



# Coastal Courier

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February 5, 2010

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## Panama City provides support for Haiti relief



Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Julio Rivera

Haitians watch as a landing craft air cushion (LCAC) assigned to Assault Craft Unit (ACU) 4 offloads relief supplies Jan. 22, from the multi-purpose amphibious assault ship USS Bataan (LHD 5) on a Haitian beach. Bataan, along with the amphibious dock landing ships USS Fort McHenry (LSD 43), USS Gunston Hall (LSD 44) and USS Carter Hall (LSD 50) are participating in Operation Unified Response as the Bataan Amphibious Relief Mission and are providing military support capabilities to civil authorities to help stabilize and improve the situation in Haiti in the wake of the 7.0 magnitude earthquake that hit the area on Jan. 12, 2010.

**STORY BY**  
**PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE**  
**NAVAL SURFACE WARFARE**  
**CENTER PANAMA CITY DIVISION**

The Naval Surface Warfare Center Panama City Division (NSWC PCD) is the Research and Development (R&D) home to Expeditionary/Amphibious Maneuver Warfare and provides the scientific, engineering and life-cycle support that enables a significant portion of U.S. naval power.

Although the Navy conducts

many missions, a core capability is humanitarian assistance and disaster response, which is an effort to prevent war and build partnerships. NSWC PCD plays a significant role in that effort and that is readily apparent in today's Haiti relief operations.

Landing Craft Air Cushion vehicles (LCAC) have been a support workhorse for the post 9/11 Expeditionary forces. From tsunami relief operations in Indonesia and Hurricane Katrina relief in Louisiana to combat support in current con-

tingency operations, the LCAC has proven its value. Panama City Division is the primary In Service Engineering Agent (ISEA) for the LCAC.

The primary mission for the LCAC is to support Amphibious Warfare. The role of the LCAC in this mission is to transport from ship-to-shore and over the beach, weapons systems, equipment, cargo, and personnel organic to the elements of a U.S. Marine Corps Air/Ground Task

**HAI TI Contd. on page 3**

MILITARY  
AMERICA  
**Saves**   
START SMALL. THINK BIG.



**The Coastal Courier**  
Naval Support Activity  
Panama City

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# Military Saves 2010 Financial Fair

STORY BY MELISSA STRAWSER  
FLEET AND FAMILY SUPPORT  
CENTER FINANCIAL SPECIALIST

As financial statistics are posted for 2009, an exciting trend is emerging. Consumer household debt declined in 2009 for the first time since 1952 and the consumer savings rate has increased significantly!

In November 2009, the household saving rate increased to 4.7%. This might not seem like much; however, the savings rate has dipped into the negative many times over the last 20 years. According to the U.S. Department of Commerce: Bureau of Economic Analysis, in 2007 and 2008 the household savings rates were 1.3% and 3.8% respectively compared to 6.3% or more in the late 1980's. American families are getting back on track with saving versus spending!

The Military Saves Campaign is a campaign to persuade, motivate, and encourage military families to save money every month. The campaign is a growing network of organizations and individuals committed to helping and supporting military members and their loved ones build personal savings arsenals to provide for their immediate

and long-term financial needs. For more information and to take the Saver's Pledge go to: [www.militarysaves.org](http://www.militarysaves.org).

In support of the Military Saves Campaign, Fleet and Family Support Center is having a Financial Fair on Wednesday, Feb 24 from 9 a.m.- 2:30 p.m. in the Long Glass. Speakers will begin at 10 and include:

**Keynote: Captain Andy Andersen, USN (Ret.)**

*Topic: Living Well and Making a Difference*

**Veteran's Affairs State Approving Authority**

*Topic: VA Education Benefits and Post 9/11 GI Bill*

**Table Displays and Representatives from:**

*Federal Deposit Insurance Company*

*Social Security Administration*

*Florida Department of the Chief Financial Officer*

*Florida Department of Financial Regulations*

*Department of Veterans' Affairs State Approving Authority*

*Consumer Credit Counseling Service of Northwest Florida*

*Navy Marine Corps Relief Society*

*Better Business Bureau*

*Navy Federal Credit Union*

*MWR*

*Fleet and Family Support Center*

*Balfour Beatty Communities*

During the fair, all service members, spouses, civilians, and contractors are welcome to talk with the participants, have lunch provided by our partner Balfour Beatty Communities, and listen to our guest speakers.

## Recycling tip

### PAPER

Letter or copy paper

Computer printout

Shredded Paper

( WHITE ONLY)

Place in blue containers located in all office spaces



If your office space does not have a blue container for recycling, contact 850-235-4166 and a representative will make arrangements for delivery to assist your needs.



Courtesy of freeclipart.com

# Who Wants to be a Millionaire?

**STORY BY MELISSA STRAWSER  
FLEET AND FAMILY SUPPORT  
CENTER FINANCIAL SPECIALIST**

Million Dollar Sailor (MDS) is a fun, two-day, personal wealth-building program offered through Fleet and Family Support Center. MDS is designed to teach service members and their families to successfully navigate the transitions of military life and the financial challenges that accompany them.

The MDS program is a component of the Navy Personal Financial Management Program and was created to specifically combat the most common financial issues facing service members in today's military by providing them with sound financial management skills that can be used over their lifetime.

The topics covered are: Military Pay, Budgeting, Consumer

Awareness, Insurance, Credit Management, Car Buying, Home Buying, Banking and Financial Services, Saving and Investing, Retirement Planning and Resources.

For more information on the MDS program go to: [http://www.news.navy.mil/search/display.asp?story\\_id=42939](http://www.news.navy.mil/search/display.asp?story_id=42939).

DATE: Mar. 24 and 25

TIME: 8a.m. - 4p.m.

ATTIRE: Casual

THEME: Island Retirement

WHO: Service members, family members, civilians, and contractors.

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: MAR 5 AT 12p.m.

To register contact the FFSC Personal Financial Manager, Melissa Strawser, MAS,AFC at 850.235.5611 or [Melissa.strawser.ctr@navy.mil](mailto:Melissa.strawser.ctr@navy.mil)



Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Kristopher Wilson

**A landing craft air cushion (LCAC) assigned to Assault Craft Unit (ACU) 4 exits the well deck of the multi-purpose amphibious assault ship USS Bataan (LHD 5) while transporting equipment and personnel off the coast of Haiti**

## Haiti (cont'd from page 1)

Force. In a typical mission, the craft will embark equipment, troops, and/or supplies; launch from amphibious ships; transit at high speed to the beach; transit the surf zone and beach; proceed inland to a suitable offload site; offload rapidly; and return to the amphibious ships for reload and follow-on sorties.

NSWC PCD currently has On Site Representatives (OSR) located permanently at Assault Craft Unit Four (ACU-4) in Norfolk, Virginia. These senior technicians are experts in their area of support. Kevin Gerber is a Hull and Mechanical expert and Steve Dunaway is a Command, Communications Computers and Navigation (C4N) expert. They provide the immediate interface with the fleet

in support of deploying LCAC and for Haiti relief operations they are currently coordinating with the NSWC PCD Fleet Support manager Robert Adkins to prepare additional LCACs for deployment.

The Fleet Support team residing at NSWC PCD coordinates engineering, logistics and operational resources to provide whatever is needed to deploy the craft as soon as possible. Further, the entire LCAC in-service engineering organization will monitor these deployments and provide rapid response support as required to keep the craft fully mission capable while in Haiti.

The Naval Surface Warfare Center Panama City Division, leaders in littoral warfare. For the latest information on the Navy's support of relief efforts in Haiti, visit: <http://www.navy.mil/haiti>



Would you be interested in speaking with an Embry-Riddle representative regarding the programs offered by ERAU in the local area?

Are you currently an Embry-Riddle student?

If you are an ERAU student, would you like to see classes offered at the Naval Support Activity?

If you are not an ERAU student, would classes held at the NSA influence your decision to apply to Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University?

Would you be interested in Embry-Riddle if you knew that we have several different course delivery modalities beyond classroom learning, such as online courses, Eagle Vision courses, and Eagle Vision Home courses?

Your answers to these questions will aid the Tyndall campus in better serving the needs of its Navy students.

Please contact Ms. Tina Provo directly at [PROVOT@erau.edu](mailto:PROVOT@erau.edu) or call 850-283-4557

# Center for Explosive Ordnance and Diving selects 2009 Sailor of the Year



Photo courtesy of NDSTC

**Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technician 1st Class Schofer talks with students on the pier at Naval Diving and Salvage Training Center.**

**STORY BY MASTER CHIEF EOD TECHNICIAN TODD ROBINSON, NDSTC**

The Center for Explosive Ordnance Disposal and Diving (CEODD) recently announced its 2009 Sailor of the Year, Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technician 1st Class (EWS/SW) William B. Schofer.

When informed of his selection as the CEODD Sailor of the Year, Petty Officer Schofer attributed his success to the caliber of those he serves with, and dedication to the command's mission.

"I feel privileged to work with such outstanding individuals," said Schofer. "The Naval Diving Salvage Training Center (NDSTC) is the worldwide leader in diving instruction, and our instructors exemplify the highest standards of honor and commitment."

While growing up in Tampa, Florida, Schofer felt the call to duty and an over-riding sense of being part of something bigger than himself. He joined the Navy in May of 2002 with the goal of serving in one of the most rigorous and demanding career fields supporting Operation Enduring Freedom.

As the son of a retired Navy Master Diver, Petty Officer Schofer grew up with diving in his blood and had the desire to give back to the diving community. So when the opportunity presented itself, he chose orders to NDSTC.

"I feel that our work (at NDSTC) enhances the Navy's mission by influencing and developing the future leaders of the Navy and EOD early in their careers," said Schofer.

Schofer credits his success in the Navy to a combination of individuals throughout his career. From day one of dive school,



Photo courtesy of NDSTC

**Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technician 1st Class (EWS/SW) William B. Schofer, Center for Explosive Ordnance Disposal and Diving 2009 Sailor of the Year.**

key leaders have recognized his potential and influenced his growth culminating in the Sailor he is today.

"Petty Officer Schofer is excelling at one of our most challenging jobs; a high-risk instructor charged with molding the next generation of EOD techs and Navy Divers," said Capt. Bradley McKinney, commanding officer of CEODD. "He is an extremely gifted instructor who quickly qualified to teach every topic within the diving phase of EOD 'A' school."

Since joining the Navy, Schofer has served at EOD Mobile Unit Six in Charleston, S.C. where he completed a cruise onboard the USS Kearsarge (LHD 3) and two combat deployments,

earning successive Bronze Stars while disarming 86 Improvised Explosive Devices.

Schofer's 2010 goals are to become a Master EOD Technician, Master Training Specialist, and continuing work on his bachelor's degree.



# Sea Fighter returns



Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class David Didier

The Sea Fighter returned to NSA Panama City Jan. 22 after completing a 20-month yard period in Portland, Oregon where it received routine ship repairs. The 262 ft. Catamaran serves as a research and development platform for Navy projects.

## Obituaries

### *Harvey Gilbert*

Mr. Harvey Gilbert, 70, of Panama City Beach, Fla., passed from this life Tuesday, Jan. 19, 2010, at Bay Medical Center.

Harvey had lived in the area since 1994, moving here from California.

He was originally from St. Louis, where he lived and worked for 25 years.

Harvey is survived by his wife of 47 years, Marlys Gilbert of Panama City Beach; daughter, Stacey Gilbert of Denver; and son, Scott Gilbert of Aliso Viejo, Calif.

Harvey was the general counsel for the Navy base in Panama City for 15 years and was patent counsel for six years at China Lake Naval Weapons Center in Ridgecrest, Calif. Before his last 21 years working for the Navy, Harvey was employed for 23 years with McDonnell-Douglas (now Boeing) in St. Louis.

A memorial service for Mr. Gilbert was held at 1 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 23, 2010, in the Kent-Forest Lawn Funeral Home chapel.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Bay County Humane Society.

## DONATIONS TO HAITI RELIEF

The Navy is encouraging members of the community, community organizations, and local businesses to visit <http://www.usaid.gov/helphaiti/> to learn how they can donate money or items in support of Haiti earthquake relief. This web site provides links and detailed information on what are acceptable donations and how to make them.

A special thanks to all who are donating their time, money, and goods in this time of need.

# Students and parents SOAR to new heights with website

**STORY BY**  
**LYNDA KENT, SCHOOL**  
**LIAISON OFFICER**

**S**OAR (Student Online Achievement Resources) is a free website for both military and civilian families with students in grades 3-12 that identifies academic strengths and weaknesses and offers interactive tutorials to improve skills.

SOAR provides students and their parents with resources to: 1) identify academic strengths and weaknesses in math, reading, and language arts, 2) instruct the students through interactive tutorials, and 3) involve parents by providing educational resources written specifically for parents.

SOAR allows parents and students to assess the students' strengths and weaknesses against state standards. The program includes interactive tutorial lessons to help students improve core skills in math and reading. Students take

an assessment aligned to state standards, and SOAR directs them to individualized tutorials to improve skills where needed. Parents can monitor their children's progress from anywhere in the world, anytime, and are provided with resource materials and information that will assist their child in areas where they may need help.

Moving to a new state and going to a new school is never easy, but SOAR can help. SOAR is available throughout the United States. Students can click on the button for the state where the family is moving and become familiar with the state standards as well as take the assessment assignments.

Another plus is the fact that SOAR can be accessed from anywhere in the world, allowing traveling parents to keep up with their children's work. This allows parents who are away to be involved in their children's education.

Here's how SOAR works:  
Once a student has registered,

SOAR begins by assessing the student's current level of skill mastery. The data from completed assignments is used to target the student's weak skills and enrich strong ones. Students and their parents can review the assignment reports and use other assessments and resources for skill practice.

Reports are provided for each assignment. The report provides a breakdown of the assignment by standard. Assignment questions are displayed with the student's responses and the correct answers. In addition, a brief explanation on why a choice was correct or incorrect is given. A bonus is the Skill Resources which provides activities that parents and students can use to help master specific skills as well as additional websites.

Students can increase their knowledge of a targeted skill through the SkillsTutor View link. SkillsTutor offers interactive lessons that contain instruction and guided examples. After completion of a lesson,

students may take a test for comprehension. Parents can view the results by clicking the SkillsTutor Progress Report on the homepage.

The Military Impacted Schools Association (MISA) sponsors SOAR in partnership with the University of Northern Iowa, The Princeton Review, and Houghton Mifflin. Their hope is that SOAR will help children improve in their academic endeavors as well as ease the transition of moving from one military installation to another.

Students can register and begin using SOAR by going to [www.SoarAtHome.org](http://www.SoarAtHome.org).

For more information please contact Lynda Kent, School Liaison Officer at 850-774-7976 or at [lynda.kent@navy.mil](mailto:lynda.kent@navy.mil).

(Information in this article taken from the American Association of School Administrators website and SOAR presentation materials.)

## Length of service

### January

#### 10 Years

Thu Thao Nguyen  
Allison T. Roberts  
Catherine E. Quarles  
Jacquill L. Baker  
Mark W. Giles  
Robert Craig Pajak

#### 20 Years

Mary Cameron Hulgán  
Marline M. Davidson  
Joseph A. Thomas  
Mitch M. Gavrilash  
Kenneth W. Ford  
David E. Wilhite  
Mary A. Stinson  
Robert G. McDonald

#### 30 Years

Carol A. Dreger  
Lee Tender  
Marcus W. Hall  
David F. Hardesty

### February

#### 20 Years

Danny L. Smith  
Philip C. Davis

#### 25 Years

Stanley G. Reach Jr.  
William W. Fontaine

#### 30 Years

James C. Green

#### 35 Years

Terry W. Flowers

# Newly renovated Main Deck now open



Naval Support Activity Panama City Command Master Chief Dale Pittz, Commanding Officer Cmdr. Jessica Pfefferkorn and Fleet Readiness Director Brian Connors cut a ribbon at the Main Deck to commemorate the completion of a \$200,000 renovation project to improve the existing facility.

Photo by Tessa Johnson

## It's tax time! VITA is now taking appointments



Military W-2's are available via DFAS. So are you ready? We want to help you file your taxes for free. VITA is available to Active duty, Retirees, Civilians, and contractors with CAC cards with simple tax returns.

We have a trained team and we are ready, if you would like assistance, please contact:

EMC Sutherland at Office: 235-4449 or Cell: 850-625-7315  
LS2 Carmody at Office: 235-4449 or Cell: 619-307-9001

We are available from 0900-1500 Monday to Friday, just give us a call and we will schedule your appointment.

Happy Tax Time, we are here for you!

# Turtles return to sea

Photos by David Sussman.



Petty Officer 2nd Class Nicholas Matteson assists a Gulf World employee as he loads sea turtles aboard the NSWC PCD Project Craft.



Naval Surface Warfare Center Panama City Division and a crew of volunteers helped return 60 sea turtles to the Gulf of Mexico Jan. 15. During the recent two-week record of cold temperatures, roughly 1,500 sea turtles were rescued after being stunned by the cold from Panama City Beach to Port St. Joseph Bay.



Sixty sea turtles set sail from Alligator Bayou at Naval Support Activity Panama City for warmer Gulf waters. Nearly 1500 of the reptiles, mostly loggerhead and green sea turtles were nursed back to health by Gulf World Marine Park after a two-week cold snap in January.



When the temperatures returned to normal, Gulf World Marine Park employees such as Maria Pomara, trainer at Gulf World partnered with several agencies, including the Coast Guard and the Navy, to return the turtles to the wild. This is the first time one of the NSWC PCD project craft has been used to transport marine life.