

# Hoffman, Helms vie for Military Citizen of the Year

By Penny Randall

Editor

The tradition of celebrating and honoring those who volunteer in the local community continues on April 14 with the presentation of the Military Citizen of the Year award.

This year's nominees are Chief Master-at-Arms Clarence Hoffman from Naval Air Station Meridian and Logistics Specialist Petty Officer 1st Class Sven Helms from Naval Technical Training Center Meridian.

The award is sponsored by the Meridian Area Navy League.

Chief Hoffman is NAS Meridian's anti-terrorism officer and the installation's community service coordinator. He has served in the U.S. Navy for 20 years.

He is the NAS Meridian representative at the annual planning and execution of the Area 5 Special Olympic games. He has most recently received the coveted Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal for his contributions in the local and regional communities.

"Chief Hoffman is an exceptional Sailor who is deeply involved in volunteer efforts both on and off duty," said Capt. Charles Gibson, commanding officer of NAS Meridian. "His devotion to helping the community and providing information to others on volunteer services and community involvement is superb."

Hoffman led a team of volunteers from NAS Meridian in 2010 who were recognized by Navy Region Southeast's Community Service Program in the following categories: first place awards in Health, Safety and Fitness Flagship, Project Good Neighbor Flagship, and the Environmental Stewardship Flagship. NAS Meridian also received a second place award in the Personal Excellence Partnership Flagship.

Hoffman also works on his off duty time with LOVES Kitchen, Angel Food Ministries and Habitat for Humanity.

Helms is NTTC's Military Standards Division Leading Petty Officer and the coordinator for Students Helping Interesting People in the Meridian Area Through Enthusiastic Service (SHIP-MATES). He has served in the U.S. Navy for 18 years and has received the Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal.

In 2010, Helms help manage 135 events for NTTC's SHIP-MATES program including projects at Habitat for Humanity, Gaits to Greatness, State Games of Mississippi, Merrehope Restoration Foundation, the Wesley House and the local Veterans Day parade.

"LS1 Helms possesses a rare and genuine concern for this command, its mission and the community," said Cmdr. Shane Harris, commanding officer of NTTC. "His constant willingness to put his community and shipmates first is what sets him apart from other Sailors. Petty Officer Helms' value to the Navy reaches far beyond the borders of NTTC Meridian."