CVW 5 deputy commander makes benchmark 1,000th trap

CVW 5 Deputy Commander Capt. Dan Cave cuts a cake in the ready room of VFA 102 "Diamondbacks" after completing his 1,000th trap landing aboard *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) Oct. 22. Cave completed his first trap 22 years ago.

U.S. Navy photo by MC3 David A. Cox

By MCSN Marcos Vazquez,
***USS George Washington* Public Affairs**

Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 5 Deputy Commander Capt. Daniel S. Cave, made his 1,000th carrier-arrested landing, commonly referred to as a "trap," Oct. 22, joining the ranks of a select group of naval aviators.

After the benchmark achievement on the flight deck of *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) (*GW*), a cake-cutting ceremony was held in ready room 6, belonging to the "Diamondbacks" of VFA 102. Cave was congratulated by *GW* Carrier Strike Group Commander Rear Adm. Dan Cloyd, CVW 5 Commander Capt. Ross Myers and *GW* Executive Officer Capt. Daniel Grieco.

"It's an honor to be given the opportunity to fly around the aircraft carrier," said Cave. "But the credit goes to the pilots I've flown with and the maintainers that have maintained the aircraft throughout the years."

It has been 22 years since Cave's first trap and he said it is a privilege to reach this career milestone, but has never considered himself to be a milestone chaser. In his career, Cave has been attached to numerous squadrons, instructed pilots and even acted as the Navy aid for the commandant of the Marine Corps. His first tour was with the "Tophatters" of Strike Fighter Squadron 14 on *USS John F. Kennedy* (CVA 67) during Operation Desert Shield.

"It's been a long time since my first trap, I'm older now and I've got grey in my hair, but I hope I haven't changed too much," said Cave. "Catching the arresting wire can still be scary at times, especially if the flight deck starts slipping, but I think that the moment it stops being scary, it's time to hang it up."

At present, Cave's responsibilities are to support the commander of CVW 5, acting as a back-up for him, assisting in administrative work while Myers' main focus is on the operations side of the house.

"He's a really good guy to work for," said Cmdr. Mark Tankersley, the CVW 5 operations officer, who has known Cave for six years. "He takes care of his people in more than one way, he takes care of a lot of things on his level so we don't get overwhelmed and he's been around so long he can answer any questions we have; everyone respects him for that."

Cave is scheduled to take Myers' position as CVW 5 commander, Feb. 3, 2011. Once he finishes his tour on *GW*, Cave said he could possibly go to Washington D.C. but isn't sure what the Navy has in store for him.

"This is deployment seven and it doesn't get any easier, but my family understands and they're always there for me," said Cave.

Tankersley said he is looking forward to working for him when he gets promoted.

"Knowing him from my last command, I was very interested to work for him again," said Tankersley. "I wasn't the only person who was trying to work for him, but he helped me to get the position."

Cave said he enjoys being an aviator and won't be giving up on it any time soon.

"I'm not quite ready yet, but in the future, I would like to retire on a lake," said Cave. "I can see myself sitting on a dock, fishing, maybe getting visited by the grandkids."

Smoking lamp going dim on subs as policy deadline approaches

By Kevin Copeland and MC1 Todd Schaffer,
Commander Submarine Force Atlantic Public Affairs

Since Commander Submarine Forces (COMSUBFOR) announced a policy change which would ban smoking below decks aboard all U.S. Navy submarines effective Dec. 31, the efforts by submarine personnel in meeting that goal early has been outstanding.

All levels of submarine force leadership fleetwide have provided education and training to Sailors since the announcement April 8, hoping to meet or better the deadline.

"Based on the input from the enlisted leadership, close to 50 percent of our boats have established cessation dates prior to the end of the year deadline, so we are absolutely headed in the right direction," said COMSUBFOR Deputy Force Surgeon Cmdr. Mark Bourne. "The senior leadership of the submarine force has done an excellent job communicating to our Sailors that the deadline is quickly approaching. We've provided the training as well as the materials to ensure our Sailors are successful in making the smoke-free transition."

The change in policy resulted after extensive research revealed the significant exposure to second-hand smoke for all hands within the self-contained environment of submarines.

Once the policy was announced to the fleet, members of the SUBFOR medical staff traveled to medical training facilities (MTFs) fleetwide to train and educate personnel on a Tobacco Cessation Program (TCP) developed by them with guidance and cognizance from the Bureau of Medicine.

Once the staff determined that MTF personnel were well-versed on all training methods and techniques, they turned the TCP over to them and went into the monitoring mode.

The trained MTF personnel then conducted eight-hour TCP training courses with two tobacco facilitators from each submarine. The submarine facilitators, volunteer non-smokers, are currently conducting weekly TCP training sessions to smokers aboard their submarines. The training program incorporates education techniques and nicotine replacement therapy, such as nicotine patches and nicotine gum.

However, trained facilitators on each submarine are not part of their medical division.

"The focus of the independent duty corpsman from each submarine will be implementing and monitoring the tobacco cessation program," said Master Chief Hospital Corpsman (Submarines) George A. Shelton, COMSUBFOR force corpsmen. "From lessons learned in previous efforts in tobacco cessation programs, it has been medical's perspective that the biggest difference makers and best facilitators for these programs are your hard charging first and second class petty officers. These are the Sailors who constantly interact daily with their shipmates on the deckplates while standing watches around the clock."

While the cessation dates for each submarine are set by the commanding officer, the targeted date for each submarine usually aligns itself with other significant events occurring with the boat, such as deployments or upcoming shipyard maintenance periods. Combining shipboard training along with limited smoking hours and smoke-free days established by submarine leadership, has produced some significant successes.

Considering that 40 percent of the submarine force personnel smoke, and 50 percent uses some form of tobacco product, it is a testament to the training and leadership that 21 submarines forcewide are completely smoke-free.

No TCP was more successful than the one aboard the guided-missile submarine *USS Michigan* (SSGN 727), home ported in Bangor, Wash. The smoking lamp was extinguished nearly six months prior to the deadline – at 7:27 a.m., July 27. The date and time were chosen by leadership to honor the ship's hull number.

The Ohio-class guided-missile submarine *USS Michigan* (SSGN 727), moored at CFAY Sept. 28 for a scheduled port visit during a deployment to the western Pacific Ocean, extinguished their smoking lamp July 27.

U.S. Navy photo by Lt. Lara Bollinger

The editor asks:

"Did you know, since its introduction in 2009, the Post 9/11 GI Bill benefit has proven popular with transferability being one of the most-valued features for Sailors interested in paying for their family member's college education?

"While a Sailor may be eligible for education benefits provided by the Post 9/11 GI Bill, generally the option to transfer benefits to an eligible family member requires an additional service commitment in the armed forces.

"Qualified Sailors may elect to transfer all or a portion of their benefits to a spouse or child enrolled in Defense Eligibility Enrollment System and eligible for benefits. For transferability, Sailors must have served at least six years in the armed forces and agree to serve an additional four years, in most cases.

"Sailors can apply for transferability of benefits at www.dmdc.osd.mil/TEB/, however, Sailors should ensure their service obligation is reflected in their Electronic Service Record at https://nsips.nmci.navy.mil/.

"The number one reason for rejected applications is the lack of sufficient obligated service or Page 13 not reflected in a Sailor's Electronic Service Record (ESR). Sailors should verify the information is there before applying for transferability. Self-validation of ESR is required by Naval Administrative Message NAVADMIN 203/09.

"Additionally Sailors should transfer their Post 9/11 GI Bill benefits before going on terminal leave. Benefits must be transferred prior to leaving active duty.

"The Navy has approved more than 24,000 requests for transferability since the program's inception, processing approximately 250 applications weekly."