

# Tropical Times

February 3, 2012

*Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 40 Seabees pour concrete placements in Seabreeze Village Jan. 26., as part of construction on Contractor Living Unit #5, NMCB 40's contribution to improve the quality of life for DG21 contractor's living quarters.*



**Submitted By**  
**Lt. Cmdr. Robert Spencer**  
**Command Chaplain, NSF Diego Garcia**

**Keep your promises:** unknown to Braddock, his wife sent their three kids to New York to stay with relatives. Things were so bad, they simply could not afford to provide for them. The electricity was turned off in the one-room cellar they called home. As a result, the kids were getting sick and food was too scarce.

Braddock remembers the earlier promise he made to his son. To get his kids back, he first had to swallow some pride and ask for help, which takes us to the next lesson.

**Humility:** up to this time, Braddock had not asked for public assistance. Things were now so bad he had no other choice. He applied for welfare and was given

money to feed his family. It's an awkward situation when the clerk who waits on him is a friend who expresses mild shock that he is there. She stated, "I never thought I'd see you here." He could not muster a response because of his embarrassment. Still short a few dollars, he goes into a boxing club because he knows people there that can maybe help him. One of them is the person who had earlier pulled his boxing license that prevented him from fighting. The humbled boxer takes off his hat to use as an offering plate and tells the group he needs a few more dollars to turn the electricity back on and to get his kids back. It was a very awkward situation for Braddock and the group

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### Lessons Learned From Cinderella Man: Part 2

was embarrassed for him. One by one, they put money into his hat. He takes the money and brings his kids home. He kept his promise.

**Character:** when he wins his first fight after regaining his license, he pays back the welfare he previously received. It was neither expected nor necessary to do this, but it was important for him to do so. To him it was the honorable thing to do.

**Families should stay together:** with today's high rate of divorce, it's sad that families split apart and it does not end there. It's a known fact that kids from divorced families are more likely to divorce when they marry.

Today it appears that families separate because of the

selfishness of a spouse. Even during the Great Depression, the most trying time in the 20th century, families stayed together. The divorce rate then was well below than what we experience today. Families stuck it out back then, and in the process became stronger. We need this strong example today.

*To be continued...*

***"The reward of humility and fear of the Lord is riches, honor and life."  
(Proverbs 22:4)***

# Captain's Cup



U.S. service members on Diego Garcia, British Indian Ocean Territory, compete for the coveted Captain's Cup Jan. 27. Activities included a four-person kayak relay race, beach run, tug of war and a bouncy obstacle course. Congratulations to the Air Force team for taking first place!



# THE FIGHTING

# 40



Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 40, based out of Port Hueneme, Calif., has a total of 16 personnel here on Diego Garcia. The battalion's main body site is in Camp Shields, Okinawa. Concrete placements are part of the construction of Contractor Living Unit #5 in the Seabreeze Village section of the island and will replace older living units and improve the quality of life for Diego Garcia contractors. NMCB 40 is currently deployed to the U.S. Pacific Command area of responsibility and Diego Garcia is one of 11 different detail sites. This is NMCB 40's last deployment before decommissioning later this year.

# NEWS *from around the fleet*

## Historical All-Female Flight Takes Place Aboard USS Carl Vinson

By Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class (SW/AW) Rosa A. Arzola, USS Carl Vinson Public Affairs

USS CARL VINSON, At Sea (NNS) -- Five "Tigertails" of Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron One Two Five (VAW-125), embarked aboard the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70) as part of Carrier Air Wing Seventeen (CVW-17), flew an historic flight on Jan. 25 when they participated in the Navy's first all-female E-2C Hawkeye combat mission.

Carrier Aircraft Plane Commander Lt. Cmdr. Tara Refo, Mission Commander Lt. Cmdr. Brandy Jackson, Second Pilot Lt. Ashley Ruic, Air Control Officer Lt. Nydia Driver, and Radar Operator Lt. j. g. Ashley Ellison flew an E-2C Hawkeye- the Navy's all-weather, carrier-based tactical battle management airborne early warning and command and control aircraft. The aircraft was also manned up by multiple female maintainers including Aviation Machinist's Mate 3rd Class LaTasha Lawrence, Aviation Machinist's Mate 1st Class Farzana Lively, Aviation Structural Mechanic (Equipment) 2nd

Class Ana Wilson, Aviation Structural Mechanic Airman Denise Birchfield, and Aviation Machinist's Mate 3rd Class Racheal Watson who ensured the safe launch and recovery.

"I have only had the opportunity to fly with one other female pilot," Ruic said. "It is nice to be a part of history, not just because we are females, but because we are also close friends. It was a unique experience."

Ellison added, "We got the mission accomplished and had fun at the same time. It was a flight I will never forget."

"Since April 2011, when Ellison checked on board as the fifth female in the squadron, we have been attempting to organize the all-female combat mission flight. Due to operational constraints, it had not been possible until now," stated Jackson, the squadron's operations officer.

The Tigertails are one of twelve active-duty VAW squadrons in the Navy. Eleven are carrier-based, but as Driver explained, VAW-125 is the only fleet Hawkeye squadron



ARABIAN SEA (Jan. 25, 2012) Air Control Officer Lt. Nydia Williams, left, Radar Operator Lt. j.g. Ashley Ellison, Plane Commander Lt. Cmdr. Tara Refo, Pilot Lt. Ashley Ruic, and Mission Commander Lt. Cmdr. Brandy Jackson, all assigned to Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron (VAW) 125, pose for a photo before flying the first all-female-crewed combat mission in an E-2C Hawkeye aboard the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70). Carl Vinson and Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 17 are deployed to the U.S. 5th Fleet area of responsibility. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class James R. Evans/Released)

with enough females to fill a complete flight crew. feet, could fit two Los Angeles class submarines.

The number of female Hawkeye pilots in the fleet is still small, sitting at less than 5 percent, but the number of female naval flight officers appears to be growing, Refo noted. "During my junior officer tour from 2003 to 2006, I was the first female officer and only female pilot in my squadron," she said. "Now having five women in the same squadron with varying rank and experience, it is gratifying to witness the progression of women in the community."

The opportunities opened up by women aviators like Capt. Sarah Joyner, the first female deputy carrier air wing com-

mander, and Cmdr. Val Overstreet, the first female VAW commanding officer, have allowed many females to pursue their dreams with no limitations.

After the flight, Jackson expressed interest in repeating this event should the opportunity arise. "We are getting a new female naval flight officer soon, and we can't wait for her to join us as we continue to make history as naval aviators," Ellison commented.

Carl Vinson and CVW-17 are conducting maritime theater security operations in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of responsibility.

# NEWS *from around the fleet*

## Reflecting on Naval History During the 2012 African American/Black History Month

By Ensign Amber Lynn Daniel, Diversity and Inclusion Public Affairs

WASHINGTON (NNS) -- As announced by NAVADMIN 026/12 released Jan. 24, the Navy joins our nation in celebrating African American/Black History Month throughout the month of February.

With a national theme of "Black Women in American History and Culture," commands are encouraged to learn more about the contributions of African Americans to the Navy, including the Navy's female Sailors.

African Americans have a long and notable history of service, first with state and continental navies and continuing with the establishment of the Department of the Navy in 1798. During the Civil War, black Sailors fought against slavery on every type of Union warship, and eight were Medal of Honor recipients.

During the Battle of Mobile Bay on August 5, 1864, landsman John Lawson was seriously wounded. A member of the ship's berth deck ammunition party, Lawson remained at his post despite his injuries and continued to supply USS Hartford's guns. For his heroism in that action, Lawson was awarded the Medal of Honor.

In the 1880's, Ordinary Seaman Robert Sweeney was awarded the Medal of Honor twice within three years. Sweeney's first Medal of Honor was awarded for saving a ship-

mate from drowning while serving on board USS Kearsarge at Hampton Roads, Virginia on October 26, 1881. In addition, while USS Jamestown was at the New York Navy Yard on December 20, 1883, Sweeney rescued another shipmate, A.A. George, who had fallen overboard and was drowning. Sweeney received a second Medal of Honor for his rescue of George.

On December 7, 1941, America was attacked by Japanese forces at Pearl Harbor. During the attack, Mess Attendant 2nd Class Doris "Dorie" Miller remained steadfast at his post, machine-gunning inbound Japanese planes. Miller received the Navy Cross for his actions during the attack, and became one of America's first national heroes of World War II.

In 1942, Samuel L. Gravely, Jr. began his career as a seaman apprentice in the U.S. Navy. Gravely rose through the ranks and achieved many firsts for African Americans during his career, including becoming the first African American to command a combatant ship. Gravely was also the first African American to be promoted to flag rank and the first to command a Naval fleet. On May 16, 2009, an Arleigh Burke class guided-missile destroyer was christened the USS Gravely in his honor.

Following in Gravely's footsteps was J. Paul Reason. Raised in Washington, D.C., Reason initially chose to enter the U.S. Naval Academy because it seemed the most economical way to get an



WASHINGTON (July 13, 2011) Secretary of the Navy (SECNAV) the Honorable Ray Mabus and Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen. James F. Amos view the Department of the Navy tribute to African American Leadership display at the Pentagon. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jay M. Chu)

excellent education. Reason went on to make the Navy his career, and in 1996 he broke one of the most significant color barriers left within the Navy, becoming the first African American four-star admiral.

"I totally attribute my success to those who have gone before me - all minorities," Reason said during a 2009 interview with American Forces Press Service. "People who have broken down barriers by showing others they're capable of doing the expected task, that they can perform and it has nothing to do with color of skin or ethnicity - nothing to do with anything other than a person's capabilities."

The contributions of African Americans in Navy history aren't just reserved for men, however. In December 1944, Lt. j.g. Harriet Ida Pickens and Ensign Frances Wills made history when they became the first African American officers in the Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service (WAVES) program. African American females first enlisted in the Navy during World War I, and continue to serve with distinction and honor today.

When she was 12 years old, Michelle Howard told her older brother she wanted to join the Navy. A quarter century later, Commander Howard became the skipper of the USS Rushmore and the first African American woman to command a U.S. warship. Howard went on to lead an amphibious squadron, serve as senior military assistant to the Secretary of the Navy, and ultimately achieve flag rank. In 2010, she was selected to two-star rank and began serving as Chief of Staff to the Director of Strategic Plans and Policy on the Joint Staff.

African American/Black History Month serves as an important time for all Sailors to reflect on the history of our Navy, as well as its future. More information, including the many milestones achieved by African American Sailors and the history of the African American Navy experience can be found at the Naval History and Heritage Command

For more information, visit [www.navy.mil](http://www.navy.mil), [www.facebook.com/usnavy](http://www.facebook.com/usnavy), or [www.twitter.com/usnavy](http://www.twitter.com/usnavy).

# Diego Garcia Spot Lights

The CMC wants  
YOU!

TO PAINT A NEW MURAL IN  
HIS OFFICE.  
IF YOU CAN DRAW AND WOULD  
LIKE TO VOLUNTEER FOR  
THIS PROJECT, CONTACT  
CMDCM JOHNSON AT  
ROBERT.L.JOHNSON@FE.NAVY.MIL

## Diego News Update

- PMK TRAINING WILL BE HELD MONDAYS AND WEDNESDAYS IN THE ISLAND ROOM FROM 1430 TO 1530.
- THE MEN'S SUANA IS NOW UP AND OPERATIONAL.
- THE GREEN BAG RAFFLE HAS STARTED AT THE SHIP'S STORE. GET YOUR TICKETS THROUGH MAY 25, FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN.

## Taxes Stressing You Out?

VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX  
ASSISTANCE (VITA) WILL OPEN  
FEB. 8, IN THE LEGAL  
OFFICE FOR ELECTRONIC  
TAX FILING SERVICES.  
CALL 370-2922 TO  
MAKE AN APPOINTMENT.

Are you a graphic  
designer? Do you have  
a comic strip you'd  
like published?

IF SO, CONTACT THE TROPICAL  
TIMES STAFF TO SEE YOUR ART-  
WORK PUBLISHED IN OUR  
NEWSLETTER AND ONLINE.

CONTACT US AT  
DGNEWSLETTER@HOTMAIL.COM

# Superbowl Weekend Madden Tournament

SPONSORED BY COALITION OF SAILORS AGAINST  
DESTRUCTIVE DECISIONS

Feb. 4, at 1 p.m. in the  
Liberty Center.

Entry: \$2 sign-up in advance / \$4 sign-up  
at the door.

For more information or to enter contact

AC2 Amir Johnson at 370-5231 or

IC3 Robert Lyles at 370-5545.

## MADDEN 12

Look for sign-up sheets in the gym and in  
the galley!



### Wanted: SAPR-VAs



The Fleet and Family Support  
Officer (FFSO) is now offering individu-  
al training.

Individual classes are 20 hours of face-  
to-face instruction with the FFSO and  
10 hours of independent study.

Please contact  
Lt. Grgurich for  
more information.



Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

Dodgeball  
Tournament  
Fitness Center  
5 p.m.  
**Military Only**

Basic Sailing Class  
Section 1 and 2  
Marina  
5 - 7 p.m.

Team Triathlon  
Marina  
8:30 a.m.

MWR Sailing Regatta  
Marina  
2 p.m.

Superbowl XLVI  
Island Room  
5 a.m.

Moonlight Wander  
Fitness Center  
7:30 p.m.

8 Ball Pool  
Tournament  
Island Room  
6 p.m.  
**Military Only**

**Footloose**  
Drama  
PG 13  
8 p.m.

**Paranormal Activity 3**  
Horror  
R  
8 p.m.

**The Help**  
Drama  
PG 13  
8 p.m.

**The Big Year**  
Comedy  
PG 13  
8 p.m.

**Dream House**  
Thriller  
PG 13  
8 p.m.

**Shark Night**  
Horror  
PG 13  
8 p.m.

**Moneyball**  
Drama  
PG 13  
8 p.m.

**I Don't Know How  
She Does It**  
Comedy  
PG 13  
10 p.m.

**What's Your  
Number**  
Romance  
PG 13  
10 p.m.

**Tropical Times**

United States Navy Support Facility  
Diego Garcia British Indian Ocean  
Territory

**Commanding Officer**

Capt. David L. Tidwell

**Executive Officer**

Cmdr. Stephen E. Petras

**Command Master Chief**

CMDCM(SW/AW) Robert L. Johnson

**Public Affairs Officer**

MC1(SW) Arthur N. De La Cruz

**Tropical Times Editor**

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**Submissions to the Tropical Times are  
due to the editor no later than close of  
business Tuesday**

SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

Anyone can be a victim of sexual assault.

Resources are available if you need someone to talk to confidentially.

Contact the Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC) at 370-4421

Monday - Friday 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Pager 370-9300 ext. 1826 - 24/7

Page the on-call SAPR Victim Advocate at 370-9300 ext. 1825.

