



WINGSPAN



Naval Air Training welcomes new commander

By Lt. Brynn Turner
CNATRA Public Affairs

The Naval Air Training Command (NATRACOM) held a change of command ceremony on board Naval Air Station Corpus Christi, July 2.

Rear Adm. Dell Bull relieved Rear Adm. Roy Kelley as the Chief of Naval Air Training (CNATRA) at a ceremony held at the air station's Catalina Club.

Kelley, the outgoing Chief of Naval Air Training, reflected on his two-year tour in Corpus Christi.

"This has by far been the best tour of my career," he said. "We have made many friends here and this city does so much for the military and shows its support in so many ways."

One of the best aspects of the position, he claimed, was the caliber of men and women serving in the Naval Aviation Training Command.

"These leaders know that the future of Naval Aviation depends on them." Kelley continued, quoting President Ronald Reagan: "Each generation goes further than the generation preceding it because it stands on the shoulders of that generation. You will have opportunities beyond anything we've ever known."

Bull told attendees that he looks forward to meeting each member of the supportive South Texas community.

He echoed Kelley in affirming that "What we do here at CNATRA is so important to the future of Naval Aviation" and expressed enthusiasm for his

selection for a job that "truly allows us to leave our fingerprints on the future of Naval Aviation."

Bull joins CNATRA from his position

as the chief of staff at Commander, Naval Air Forces (CNAF) in San Diego, Calif, CNATRA's superior command. CNAF, see *CNATRA on page 4*



Rear Adm. Roy Kelley, departing Chief of Naval Air Training, right, and Rear Adm. Dell Bull, arriving Chief of Naval Air Training, shake hands after reading their official orders, as Vice Adm. Mike Shoemaker, Commander, Naval Air Forces looks on during a change of command ceremony at Naval Air Station Corpus Christi (NASCC). (U.S. Navy photo by Richard Stewart, CNATRA Public Affairs)



Pool hours extended

-- page 3



Gold Star Family

-- page 7



Legal assistants shine

-- page 11



Celebrating the 4th -- About 3,000 people attended the Independence Celebration held at Sunfish Beach on July 2. Above, families get themselves comfortable in anticipation of the fireworks display (right) that was held at the end of the event. For more information and photos, turn to page 6. (Photos by Laurie Garcia, MWR)



Executive Officer's Column



Cmdr. Scott Wilmot
Executive Officer



before you “share” online: impersonation, identify theft, harassment, damaged career or personal reputation, damaged data or networks, target for spam and phishing, burglary just to name a few.

But there are many preventive measures you can take to help minimize the risks.

- * Monitor your bank statements, balances and credit reports.

- * Avoid accessing your personal accounts from public computers or through public WiFi spots.

- * Don't store any information you want to protect on devices that connect to the Internet.

- * Use high security settings on social networking sites and limit the personal information you share.

- * Monitor what others are posting about you on their online discussions.

- * Change your passwords periodically and don't reuse old ones. Don't use the same passwords for more than one system or service.

- * Don't post anything that might embarrass you later or that you don't want strangers to know.

There's no denying social media's impact on the way we communicate. Technology-enabled social networking provides remarkable new ways for people to connect and build relationships.

But, there are risks inherent in social networking.

Once information is posted to a social networking site, it's no longer private. The more information you post, the more vulnerable you may become. Personal information you share could be used to “assault” you, your friends or family. The more information you share, the more likely someone could “impersonate” you.

There are risks or hazards of social networking that you should be aware of

Chaplain's Message



Do you live
a disciplined
life?

Lt. Cmdr. Stephen Wame
Command Chaplain

Jesus put together a group of men called “disciples.” The very meaning of the word is “ones that are disciplined for a common purpose.” For these men, it was a decision to be accountable to one another and follow someone they could trust to lead the way. It was not a “lone ranger” approach. It had nothing to do with how strong or weak the individual. It was all about community.

Involving others in your plans and goals is extremely important. It's not a sign of weakness; the inability to “do it yourself.” It is a recipe for success. When others (trusted individuals) are involved in the process, it provides a level of accountability and encouragement necessary for success.

When we fail, others are often involved out of necessity, so it may seem natural to view the help of others as a weakness. But this is a flawed concept. The greater strength comes from exposing our vulnerabilities, recognizing that we can't do it alone, and

* Verify those you connect with online. It's easy for people to fake identities over the Internet.

- * Disable Global Positioning System (GPS) encoding. Many digital cameras encode the GPS location of a photo when it's taken. If that photo is uploaded to a site, so are the GPS coordinates, which will let people know that exact location.

Also, keep in mind that once you post something on line, you “lose” ownership of the information.

I know, we tend to be bolder and less discretionary with what we share on line versus what we share in person. But, it may be smart for us to pause before hitting the “post” button. What's the old adage? “Measure twice, cut once.” It might be time for a new one, “Count to 3 before you hit ‘send.’”

For more information about social networking risks and what you can do to protect yourself and others, contact your Information Assurance Manager, or visit these sites: www.fbi.gov, www.dhs.gov, www.ftc.gov or www.ic3.gov.

voluntarily involving others. Developing community with others within our lives is extremely important. So set new goals for yourself, but don't try and do it alone. Involve others in the planning process. Ask them to keep you accountable and offer encouragement along the way.

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Identity theft: It can happen to you

Identity theft, when a person wrongfully uses your Social Security number or other personally identifiable information (PII) to commit fraud, can happen to anyone. But it doesn't have to happen to you.

Taking the proper precautions beforehand can help reduce your chances of being at risk.

Once thieves have your personal information they can drain your bank account, run up charges on your credit cards, open new accounts, or get medical treatment on your health insurance. An identity thief can file a tax return in your name and get your refund and, in some cases, give your name to the police during an arrest. And the road to recovery can be a long one.

Here are some tips on how to avoid becoming a victim:

- * Keep your documents in a safe place at home, and lock your wallet or purse in a safe place at work.

- * Limit what you carry with you. When you go out, take only the identification, credit and debit cards you need.

- * Opt out of prescreened offers of credit and insurance by mail or by calling 1-888-567-8688 or go to optoutprescreen.com

- * Don't give out personal information on the phone, through the mail or over the Internet unless you've initiated the contact or know who you're dealing with.

- * Monitor your account statements and immediately report any unusual activity to your financial institution.

If you are a victim of identity theft, the time to act is now. Go to www.identitytheft.gov to find out what steps you need to take.

For the latest news and FAQs regarding the OPM data breach visit <http://www.secnv.navy.mil/OPMBreachDON/Pages/default.aspx>. (Navy Office of the Chief of Information)

Wingspan

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Capt. Steve Banta
Commanding Officer

Fifi Kieschnick
Public Affairs Officer



This paper is published for people like Laura Valdez, who manages the shoe department at the Navy Exchange. Valdez is a native of Laredo, Texas, and has been working at the NASCC Exchange for 3 years.



Making a splash -- NAS Corpus Christi's Bayside Pool has extended its hours. It's now open Wednesday through Sunday and holidays, from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Entrance is free for active-duty military and immediate family members. Admission for military retirees and their family members is \$1 per person. Cost for DoD personnel and their family members is \$2. All guests must pay \$3. Remember, children under the age of 10 must be accompanied by, and under the direct supervision of, someone at least 16 years old. Children between the ages of 10 and 15, if left unattended, must demonstrate the ability to swim one lap. For more information about the Bayside Pool, call 961-2057.

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CNATRA from page 1

Vice Adm. Mike Shoemaker, attended the ceremony as guest speaker.

"This is a wonderful Navy town with a long and rich history," Shoemaker greeted the local audience and continued to reflect on Kelley's tenure. While CNATRA, he said, "Roy Kelley superbly synchronized the efforts of his staff and subordinate commanders with significant achievements in many areas."

Shoemaker went on to congratulate Kelley on his role in helping more than 2,500 pilots and Navy flight officers earn their "Wings of Gold" and graduate to fleet squadrons, many of whom are now serving on aircraft carriers in support of strikes against the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and in missions around the world.

Kelley will join USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71) as Commander, Carrier Strike Group TWELVE. The Theodore Roosevelt is deployed to the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations conducting maritime security operations.

CNATRA conducts and oversees all aviation training for the Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard and international partners at five training air wings located across three states. It also oversees the Naval Flight Demonstration Squadron, the Blue Angels.



Vice Adm. Mike Shoemaker, Commander, Naval Air Forces, address the audience at Chief of Naval Air Training's change of command ceremony while, from left, Rear Adm. Dell Bull, incoming Chief of Naval Air Training; Rear Adm. Roy Kelley, outgoing CNATRA; Lt. Cmdr. Stephen Warne, NASCC chaplain; and Lt. Liam Mulcahy, flag aide, look on. (U.S. Navy photo by Richard Stewart, CNATRA Public Affairs)

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Construction update -- Naval Facilities/Public Works personnel are working to provide some much-needed sidewalks near base housing on Ocean Drive. New sidewalks are being installed along the south side of Ocean Drive, from Orion Street to Tarawa Street, Ninth Street to Dimmit Street, and behind the Navy Lodge. The project will include nine new ADA handicap ramps as well as 29 wheel stops, to be placed along the length of the North side of the parking lot of Building 1. Some demolition work is being done to remove the existing old and broken sidewalk on the south side of Ocean Drive, from Buckeye Street to Orion Street. For your safety, please remain clear of the construction site and equipment.

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(Photo by Laurie Garcia, MWR Marketing)



(Photo by Laurie Garcia, MWR Marketing)

'Bang-up' celebration!

NASCC's Morale, Welfare and Recreation Department served up a super celebration of our nation's independence on July 2, at Sunfish Beach. There was food, entertainment, children's games and activities, water sports and more from 4 to 9 p.m. The event concluded with a 15-minute fireworks demonstration that thrilled the thousands of people who attended the event. Top left, Jonathan Winfrey and his family take a break, enjoy refreshments and listen to the live music. Above, MWR's Meghan McLean operates one of the free rides children were enjoying. There were numerous free activities for youngsters including pony rides, petting zoo and amusement rides. Top right, numerous water activities were enjoyed throughout the afternoon, including paddle-boat rides, kayaking, jumping on a trampoline and more. Middle right, hermit crabs on the beach enthralled everyone, especially the youngsters. Right, the fireworks display did not disappoint!



(Photo by Laurie Garcia, MWR Marketing)

First Navy Gold Star Family at Naval Health Clinic Corpus Christi honored

Story & photos by Bill W. Love
NHCCC Public Affairs

The survivors of HM2(FMF/SW) Raymond L. Blount, who passed away while on active duty, were honored as the first Navy Gold Star (NGS) Family at Naval Health Clinic Corpus Christi (NHCCC) June 29, 2015.

Blount had been assigned to NHCCC Emergency Management at the time of his death June 29, 2011. A 26 year-old native of San Antonio, he had completed his most recent deployment, a year-long, in April 2010 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, and had reenlisted in the Navy Feb. 18, 2011.

Installation Gold Star Coordinator Corcynthia Williams organized the ceremony, coordinating the family's visit from as far north as Dallas, and told everyone present that the Navy was glad to forward Raymond's legacy.

The NGS program serves the families of all who pass away while on active duty, regardless of the branch of service or cause of death.

The clinic's commanding officer met and greeted each of the 13 relatives, praising Blount for his honorable service and remarking about the high regard for each other among Navy family members.

"We are pleased to welcome you this morning to honor Petty Officer Blount. He will always be one of our shipmates no matter how much time passes," said Capt. Jimmy A. Bradley.

The NGS program provides Gold Star Families a level of long-term assistance and support not previously available through the Navy. It is enhanced with the active participation of NGS region and installation coordinators, who are the lead agents for actions within the long-term casualty supporting process.

Williams is one of three installation coordinators assigned to Commander, Navy Region Southeast (CNRSE) who coordinates support for 18 installations within the southeastern United States. She is responsible for families in Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas.

Williams assumed her new role after Commander, Navy Installations Command (CNIC) launched the new initiative to begin assisting Navy Gold Star Families Oct. 1, 2014.

The term "Gold Star" families comes from the lapel pin, known as the "Gold Star Lapel Button," that was established by Congress in 1965 to identify the widows, parents, and next of kin of active-duty service members who lost their lives in combat, retroactive to World War I.

New is the "Next of Kin of Deceased Personnel Lapel Button," that consists of a gold star within a circle that commemorates his or her honorable service. The gold star is also surrounded by sprigs of oak that represent the branches of the Armed Forces. It's designated for eligible survivors

of service members who lose their lives while serving honorably under any other circumstances other than war, retroactive to March 29, 1973.

Coordinators like Williams play an important role providing support for family members through a very difficult time, helping them build resilience and establish a new normal. Guided by the coordinators, Gold Star Families will be able to connect with support groups and grief counselors.

In Blount's case, the family had already weathered much of the agony of grieving, but his dad expressed the appreciation of family and described why they have embraced a much better appreciation for the Navy and Williams' outreach.

"It's important for me to tell you that the Navy was very good for Raymond and he was very good for the Navy," said Raymond Blount about his son.

"After I read his performance reviews I was very gratified because up until then I didn't have a measure of his service to our country -- he never boasted."

Blount continued by describing how the family defined his son's purpose.

"He was someone who was compassionate above the expectations of a corpsman. He took joy in helping those around him as much as he could. He was a positive influence on our lives, and in his short life, for military and civilians, he made a difference -- he tried and he succeeded in making life a little better. I'm proud of him, we are all very proud of him."

On the fourth anniversary of their son's passing, although a somber occasion, Blount's mom, Gina, left everyone with a cheerful thought.

"Raymond's wounds were invisible. This is a great forum because we can be appreciated for the loss that we suffered," she said. "I want you to know that all active-duty men and women are heroes to me."

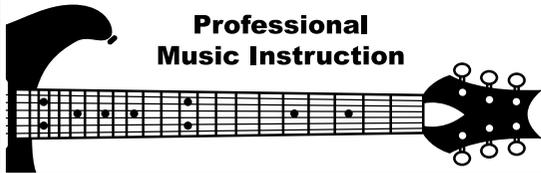


Above, HM2(FMF/SW) Raymond L. Blount, NHCCC Emergency Management Department, is surrounded by his wife Trina and their two children after reenlisting for two years at Naval Air Station Corpus Christi's South Pier on Feb. 18, 2011.

Left, Capt. Jimmy A. Bradley, NHCCC commanding officer, greets the late HM2(FMF/SW) Raymond L. Blount's father during the first Navy Gold Star Family presentation with Naval Air Station Corpus Christi Installation Gold Star Coordinator Corcynthia Williams and Navy Chaplain Stephen L. Warne nearby.

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SECNAV announces new maternity leave policy

Secretary Ray Mabus triples maternity leave: 18 weeks for women in the Navy and Marine Corps.

July 2, Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus announced that effective immediately, women who serve in the Navy and Marine Corps will have 18 weeks of maternity leave available to use during the first year of her child's life.

"In the Navy and the Marine Corps, we are continually looking for ways to recruit and retain the best people," Mabus said. "We have incredibly talented women who want to serve, and they also want to be mothers and have the time to fulfill that important role. We can do that for them. Meaningful maternity leave when it matters most is one of the best ways that we can support the women who serve our country. This flexibility is an investment in our people and a safeguard against losing skilled service members."

Department of Defense Instruction 1327.06, Leave and Liberty Procedures for the Department, charges Secretaries of the military departments with publishing departmental guidance in accordance with the DoD instruction. Under the section that delegates to the Secretary the ability to designate the level of control for convalescent leave that exceeds 30 days, Secretary Mabus has directed that commanding officers grant additional convalescent leave up to 84 days beyond the currently authorized 42 days of convalescent leave following the birth of a child.

For families, increased time following the birth of the child has tangible benefits for the physical and psychological health of both mother and child. For the Navy and Marine Corps, there is the likelihood that women will return to and stay in their careers, yielding higher readiness and retention for the services.

"When the women in our Navy and Marine Corps answer the call to serve, they are making the difficult choice to be away from their children -- sometimes for prolonged periods of time -- so that they can do the demanding jobs that we ask them to do," Mabus said. "With increased maternity leave, we can demonstrate the commitment of the Navy and Marine Corps to the women who are committed to serve."

The policy, which is effective immediately, will also apply retroactively to any woman who has been authorized convalescent leave following the birth of a child since Jan. 1, 2015. Under the new policy, commanding officers are required to grant to a woman up to a total of 18 weeks, using a combination of maternity leave and convalescent leave beyond 30 days. A mother does not need to take all of her leave at once; however, she is only entitled to the use of this type of leave within one year of her child's birth.

The increase in maternity leave is the latest in a series of personnel initiatives announced by the Secretary of the Navy. *(From the Office of the Chief of Information)*



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Marine Corps veteran receives rare Texas 'Lone Star Medal of Valor'

By MC1 Jacquelyn D. Childs
NMETC Public Affairs

Sailors and Marines gathered at the Joint Base San Antonio (JBSA) Fort Sam Houston Golf Course Restaurant, July 6, to honor a Marine Corps veteran's heroic, life-saving actions, performed more than six decades ago.

Texas Governor Greg Abbott presented retired Sgt. Ronnie Reininger, 86, the Lone Star Medal of Valor, for his actions during the brutal Battle of Chosin Reservoir in Korea in December 1950. The medal is the state's highest honor and was last awarded in 2011.

"This is a medal that is given out only occasionally," Abbott said. "It is a way for us to recognize those who have shown extraordinary valor in their service to the United States of America, and we were honored to be able to present this to Ronnie Reininger."

Navy and Marine Corps commands joined with local civilian organizations to help ensure Reininger received this long-overdue recognition. Sailors from Navy Medicine Education and Training Command (NMETC) and Marines from Company "H," Marine Cryptologic Support Battalion, teamed with the Alamo Chapter of the 1st Marine Division Association in San Antonio to coordinate the event. USAA, headquartered in San Antonio, sent the company's brass quintet.

According to one of the ceremony's attendees, Reininger is an inspiration for all who want to serve their nation.

"The many years I've had in the military can't compare to what this gentleman did for his country," said Capt. Jim LeTexier, deputy commander, NMETC. "I'm in awe of what he went through, what he did, and what he continues to do to support current generations of Marines, Sailors, Soldiers, Airmen and Coast Guardsmen. He is the epitome of service to his country."

Reininger was a machine gun section leader in the Weapons Company, 3rd Battalion, 5th Regiment, 1st Marine Division, when he and his fellow Marines came under heavy enemy fire from all sides by Chinese forces. Reininger held back overwhelming enemy forces to protect thousands of retreating Marines behind him by continuously returning fire and repositioning his men despite being severely wounded and frostbitten.

Blown from his foxhole by mortar fire four times, Reininger continued running from machine gun to machine gun to ensure desperately needed cover was provided to his

fellow servicemen.

When Reininger was later found, he was pronounced dead and one of his dog tags placed in his mouth for identification purposes. He later spat out the tag and was tended to by Navy corpsmen. In the end, he lost all 10 fingers and both legs.

"I didn't think I was going to live," Reininger recalled. "My birthday's in May,



Texas Governor Greg Abbott and retired Sgt. Ronnie Reininger share a moment prior to the 86 year-old being presented with the "Lone Star Medal of Valor" for his actions during the brutal Battle of Chosin Reservoir in Korea in December 1950.

and every May since 1950, I look up and say, 'See. I beat you. I got to see one more birthday.' At that time most of us didn't think we were going to live to see another one."

Despite his heroic actions, Reininger never received a Navy or Marine Corps award. The Lone Star Medal of Valor recognized those heroic actions in Korea, as well as his volunteer work in Texas supporting local communities and military veterans.

Reininger was presented the medal in his hometown of San Antonio, often referred to as "Military City USA."

Abbott shared his appreciation for Reininger and other San Antonians who serve.

"We admire and respect our military," he said. "We honor them during their times of service. But we also honor them in times of retirement because we are the freest, strongest, best nation in the history of this world because of the service provided by the members of the United States military."

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Upcoming Community Events
MANDELA DAY CORPUS CHRISTI

On Saturday, July 18, 2015 at 4 p.m., Corpus Christi will be hosting a FREE multicultural event in honor of the Nobel Peace Prize recipient Nelson Mandela who impacted positive change through inspiration every day. There will be music, food, ethnic performances, community programs and services available on-site, vendors and much more. The Poster Contest winners will be announced at the event as well. Corpus Christi is asked to volunteer a MINIMUM of 67 minutes in their community on July 18, representing the number of years Nelson Mandela fought for change. This event will be held at Heritage Park Plaza, 1581 N. Chaparral, Corpus Christi. For more information, visit www.Mandelaycc.com

TO HAVE YOUR EVENT INCLUDED IN THIS SECTION, EMAIL AFRENCH@PLWAVE.COM. THE DEADLINE TO SUBMIT EVENTS IS 10 A.M. THE FRIDAY BEFORE PUBLICATION. UPCOMING EVENTS ARE PUBLISHED AS SPACE PERMITS THERE ARE NO GUARANTEES AS TO HOW MANY TIMES AN EVENT WILL RUN. QUESTIONS REGARDING EVENTS SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO ASHLEY AT 361-746-4341.

Prowler retires following 45 years of naval service

By MC2 John Hetherington
NPASE West, Det. Northwest

OAK HARBOR, Wash. -- Electronic Attack Wing, U.S. Pacific Fleet (CVWP), hosted a three-day Sunset Celebration commemorating the retirement of the Navy EA-6B Prowler, June 25-27.

The celebration, marking the end of an era for the Electronic Attack community, included a history hall in CVWP's Havilland Hangar with a Prowler on display, a farewell ceremony and concluded with the last Navy Prowler flying off from Naval Air Station Whidbey Island's (NASWI) Ault Field. More than 1,000 registered guests attended the event.

"This weekend, the Prowler Sunset

Celebration, has been fantastic," said retired Capt. Fred Wilmot, who served as a test pilot for the Navy Prowler and delivered the first Prowler to NASWI while serving in Electronic Attack Squadron (VAQ) 129 in January 1971. "We've been able to see people we haven't seen in 35, 40 years or so including some of the original people from Grumman who designed the system. It's really a fitting end to the Prowler era."

Wilmot credited the lengthy service of the Prowler to multiple factors.

"The fact that the Prowler stuck around for 45 years is testimony to how well it was designed and built, and the thousands of men and women who have maintained and operated it," said Wilmot. "My hat is off to them.

see Prowler on next page



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An EA-6B Prowler assigned to the Garudas of Electronic Attack Squadron (VAQ) 134 lands on the flight deck of aircraft carrier USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77). (U.S. Navy photo by MC3 Brian Stephens)

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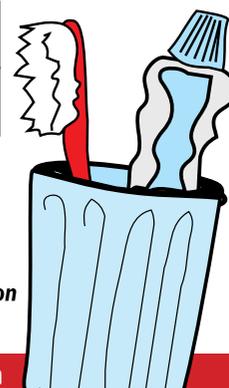
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Honoring our veterans

Marine Corps veteran serves more than 25,000 local vets

Note: This is the second in a series of stories honoring our community's veterans. They have done everything asked of them in their mission to serve our country. Some still serve in various capacities. As a tribute and to honor their legacy, we are sharing their stories.

By Fifi Kieschnick
NASCC Public Affairs

Toby Cross and his staff are “hidden jewels” in Nueces County, assisting veterans in need.

An Army veteran himself, Cross is the Veterans Services Officer for Nueces County. His office is located on the first floor of the Nueces County Courthouse.

Cross, and his small staff of two, assist veterans and their survivors with claims for federal benefits through the Dept. of Veterans Affairs. If veterans' claims get denied, then Cross will also help them with filing an appeal.

Cross has been serving Nueces County veterans for the past five years. Prior to that, he was assisting veterans in Smith County. Born and raised in Texas, he says that he has worked for the state of Texas, and various Texas counties for many years.

“I enjoy it,” Cross says of his service to the approximately 29,000 veterans in Nueces County.

“Here, we specialize in service-connected disability claims, and non-service connected pension claims,” he said. They also assist with debt waivers, claims for survivor benefits, requests for military discharge documents, correction of military records, requests for medals and decorations, and information of referrals for other benefits.

“We are a busy veterans services office,” Cross added. “With a Veterans Assistance Grant, we have also established a pantry for our homeless and low-income veterans, and veterans and their families facing financial crises. We issue weekly and monthly bus passes so veterans can make their employment interviews and their doctors' interviews at the VA (Veterans Administration) clinic. We help with rent, if facing eviction, or help in paying the electric or gas bills.

“One Monday morning, I personally assisted 15 veterans and issued bus passes, food, hygiene products and referrals to our human resources office for rent, utility payments – that was just one morning,” the Vietnam veteran added. “And we do many DD-214 requests. We order dozens of those each week.”

Cross served in Vietnam in 1970 with the Army's 101st Airborne Division as a combat engineer. “We would mine-sweep roads and use explosives to clear fields of fire on a fire support base. We would ‘blow’ trees and level hills, so we could see straight down a mountain. My fire support base overlooked the A Shau Valley.”

Cross came back to the states in 1971, and was stationed at Ft. Hood, Texas, with the 1st Calvary Division, until he was discharged 1973.

Cross said he joined the military because his father encouraged him to – he was a World War II veteran.

“I took his advice.

“I gained a sense of responsibility, duty and discipline,” he said of his Army service.

Cross and his staff agrees that the most rewarding part of their jobs is, “We get a lot of ‘thank you.’ Our veterans will come back and say thank you for providing services.”

To find out more about Nueces County Veterans Services Department, visit www.co.nueces.tx.us/vet/ or stop by the courthouse. When you discover this hidden



Toby Cross

jewel, you will find a wealth of resources and information.

Corpus Christi legal assistants shine nationwide

By Lt. Brynn Turner
CNATRA Public Affairs.

Two of Naval Air Station (NAS) Corpus Christi's legal assistants received distinguished awards this month, bringing national attention to South Texas' small but historic naval base during its 75th year of preparing young aviators for operational service.

Peggie Penn, who has been the paralegal specialist for the Chief of Naval Air Training (CNATRA) since 2010 but has been working for CNATRA since 2000, received the Office of the General Counsel (OGC) Support Staff Appreciation Award for her outstanding performance “in such a manner to provide great benefit to the Department of the Navy.” This award is the highest non-attorney award that is presented annually and Penn was chosen over 10 other national finalists.

As the paralegal specialist for CNATRA, Penn supports the command's mission to train the world's finest combat quality aviation professionals, delivering them at the right time, in the right numbers, and at the right cost to a Naval force that is where it matters, when it matters.

Penn was born in Dallas, graduated from Franklin D. Roosevelt High School in 1976, and attended East Texas State University (now known as Texas A&M Commerce) before serving 21 years in the Navy. She has been married to her husband Leo Penn for 22 years, and has two stepsons, two stepdaughters and six grandchildren.



Peggie Penn

Patricia Amador, the legal assistant at the Corpus Christi Region Legal Service Office (RLSO), received the RLSO Southeast Junior Civilian of the Year award for “dedication to the command and the exceptional provision of legal services [which] proved instrumental in meeting an increased demand for legal assistant services.” She began her career with the Legal Service Office in 1979 and has been lauded for her efforts in multiple positions over her years of service.

As the legal assistant for the RLSO, Amador supports the operational readiness



Patricia Amador

of Department of the Navy assets in the Southeastern United States by providing responsive, timely and accurate legal guidance, support services and training in the areas of military justice, legal assistance and administrative law.

A Corpus Christi native, Amador has been married to Fred Amador for more than 30 years. They have two children who reside in Dallas. Amador plans to join her husband in retirement as she completes her 36th year of service to NAS Corpus Christi.

Prowler from page 10

You don't find any more professionalism than in those personnel.”

The farewell ceremony, held at NASWI's Prowler Memorial, featured speeches by leaders in the VAQ community, a recitation of the names of VAQ Sailors who sacrificed their lives in service, and a missing man formation, which was an emotional experience for those in attendance.

“There probably wasn't a dry eye in the audience during the missing man formation,” said Capt. Darryl Walker, commander, CVWP.

Wilmot rode in the formation for the fly off of the last Prowler bringing this piece of naval aviation history full circle.

“I feel extremely fortunate that I was able to take the opportunity to fly in the last flight away since I brought the first flight in,” said Wilmot.

Walker feels fortunate to have led his community through this major transition.

“We've sunset our last Navy Prowler with VAQ 134, so the entire community will now be transitioned to the EA-18G Growler,” Walker said. “It's really spectacular to see the community grow into the fantastic airplane, the EA-18G Growler. It's just been really neat to be in charge during this time frame as we move from one airplane to the next.”

Wilmot thinks that the future of the VAQ community will be bright.

“It closes a chapter on the Prowler, but certainly not on this community,” said Wilmot. “The community continues to grow and thrive.”

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