient way to get into shape, Agoras said. Lifting weights will build muscle mass and running will improve cardio, but neither will improve overall fitness. According to Fitness Magazine, an all-strength circuit training burns 30 percent more calories than a typical weight workout.

A participant should start to see results in about two to three weeks of attending Beatdown, he said. Coming to class four to five times a week, a person should see big changes in just a few weeks.

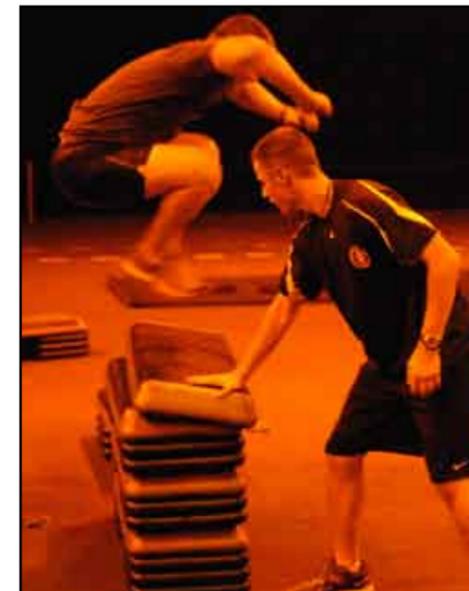
“You are not going to get away with cheating,” Agoras said. “I’m going to find you and put you on the spot and you are going to do it as hard as you can. Then when you can’t do it anymore, you modify.”

Agoras started a Beatdown club membership for the Sailors who attend his class. There are three tiers to the Beatdown membership. Once a member has attended 20 classes they have reached silver status, 40 is gold, and 60 is platinum. Due to the limited

amount of space and resources available for Beatdown there are a limited amount of sign-up spots for the class. Each level of membership guarantees a few open spots in the class for those who have achieved that level, he said.

He is in the process of having t-shirts made with a Beatdown logo for purchase. He said he is thinking about having a second made to give to the platinum level members as a prize for achieving 60 classes.

“I love teaching that class,” Agoras said. “My favorite time during the day is going out there and beating the crap out of a bunch of people who are, I don’t know why, loving every bit of it and keep coming back.”+



Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Michael Territo completes a standing jump over a stack of aerobic steps while Fire Controlman 2nd Class (SW/AW) Will Agoras holds the stack.



Fire Controlman 2nd Class (SW/AW) Will Agoras, left, Aviation Structural Mechanic 1st Class (AW) Daniel Tello, and Logistics Specialist 1st Class (SW) Rodway McCloggan do triceps dips in the hangar bay during Beatdown.



Fire Controlman 2nd Class (SW/AW) Will Agoras, center, leads the Beatdown participants in eight-count sit-ups during class in the hangar bay.



FCPOA Shares the Fourth of July with American Cultural and Education Center



Story, photos and layout by MCI(SW/AW) Joseph R. Vincent



First Class Petty Officers' Association President Aviation Ordnanceman 1st Class (AW/SW) Donnie Dowell explains drag racing to Bahraini children at the American Cultural and Education Center.

Sailors from USS George H.W. Bush's (CVN 77) First Class Petty Officers' Association (FCPOA) were invited as guest speakers during a community relations (COMREL) event at the American Cultural and Education Center in Manama, Bahrain, July 14.

Sailors spoke to more than 50 children ages 12-14 on a broad range of topics, focusing mainly on American culture and what it means to celebrate America's Independence Day, while answering a variety of questions from curious Bahraini children.

"Whenever we pull into port, it's a good experience for Sailors to dialog with the local culture and gain a better understanding of the world in which we live," said Lt. Sunny Mitchell, a Navy Chaplain assigned to George H.W. Bush.

The event was organized by the U.S. 5th Fleet Chaplain's office as part of a long-standing tradition of COMRELs between the Navy and host countries.

"The purpose is to give the Sailors an opportunity to interact with some of the local people and community," said Chief Religious Programs Specialist (SW/AW) David Aguirre. "We're building relationships everywhere we go. It's good for the Sailors, it's good for the Navy, and it's good for the local community."

Aguirre said the FCPOA was eager to participate, and Mitchell said the group was the perfect fit for the event.

"This was a hot fill and we knew we could depend on our first classes to step up and take a leadership role," said Mitchell. "They're the right fit because of their maturity, experience and commitment not only to the Navy, but to the communities we serve."

Aviation Ordnanceman 1st Class (AW/SW) Donnie Dowell said the FCPOA has wanted to participate in a public relations event since he became the FCPOA president in September.

"It's something that I've done for years; I feel it's important to give back," said Dowell. "Our namesake was really big on community relations. He called it a thousand points of light; reaching out to our communities no matter what our community is."

The most challenging part was relating what the Fourth of July means to Americans, said Dowell.

"It's difficult to explain what an event like the Fourth means to Americans," said Dowell.

Despite the difficulties, Dowell said they were able to both teach and learn. "It was a shared experience. I was able to teach them a little about what we enjoy in the states, but the class taught us a lot about their traditions and culture."

Some Sailors were surprised by the similarities between the two cultures.

"I wasn't expecting to see the same things that you would expect to see in the states, like the class clown," said Operations Specialist 1st Class (SW) Joshua Dorsey. "It was a very fun and rewarding experience for me."

For others, it was an opportunity to learn about a different culture by experiencing it first hand.

"The best part was interacting with children," said Logistics Specialist 1st Class (SW/AW) Maria Conway. "I learned as much about their culture as I shared of my own." †



Logistics Specialist 1st Class (AW/SW) Desiree Garner points out California on a map of the United States during a community relations project in Manama, Bahrain.

It Pays to Think

Story, photos and layout by MCSN Molly Treece

Information Systems Technician 2nd Class (SW/AW) Jesse Daniel from USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) Network Security recently received \$5,000 for an idea submitted through the Military Cash Awards Program (MILCAP). The program rewards Sailors whose ideas have proven to save their command or the Navy time and money.

Daniel stumbled upon the idea when he noticed a few inefficiencies in the trouble call system while working in the Automated Data Processing (ADP) shop on board.

Using his prior experience as a web developer, he decided to develop an online trouble call system in his free time.

"I thought I could use my training and experience to develop a more efficient system," he said, adding that the system was wasting man-hours. "Most times you'd show up for a job and half-way through someone else would show up for the same job," he said.

The approved system went into effect October 2010. So how does it work? After a trouble call is submitted, it's logged into a database. This database is accessible to all technicians and keeps track of all trouble call data, including the time submitted, department, individual affected and the problem. An e-mail is sent to the individual who placed the trouble call confirming their request. Also included in the e-mail is the trouble ticket number and the technician assigned to the job.

"This way the person can be reassured that their job is being taken care of and a contact person," he said. "It's a whole lot easier and more effective."

An e-mail is sent to the requester after the job is completed, but Daniel said that anyone can check on the progress of the job at anytime.

For those who like to solve small problems on their own, there is an archive of how-to-fix-it remedies on the ADP webpage.

"These are for minor issues such as networking a printer or resetting Outlook," he said.

In addition to making the system as a whole more effective, Daniel also developed a way to help his shipmates track their



Information Systems Technician 2nd Class Jesse Daniel checks the status of completed jobs through the trouble call system he designed.

own efficiency and how many jobs they have completed.

"Evals are important to everyone, so it's nice for them to put in numbers and percents on how hard they work," he said.

IT1(SW/AW) Christopher Stewart, a co-worker, suggested he submit his idea to the MILCAP program. Daniel's leading chief petty officer and divisional officer submitted his completed MILCAP package through the ship's MILCAP administrator, Lt. Cmdr. Sean Wilson.

It doesn't stop here for Daniel. His program has a chance to be reviewed by Naval Air Force Atlantic (AIRLANT) and possibly the President of the United States. The reward for each approval ranges from \$7,500 to \$25,000.

When asked if he had any more ideas in work, Daniel said that he is focusing on finishing his degree in Business Administration/Information Systems, but encourages people to take a look into the MILCAP program.

"If you have an idea that you think could benefit someone, even if it's just your shop, get it out there. Because who doesn't like getting paid to think?" †



Information Systems Technician 3rd Class Daniel Condon checks for updates in the new online trouble call system.



BAHRAIN



Layout by MCSN(SW) Jessica Echerri

1. A Sailor plays volleyball at the Lost Paradise of Dilmun water park while on a Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) services program-sponsored tour July 11. Photo by MCSN Brian Read Castillo.
2. Sailors kayak at the Al Bander Hotel and Resort while on an MWR services program-sponsored tour July 13. Photo by MC3 Leonard Adams.
3. Ship's Serviceman Seaman Todd Guididas, left, and Electrician's Mate Fireman Angela Faulkner swim with dolphins at The Dolphin Resort during an MWR sponsored tour July 12. Photo by MCSN Gregory Wilhelmi.
4. Sailors and residents of the Embassy of the Philippines' women's shelter pose for a photo during a community relations project June 11. Photo by MCSN Jessica Echerri.
5. Machinist's Mate 3rd Class Daniel Ostarello pets a camel during a cultural tour of Bahrain July 12. Photo by MC3 Michael Smevog.

Being the difference

George H.W. Bush Sailors impact the lives of Bahraini children

Story, photos and layout by MC3 Billy Ho

Nearly a dozen Sailors from USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) and embarked Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 8 participated in a community relations (COMREL) project at the Regional Institute for Active Learning (RIA) in Manama, Bahrain, July 12.

The project included tutoring children in math, science, art, dance and cooking. The ship's Sailors were able to bring many smiles to the children's faces and gain an insight into the local culture.

"I enjoy COMRELS, because I have a chance to go out in town and do something helpful for the community," said Aviation Maintenance Administrationman 1st Class (AW/SW) Brandi Heath, assigned to Aviation Intermediate Maintenance Department.

The event started with music and a room full of more than 30 playful children who sang and danced hand-in-hand with the Sailors.

"It was very interesting to see the kids dancing and singing the YMCA and having a good time," said Heath.

After the dancing, some Sailors went to the nursery to read books to the children. Other Sailors showed the kids how to draw or simply shared toys with them.

"My favorite part of this COMREL was when I went to the nursery and read to the children," said Heath. "They

understood English and they read it back to me."

Lt. Cmdr. Maxsimo Salazar, from the ship's Operations Department, explained the basic principle of gravity to the children. Salazar also showed the children how to prepare banana bread. He gave the children a hands-on experience with mixing the flour and stirring the eggs. The children spoke few words but each wore a wide grin.

"The project itself is all about the relationship," said Cmdr. Cameron H. Fish, the ship's senior Chaplain. "People will remember George H.W. Bush, the Navy and the U.S. as being helpful to the community." †



Sailors enter the Regional Institute for Active Learning (RIA).



Ensign Matthew Stroup shares a toy with the children at the Regional Institute for Active Learning (RIA).



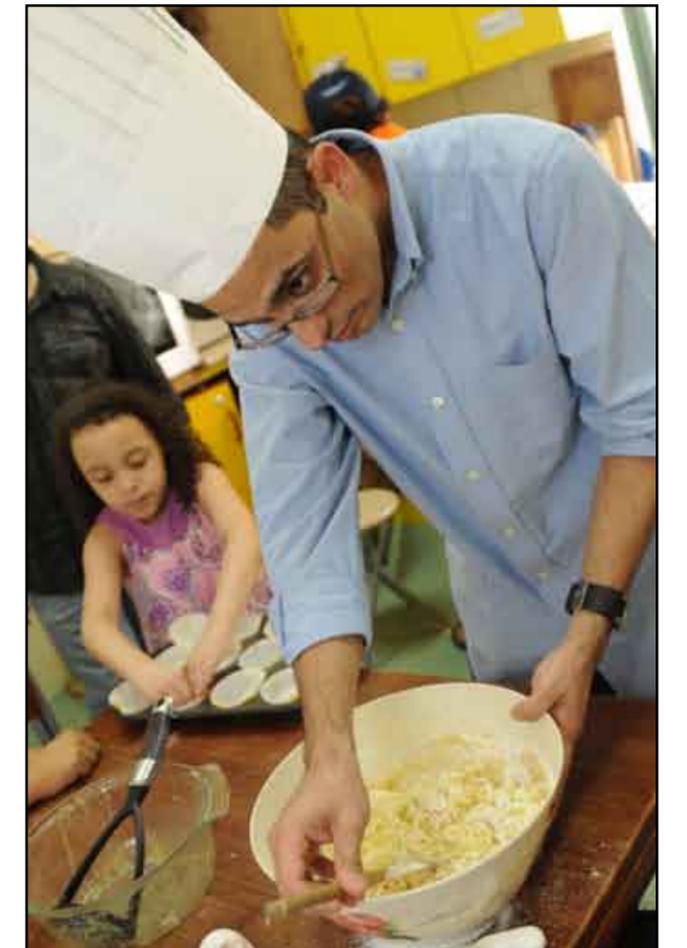
A girl looks at George H.W. Bush Sailors at the Regional Institute for Active Learning (RIA).



Aviation Maintenance Administrationman 1st Class (AW/SW) Rayfield Gordon plays with a girl at the Regional Institute for Active Learning (RIA).



Children dance with Ensign Matthew Stroup at the Regional Institute for Active Learning (RIA).



Lt. Cmdr. Maxsimo Salazar shows the children how to make banana bread at the RIA.

Asian Pacific Island Heritage Celebration

Layout by MCSA Brian Read Castillo
 Photos by MC3 Billy Ho and MCSA Read Castillo



1



2



3



7



8



4



6



5



1. Logistics Specialist 2nd Class Mengshi Fu performs "Can You Feel It" in Chinese.
2. Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Handling) Airman Tenzin Sandop sings a Tibetan song.
3. Commanding Officer Capt. Brian E. Luther enjoys a performance.
4. Rear Adm. Nora W. Tyson, Commander, Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 2, and Command Master Chief David R. Colton enjoy a performance.
5. Sailors applaud after a performance.
6. Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Handling) 3rd Class Darlene Mae Rule plays guitar.
7. Aviation Boatwain's Mate (Handling) 3rd Class Kahoneokamaleoakekulelia Speed performs a warrior dance
8. Machinist's Mate 3rd Class Marjorie Mercado, left, and Aviation Electrician's Mate 2nd Class Nancy Richardson perform a dance.



Steady as she goes:

The night helmsman has the wheel

Story, photo and layout by MC2 Joshua K. Horton

The time reads 3 a.m. and the majority of the crew aboard USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) are asleep in their racks. But who stays awake to control such a vessel and steer it out of harm's way while so many others slumber?

The night helmsman has this duty. From his perch behind the wheel of the carrier, he studies the monitor in front of him and adjusts the wheel to port or starboard as ordered.

His work environment consists of alternating flat screen panels strategically placed along the bulkheads of the bridge that illuminate a pathway from one side of the room to the other. The remainder of the room is dark except where a glowing red bulb hangs over the plotting chart of a navigation station. The view through the glass that encompasses the bridge is hazy. The horizon can barely be seen.

As he stands two feet from the Officer of the Deck (OOD), his face is hardly visible. The OOD speaks of heavy traffic in the area as the helmsman stays focused for any sudden commands.

In the darkness, mysterious transmissions bellow from the speakers as members of the crew set about determining their origin. One person remarks, "Well, we're officially on deployment now."

As others discuss the radio transmissions in a distant corner, the OOD calls out his order, "Steady on course two seven zero." The order makes its way through the Conning Officer and is in turn relayed to the helmsman who responds without delay, "Steady on course two seven zero aye, sir."

Seaman Ryan Wetzel is one of many Sailors assigned to the night watch as helmsman on board USS George H.W. Bush. He has assumed the watch many times, and like every instance before, he does so with attention to detail.

Before joining the Navy, Wetzel was in the landscaping business, where he mowed lawns, raked leaves and trimmed hedges. Then one day, Wetzel began looking toward the future and decided that he wanted more for himself. Soon after, at the age of 22, he enlisted in the U.S. Navy and was assigned to the Navy's newest aircraft carrier about to embark on its first operational deployment.

Wetzel had the task of immediately familiarizing himself with the technology he would be working with on a nightly basis, such as the touch screen monitor in front of his station. This screen is littered with information about rudder angles, relative and true bearings of the ship, and course headings that extend in five degree increments from zero degrees dead center, to 35 degrees left or right.

"It's really intimidating when you first start," said Wetzel.

In order to better prepare the Sailors for their watchstanding duties, each one is put through an intensive training regimen before being allowed to man the helm alone. According to Boatswain's Mate 1st Class (SW/AW) Randall Cribb, from Deck Department's 1st Division, each prospective helmsman must first spend a certain amount of time in an under instruction status before proceeding to a qualification board where they are tested by senior Sailors on the different scenarios they might encounter while manning the helm.

"Once they feel confident, we grill them with different scenarios of what could happen," said Cribb.

One particularly important part of the night watch is the terminology. Most of it is standard protocol and Wetzel knows it well. For example, each watch begins with the dissemination of vital information from the watch being relieved to the oncoming watch. That information is then relayed to the Conning Officer.

"Conning officer, requesting permission to relieve the helm, steady on course two seven zero, checking course two six eight. Steering units two and three online, one and four stop. Steering by computer manual and forward gyro, sir," Wetzel said as he assumed the watch.

Adding to the complexity of the watch, the ship sometimes conducts loss of steering drills. These drills are meant to train the crew on how to act should the bridge actually lose its steering ability. These scenarios deal with shifting the rudders left to right and may culminate with aft steering assuming the controls if the helmsman loses steering ability.

"Stay on course. If the OOD gives you a course of two seven zero, your goal is to stay within point four."

Additionally, the late nights often take their toll on a weary Sailor.

"Sometimes you'll be on the helm at 2:30 in the morning and you can barely keep your eyes open," said Wetzel.

However, due to the importance of his duty, the night helmsman must remain ever attentive and engaged in his surroundings.

"It's more crucial at night because visibility is restricted," said Cribb.

Therefore, Wetzel maintains his poise, always keeping his eyes open and his ears fixed on the OOD.

Hardship aside, Wetzel says the job of helmsman offers exciting opportunities. For instance, the ship may occasionally conduct an evolution known as a high-speed turn. During this evolution, the ship's speed is increased to about 25

knots. At this speed the ship normally employs only two degrees of rudder, but while involved in a high-speed turn, three or more degrees are used. Wetzel has not yet been at the helm during one of these events, but it is an event he looks forward to being involved in one day.

When summarizing his duties as a night helmsman, Wetzel is clear and concise.

"Stay on course," said Wetzel. "If the OOD gives you a course of two seven zero, your goal is to stay within point four."

Wetzel is just as clear on his future aspirations of striking into the rating of boatswain's mate and then completing college and becoming an officer in the Navy. In the meantime however, he can be found late at night, manning the wheel of the Navy's last Nimitz class aircraft carrier. And even in the darkness, the future looks bright for Wetzel. †



Below: Seaman Ryan Wetzel mans the helm on board George H.W. Bush.

August 2011 Fleet and Family Support Center Calendar

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

<p>1 Career Planning Little Creek 1-4p.m. Federal Employment System Little Creek 9a.m.-noon</p> <p>Job Search Strategies Yorktown 9a.m.-noon</p>	<p>2 Couples Workshop Oceana 2-4:30 p.m. Resume Writing Yorktown 9a.m.-noon</p> <p>Federal Employment System Norfolk 8:30-11:30a.m.</p>	<p>3 Credit Management Little Creek 8:30-10 a.m. Identity Theft Protection Little Creek 1-2:30 p.m.</p> <p>Consumer Awareness Little Creek 10 a.m.-11:30 a.m.</p>	<p>4 Changes Norfolk 1:30-3:30 p.m. Resume Writing Norfolk 1-4p.m.</p> <p>Interview Techniques Yorktown 9a.m.-noon</p>	<p>5 Career Planning Yorktown 9 a.m.-noon</p>
<p>8 Money Management Little Creek 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Resume Writing Northwest 9a.m.-noon</p>	<p>9 Couples Workshop Oceana 2-4:30 p.m. Federal Employment System Oceana 9a.m.-noon</p>	<p>10 Car Buying Strategies Northwest 3-4:30 p.m. Interview Techniques Norfolk 8:30-11:30a.m.</p>	<p>11 Money Management Newport News 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Changes Norfolk 1:30-3:30 p.m.</p> <p>Career Planning Norfolk 1-4p.m. Resume Writing Oceana 9a.m.-noon</p>	<p>12</p>
<p>15 Federal Employment System Norfolk 8:30-11:30a.m.</p>	<p>16 Retirement Planning Newport News 8-9:30 a.m.</p>	<p>17 Money Management Norfolk 4:30-8 p.m. Home Ownership Oceana 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.</p> <p>Retirement Planning Norfolk 12:30-2 p.m. Savings and Investments Norfolk 8:30-10 a.m.</p>	<p>18 Money Management Norfolk 4:30-8 p.m. Changes Norfolk 1:30-3:30 p.m.</p> <p>Couples Workshop Norfolk 4-6:30 p.m. Interview Techniques Little Creek 9a.m.-noon</p>	<p>19 Job Search Strategies Little Creek 9a.m.-noon</p>
<p>22 Retirement Planning Oceana 8:30-10 a.m. TSP Oceana 10-11:30 a.m.</p> <p>Federal Employment System Northwest 9a.m.-noon</p>	<p>23 TSP Yorktown 1-2:30 p.m. Resume Writing Norfolk 1-4p.m.</p>	<p>24 Money Management Oceana 8 a.m.-4a.m. Car Buying Strategies Norfolk 10-11:30 a.m.</p> <p>Credit Management Norfolk 8:30-10 a.m.</p>	<p>25 Money Management Norfolk 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Changes Norfolk 1:30-3:30 p.m.</p> <p>Couples Workshop Norfolk 4-6:30 p.m. Resume Writing Oceana 9a.m.-noon</p>	<p>26</p>
<p>29</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31 Resume Writing Norfolk 8:30-11:30a.m.</p>		

To Register, contact: FFSC Oceana: 443-2923, FFSC Norfolk: 444-2102,
FFSC Yorktown: 887-4606, FFSC Northwest: 421-8770, FFSC Little Creek: 462-7563