



WINGSPAN



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Naval Air Station Corpus Christi, Texas

December 3, 2015



LDO retires after 30 years

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Sports Day

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Retired veteran shares story

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Happy Thanksgiving —

Volunteers dish out a free Thanksgiving buffet Nov. 26 at Naval Air Station Corpus Christi's Catalina Club. The meal, sponsored by MWR and supported by USO of South Texas and the Navy League, featured roast turkey with dressing, baked ham, mashed potatoes, gravy, green beans, sweet potatoes, rolls and assorted desserts. More than 450 people enjoyed the festive meal. It was the second year volunteers came together to set up, cook and serve Thanksgiving dinner to anyone who showed up. The volunteers included active-duty members and their families as well as supporters of the military. Chika Buyo also provided musical entertainment. Chika, a senior at UTSA, is the daughter of CNATRA's Chiko and Takayo Buyo. (Photo by Fifi Kieschnick, NASCC PAO)

Holiday season: Time for joy ... and \$tre\$\$

By Eric Lobsinger
NASCC Public Affairs Office

The holiday season, for many, can be the happiest time of the year. It provides an opportunity to gather with family and friends for celebration, joy, camaraderie, spirituality and remembrance.

For others, however, this happiest of times can also be a time of stress and sadness, resulting in a deep feelings of anxiety and depression.

Perhaps the greatest challenge of the holiday season for those experiencing the “holiday blues” is to realize that they have those feelings in the first place and then to reach out and find ways to engage in the holiday festivities.

As to why this season of joy can also cause so much stress for those involved, at times it's just a simple matter of too many things to do and too little time in which to do it.

For many, a normal day involves going to work and focusing on the mission. And then, going home, having quiet evenings and then enjoying settled, sedate weekends.

“Suddenly, when the holidays come around, everyone tries to “shoehorn” everything into as little



Lt. Cmdr. Stephen Warne, NASCC command chaplain, is surrounded by 60 holiday food baskets that were distributed to members of the NASCC community prior to Thanksgiving. Each basket contained a \$25 gift certificate for the Commissary in addition to \$15 of non-perishable side-dish foods. (Photo by Eric Lobsinger, NASCC Public Affairs Office)

time as possible,” said Steve Arndt, who serves as the chaplain's religious education development operation detachment facilitator, Naval Air Station Corpus Christi. “They travel as far as possible to see as many relatives as possible — and it ends up becoming more arduous than a work week.”

It is at this time that the stressors of family obligations come to the forefront.

For some, the stress can be centered on what they believe to be the “normal” holiday expectations.

“Many people have a false sense of happiness, peace and joy in that they attribute that the more gifts they have under the tree, they happier they'll be,” said Lt. Cmdr. Stephen Warne, NASCC command chaplain.

And this, in turn, tends to compound the issue when you add in the additional financial stressors.

The reality, said Warne, is that some will spend money that they don't necessarily have — to get the gifts they feel they are necessary to purchase. Thus, although already stressed on a personal and a financial basis, they face an additional stress in their belief that the key to having a happy holiday is to celebrate well, to go on vacations and, for many, to travel.

“During the holidays, we tend to compare ourselves to other people,” said Warne. “We may think, I have ‘this’ image of what a happy family looks like. And, if mine doesn't measure up to that, then I have to compensate somehow.”

In this, the financial obligations can become daunting. Many will feel pressured — even if they do not have the necessary funding — to travel. For instance, some will succumb to a perceived pressure by their parents to return home so they can see their grandchildren.

“We have all of these things we do to celebrate such a happy occasion,” said Warne, “and what we are left with, for some, is the financial price tag it brings.”

So how does a Sailor, civilian

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Command Master Chief's Column



CMDCM(SW)
Jeffery Tidwell

Howdy! In this day and age, where we can have almost anything at the drop of a dime, we have become a “we want it now” society, and it can be difficult to show appreciation or gratitude.

Traditionally, the holiday season is the time when most everyone gives thanks for our family, friends, co-workers and the material things we have. However that shouldn't be the only time we are grateful. There is always something to be grateful for – even if it's just “the sun is shining

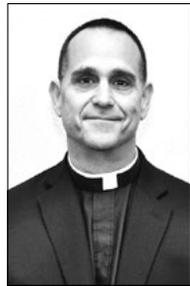
today.”

The holidays can also be a stressful time for us, both mentally and financially, because of this “we want it now” mentality. The holiday season comes with a lot of so-called good deals where you can get all the latest and greatest material things at a discounted price. These are good deals if we are financially set-up to purchase them. However, most families are not, and they open a lot of interest free loans/credit cards during this time of year because they have 18-24 months to pay it off before they are charged interest.

Most families can handle one of these accounts; however, because of our “we want it now,” we tend to open up more of these accounts and the next thing you know, these good deals ends up costing us more because we cannot get all these accounts paid off before the interest kicks in.

Please stay within your financial means.

Chaplain's Message



Reason for
the season

Father John Vidal

Last year we put out the Nativity Scene on the First Sunday of Advent. That is the beginning of the liturgical year for the Catholic Church and others who follow a liturgical calendar. It is always the fourth Sunday before Christmas. For us it is not yet the Christmas season but the time when we look forward to the incarnation celebrated on Christmas day.

The Christmas season follows for 12 days to the Epiphany when we remember the magi, or three wise men, and their visit to the baby Jesus with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

For this reason, when we put the scene out, we did two things that most people did not notice – but a few did.

The first thing is that we placed the three magi at a distance from the scene and then moved them closer each Sunday until Christmas day. We do this to remember the magi following the star to Bethlehem. When I grew up, we used to move them a bit closer each day until we finally put them at the manger on the epiphany on Jan. 6. The second thing we did was to leave the baby Jesus out until Christmas Eve as a reminder that we are looking toward the celebration of the incarnation on Christmas day. Christians believe that Jesus will return on the “last day” and therefore during advent we look to that event as well.

I'm not sure how many people noticed the magi moving closer. Nobody made any comments except to say that they thought it was

strange we put them so far away. However, many wondered if we were prohibited to put the baby Jesus out.

The answer to that is no: thankfully, the First Amendment, freedom of religion, is alive and well in our country. Others thought the manger had been stolen. Very few people



My roll – A young man hangs on to the side of his father's head as he reaches out for a tasty roll during a Thanksgiving buffet Nov. 26 at Naval Air Station Corpus Christi's Catalina Club. More than 450 people gathered for the festive meal. (Photo by Fifi Kieschnick, NASCC PAO)

Believe it or not, just spending some time with your family members over a good meal and letting them know how thankful you are for them being in your life is enough. Don't get caught up in the material things; sometimes just letting them know how much they mean to you is gift enough. You may also find out that this will bring you a greater sense of gratitude and happiness.

In closing, I want to thank you and your families for your service to our great country and the many sacrifices that come with military life. Have a happy and safe holiday season. If you and your family are traveling this holiday season, do so smartly. If you have to stop somewhere because of bad weather, then please do so.

Getting everyone back safely is the number-one priority. We will work with you if you can't get back on time – just keep us informed.

Better to be safe than sorry!

understood the concept of waiting until Christmas day.

It is interesting really, how so many of us spend the season of advent not preparing for the religious implications of Christmas day but instead focus on the shopping and preparation for the exchange of gifts. The exchange is a wonderful tradition, but we should be careful not to make it the center of our celebration. This can also be true for those who celebrate Chanukah.

The problem with focusing on the exchange of presents is that we turn our attention inwardly toward ourselves and away from God. When we do this we run the risk of getting carried away with excitement for the material over the spiritual. For many, this results in overextending their spending. I want to urge you to be careful this season to make a budget and follow it and, whether you follow a liturgical calendar or not, that you place your spiritual health ahead of any materialistic urges you may feel.

Having said all that, I would like to wish you all a safe and joyful Christmas or Chanukah, and if you follow another religious tradition, or merely see the season as a time to celebrate and be thankful for family and friends, that you are richly blessed.

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Base Protestant Chapel
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ISLAMIC WORSHIP SERVICE

Islamic Society of South Texas, 7341 McArdle Rd.
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Capt. Steve Banta
Commanding Officer

Fifi Kieschnick
Public Affairs Officer

Eric Lobsinger
Editor



This paper is published for people like MA2 Keisha Ferguson, a new arrival to Naval Air Station Corpus Christi. A native of Bronx, N.Y., she has served in the Navy for seven years.

LDO captain retires after 38 years of service to nation

By Lt. j.g. Liz Feaster
CNATRA PAO

Following a career that spanned 38 years of service, Capt. Horacio “Ferny” Fernandez, a naval aviation maintenance officer, bid farewell to the Navy during a retirement ceremony Nov. 20 aboard USS Lexington Museum on the Bay.

“To be a part of the Navy and its aviation community has been such an honor,” said Fernandez. “This journey, every step of the way, has been worth it.”

Fernandez enlisted in 1977 and later completed the Navy’s limited duty officer program, where he received his commission as an aviation maintenance officer. He completed multiple tours at Naval Air Station North Island and NAS Miramar in San Diego, NAS Fallon in Nevada, and served as the commander, Navy Recruiting Command in Millington, Tenn.

Since February 2014, Fernandez has held the position of assistant chief of staff for Aviation Maintenance and Contract Logistics at Chief of Naval Air Training in Corpus Christi.

“We have all had the distinct fortune of Captain Fernandez’ experience, sound judgment and leadership for the

last 22 months of his 38 years in the Navy,” said Rear Adm. Dell Bull, chief of Naval Air Training. “His dedication has kept our aviators flying safely and the Blue Angels on schedule.”

Fernandez is one of only 43 limited duty officers who have been promoted to the rank of captain, and he is the only Hispanic LDO in the aviation maintenance community.

“I’m very proud of my heritage and where I’ve come from,” said Fernandez. “I am thankful to have been a part of an organization that celebrates diversity but unites its members through the common goal of protecting our country.”

Several of his family members and close friends attended the ceremony and the following reception aboard USS Lexington.

“These people around me today, my wife and sons, the friends I’ve made throughout my career, they are the reason I’ve been able to do this job,” said Fernandez. “There’s no way I could’ve made it this far without their support.”

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 Blue Angels.



Capt. Horacio Fernandez, Aviation Maintenance/Contract Logistics, Assistant Chief of Staff for CNATRA is piped ashore along with his wife Margarita and children; Horacio Jr., Hector, Kevin, Carlos, and Enrique at the conclusion of his retirement ceremony Nov. 20 on board USS Lexington Museum. . Fernandez served more than 38 years. (Photo by Richard Stewart, CNATRA public affairs office)

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NAS Corpus Christi ... Training – 75th anniversary

Editor's note: This is the second in a series of articles about Naval Air Station Corpus Christi. As we prepare to celebrate the station's 75th anniversary, we will explore its rich history, discuss its impact to Corpus Christi and South Texas, and what is being planned for the anniversary celebration in March.

By Fifi Kieschnick
NASCC PAO

During World War II, approximately 35,000 men successfully completed flight training at the naval air station. Most of the cadets were Navy and Marine Corps officers; others came from Great Britain, Canada, Mexico and South America.

It was said that during the war there probably was not a pilot in the Navy who had not landed at the air station. Either the pilot took flight training at the Corpus Christi base or stopped here on a cross-country flight.

The naval air station was commissioned March 12, 1941, and the first students – 52 in number – arrived March 20. The second group of 75 students arrived April 3. Their numbers increased steadily at two-week intervals.

The first students had to meet the Navy's physical fitness requirements and have at least two years of college. They ranged in age from 20 to 28 years old and had passed an elimination pilot test at a Reserve training center.

Ground school began on April 7 and flight training a month later when the first aircraft arrived – Naval Aircraft Factory N3N-3 Canary or "Yellow Peril" biplanes. The early cadets were trained in an open cockpit biplane – the N3N and N2S. They advanced to the SNV, made by Vultee in California, which the aviators nicknamed "Vultee Vibrators" because they shook so badly. They finally progressed to the SNJ Texas, a single-wing training craft.



Aviation Cadets receive instructions, 1944. (Photo courtesy of Naval Aviation News 1944)

The first 45 cadets – of the original 52 – successfully completed training and received their commissions and Wings of Gold on Nov. 1, 1941. According to the U.S. Naval Institute's June 2013 Naval History magazine, Nov. 1 was a hot day and corpsmen were busy picking us those who "keeled over from the heat."

The base chapel held its first service Dec. 7, 1941. After services let out, people heard on the radio that Japanese planes

see Training on page 10

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Power under ground

— Roland Trevino keeps a close eye as Warren Hoelscher, a line technician, makes his way underground down a ladder. Once underground, the team handed off the power lines, which he dragged over to the next manhole. The team is adding new power lines as the base replaces its existing street lights with LEDs, which provide more lighting while using less electricity. (Photo by Eric Lobsinger, NASCC Public Affairs Office)



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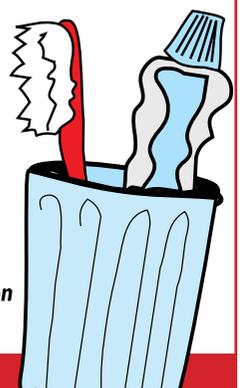
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NASCC Sports Day athletes

Overall scores by organizations:

First Place:	MATSG-22	244 Points
Second Place:	NHCCC	86 Points
Third Place:	TW-4	79 Points

With sheer determination, a female competitor (left) hauls up a giant tire during the Strongest Woman competition of the two-day event as a male competitor slams a homer that flies well beyond the left-field fence during the homerun derby. Competitors from throughout the base were invited to compete during a myriad of events: Ace in the hole, bowling, speed agility, 3 vs. 3, volleyball, racquetball, dodgeball, longest drive, strongest man/woman, home run derby, and 3-point shootout. (Photos by Laurie Garcia, MWR, and Eric Lobsinger, NASCC public affairs office)





Capt. Steve Banta, commanding officer, NAS Corpus Christi, meets with the team from Marine Aviation and Support Group-22 after they earned bragging rights to the overall victory for the team competition by an almost three-to-one margin of victory over the second place team. (Below) A basketball player soars through the air as he attempts to drive the lane and to shoot above the outstretched arm of a defender. (Photos by Laurie Garcia, MWR, and Eric Lobsinger, NASCC public affairs office)

Players earning top honors for the events were: Ace in the hole: Lance Cpl. Lewis, MATSG-22; bowling: Patrick Byrne, TW-4; speed agility: Lance Cpl. Lewis, MATSG-22; 3 vs. 3: CCAD; volleyball: TW-4; racquetball: Lorenzo Valdez, USCG; dodgeball: NHCCC; longest drive: Dolanm VT-35; strongest man: Sgt. Smith, MATSG-22; homerun derby: HM1 Guyton, NHCCC, and 3-point shootout: Bryan Schmidt, TW4.



As everyone watches the ball with an eagle eye, a volleyball player (above) bumps up a serve to set up his teammates during the volleyball competition. Players from both teams (below) scramble to get to the balls first during the slaughter ball tournament below. (Photos by Laurie Garcia, MWR, and Eric Lobsinger, NASCC public affairs office)



Stresses from page 1

employee, family member, cope with the ever-growing pressures to do more, to buy more, and to spread themselves out in more directions?

For most, it may be a matter of setting realistic expectations – both for themselves and for their loved ones.

“The objective,” said Arndt, “is to set your goals and to create a schedule that doesn’t exhaust you to the point that, in the end, where you need a vacation from your vacation.”

For example, rather than attempting to visit both the husband’s and the wife’s families during the holidays, perhaps rotate the holiday visits to each family ... or perhaps determine the family should stay home for the holiday.

“Thanksgiving can be an alternate,” said

Arndt, “and perhaps then New Year, spring break and then summer break, instead of trying to cram everything around Christmas and New Year. Make it a year-round project. You can maintain contact with everyone but in a pace and a manner that doesn’t totally exhaust you and take away from your resiliency – and take away from the joy of the holidays.”

For others, the holiday blues can kick in as a result of a feeling of loneliness, particularly when they cannot return home for the holidays.

“Don’t be isolated and alone,” said Warne. “Realize that isolation is the number-one enemy. When people think they are isolated and alone, and feel they have no resources available to them, that’s when everything else tends to fall apart. Surround yourself with other people who care. Find ways to celebrate the season.”

Warne recommends that those who cannot go visit family, rather than being alone, find other people to be with.

For some, this is challenging because they may feel that they don’t need help or that they’re strong enough to do it on their own – or perhaps that it’s a sign of weakness or they don’t want to “burden” others – which tends to add to their sense of frustration or isolation.

There is no “set standard” or “proper” way to enjoy the holidays, and it’s important to recognize the onslaught of the holiday blues.

“If we are experiencing anything – helplessness, depression, anxiety, or loneliness – then we must intentionally seek out people who can

support us, who we can talk to, who we can celebrate with,” said Warne.

As important as self-recognition is, it’s also vital for family members, friends and co-workers to keep an eye on one another and to recognize the symptoms of those having a hard time during the holiday season.

“The number-one thing is to keep the right perspective on everything,” said Warne. “Knowing that grief or loss, which is a big thing for some during the holidays, those times will pass. We may not be able to see how but they will.

“So just hang on a little longer to get past those periods. It’s also understanding that ‘I don’t need to go spend money that I don’t have,’ thinking that’s going to take the place of happiness.”

He said it is important to keeping the perspective of the necessity of spending wisely – and of using one’s time wisely.

And making contact with families is not only important during the holidays, said Arndt, but it is also important to keep in touch outside the holiday window. He recommends developing a plan – and then following up on that plan.

“Find a way – maybe at the end of the week or a Sunday afternoon – and set aside an hour or 30 minutes, either by phone call or even by writing letters,” said Arndt. “Let the holidays be one among the many opportunities for a break, for resiliency, for recharging or refreshment.

“People can schedule in time for themselves or for family but don’t feel that they have to over-spend or over-obligate themselves.”

Both Arndt and Warne stressed the importance of developing a healthy, well-balanced lifestyle, which helps combat stress and depression. Both cited the principles of Total Force Fitness, which diagrams eight parts of life: Social, Physical, Environmental, Medical and Dental, Spiritual, Nutritional, Psychological, Behavioral.

“When any parts of those areas of life suffer,” said Warne, “it contributes to the other areas also suffering. We can work on the little things. When we do enough of the little things, then it starts to add up, and we put ourselves in a better place to make positive decisions.”

For some, religiously and spiritually, the holidays are an important time of the year. As such, it is imperative for each individual to determine what is meaningful to him or her and to celebrate in a manner that is meaningful as individuals, not as to how it may be perceived by others.

“For some, it may all be about the presents, the family or the gifts, but if the whole celebration is based on the birth of Christ – that’s sometimes lost,” said Warne. “And, if that is the pivotal thing that brings us the most meaning for the holiday, then that’s the thing we need to be celebrating.

“What better way is there to celebrate than at services with a bunch of people who also feel that is what is most important to them?”

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Retired Marine would give anything to wear uniform one more time ... officially

Editor's note: This is part of a continuing series of stories honoring our community's veterans.

By Eric Lobsinger
NASCC Public Affairs Office

He is a quiet, unassuming man. At the age of 84, he no longer tops the 5-foot mark. And when he speaks, he does so with a quiet, casual grace and dignity. The Korean War veteran, wounded in battle, awarded the Purple Heart and the Silver Star more than six decades ago, said the day he became a Marine was the proudest day of his life.

"People ask me: 'How long were you a Marine?' I tell them I was in the Marine Corps for three years, but I've been a Marine all my life," said Aurelio "Harry" Samuel Alfeo.

Born and raised in Joliet, Ill., his parents were both immigrants from Italy – mom from Naples and dad from Sicily in 1918/1919. Raised in a blue-collar family, he said both were hard-working people. And his father, he said with a chuckle, could have been a Marine – "all Italian fathers were pretty strict back then."

He said his childhood played an important part in his development as an adult – and as a Marine.

"Probably the most traumatic thing, other than being in combat, was being a child in the 1930s during the Depression," explained Harry. "We survived it. We were poor, but everybody was poor back then."

The youngest of three children, he had two sisters, one 12 years older and the other 6 years older. He also had a step-brother and two step-sisters from his mother's previous marriage.

Harry, born in 1931, joined his beloved Corps when he was 19, saying he was "PO'd" when the Japanese surrendered to end World War II because he wanted the chance to serve his nation.

"I had seen so many John Wayne movies and so many war movies in the theaters that I couldn't wait until I was 17 or 18 to enlist," he said. "Most of the guys my age who saw the same war movies I did were ready."

The Korean War started in June 1950, and Harry said he kept "bugging my parents: 'I want to join the Marine Corps.'"

They told him, "No, you'll get hurt." After a while, Harry convinced them to let him join.

"The only way I got my parents to agree," he said, "is that I told them that if 'you force me to be drafted and go into the Army, I will never talk to you again.' Of course, that's big with the Italians. If they kids don't talk to you? No way."

Harry said the proudest day of his life was in Chicago when he raised his right hand and said: "I do solemnly swear ..."

And then, not really knowing that much about what he was getting ready to do, he said he was absolutely shocked when he went to boot camp.

He fondly recalls his drill instructor as a huge man, 6 feet, 4 inches, from Vermont.

"I say he was 6'4" but to me he was about 10 feet tall," said Harry.

The DI was a decorated Marine from World War II. Each day he provided the trainees a running report on what was happening in Korea, particularly the Battle of Chosin Reservoir in which 30,000 United Nation forces fought a desperate battle to break through the encirclement of 67,000 Chinese soldiers.

That daily report left a lasting, powerful impression on the troops.

To prepare for his upcoming deployment, Harry was sent to advanced infantry training at Camp Pendleton,

Calif., where he found the training to be very rigorous, very precise, and a great preparation for what was to come, as well as cold-weather training in Tioga National Park to simulate the conditions in Korea.

On Nov. 15, 1951, he shipped out from San Diego and landed in Korea on Dec. 5, joining Company A, 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, 1st Marine Division. He landed on the east coast of Korea; the mountains were, at a minimum, 4,000 feet high; the weather dropped to 30-35 below zero, and the Marines kept warm any way they could.

"We layered our clothing," recalled Harry. "You started with just a heavy jacket, a shirt, another shirt, a sweater: you were like that kid in Charlie Brown."

Harry saw his first action in January 1952 during a firefight in the east coast of North Korea. At that time, he said, U.S. forces were fighting the North Koreans on the east coast and the Chinese in the central part.

"We were more like WW1 by this stage," he said. "There was no fluid movement; we had trenches; we had barbed wire, and we had outposts."

During his first firefight, he and his buddy shared a bunker and "acquitted ourselves quite well." He said the training they underwent was very effective once they found themselves in combat.

"During the firefight, my buddy's rifle jammed, so I grabbed it and gave him mine, which was working. In the dark, in about 40 below zero weather, I was able to disassemble that weapon and put it back together, clear the jam, and join the firefight in probably less than a minute.

"It was all by feel and all by the training. They (the enemy) lost a few men that night."

His buddy, Eddie Arechiga, is his dearest friend. The two of them have kept in constant communication for the past 65 years.

On a day that he will long remember, May 28, 1952, Harry's unit, Able Company, attacked enemy forces on Hill 104, which was defended by a battalion of Chinese soldiers. During the combat, Harry was wounded after stepping on a land mine.

"Thank God it didn't sever the leg – but it scared the hell out of me," said Harry. "All the while, the artillery and mortars are coming in just like rain."

Harry was awarded the Silver Star for rescuing some men that day even though he was already wounded. He said it took him years to wear the Silver Star because he feels that every Marine that was on that hill that day deserved at least a Bronze Star, if not Silver.

"That one operation, my platoon, 45 men, got a Medal of Honor, were awarded two Navy Crosses and two Silver Stars ... during peace talks.

"It was a dirty, vicious little battle. My company, over a three-year period, lost 124 men and four corpsmen. It is a little-known fact that 40,000 Americans died in that



Aurelio "Harry" Samuel Alfeo.

three-year period. "

He was on the hospital ship for less than a month before rejoining Able Company, where he saw more action with his buddy Eddie again at his side. In all, Harry would spend one year and one day in Korea, leaving Dec. 6, 1952.

"I should have been a lifer ... but I wasn't," said Harry, with a heart-felt sigh. "I knew it at the time that I loved my Corps. It was a very hard decision. I got out of the Marine Corps, which I have always regretted in November 1953.

From there, he went to college under the GI Bill, which he said was an incredible, unexpected blessing.

He said he spoke with a guy who was a graduate of Duke and told him that he wished he could go to college too. The guy told him that he could go to college under the GI Bill.

Harry would spend the next couple of years attending Joliet Junior College and then moving on to Illinois Urbana, where he majored in banking and finance, graduating in February 1958.

Harry married his wife Ruth on Feb. 27, 1960. The couple has four children: two boys and two girls, in addition to six grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

He has served as the commandant of the Coastal Bend Detachment Marine Corps League #430 and currently serves as its paymaster.

While serving as the commandant, he was involved in the Mayor's Committee on Veterans Affairs and also works with Area Aging, which oversees senior citizen and dementia programs.

On a final thought, Harry said that the one thing he truly wishes he could do again is to wear his uniform – one more time – officially. His message to today's Marines is to cherish every moment while serving the nation.

"Love it with all your hearts," he said. "You'll get back 10 times more than what you put into it. Love every moment that you are in the Marine Corps because you are never going to experience that again ... that teamwork, that discipline, that pride.

"That uniform has such tradition."

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Training from page 4

had attached U.S. bases at Pearl Harbor and destroyed much of the Pacific fleet.

Aboard the base, military leaves were cancelled, security was tightened, and training continued at a brisk pace.

The following day, hundreds of personnel gathered at the Overhaul and Repair Dept. hangar to hear President Franklin Roosevelt's war speech.

The training schedule aboard the station was expanded to seven days a week and elevated in intensity and tempo – from graduating 300 pilots each month, it rose to 600 a month.

By 1943, the Navy had lowered the age limit for cadets and began accepting qualified high school graduates. One such cadet was George H. W. Bush. After graduating from Philips Academy in Andover, Mass., Bush went through flight training and received his wings at Corpus Christi in 1943. He was only 18 and the youngest to earn his wings aboard NAS Corpus Christi.

By June 1944, 3,000 officers and 7,000 cadets were at the station; with thousands more enlisted men, WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service) and civilian workers there. Graduations took place twice a week and were kept brief and simple.

Cadets who later achieved distinction included future astronaut and U.S. Senator John Glenn. Among the 1944 graduates

was later radio and TV game-show host Bob Barker. John Tower, who became a Republican U.S. senator from Texas, washed out of the training program here and later served on board an amphibious gunboat in the Pacific.

Hollywood stars Tyrone Power and Robert Taylor were among those stationed at the base during the war. Power, a lieutenant in the Marines, went through flight training at NAS and despite his celebrity status, refused any special treatment. Robert Taylor, already a pilot, was at NAS in 1942 for refresher training.

Neil Armstrong, the first person to set foot on the moon, received his flight training at Corpus Christi, as did future Arizona Senator John McCain, who narrowly escaped death or serious injury when he crashed his training plane into Corpus Christi Bay.

Many of the aviators who fought and died in the great naval battles in the Pacific, the battles that ultimately won the war, were trained at the Corpus Christi NAS, according to local author Murphy Givens in a recent Corpus Christi Caller-Times editorial.

When the base was being built in 1940, people said it would make Corpus Christi important, or at least more important, but they didn't know at the time just how important it would be.

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Bravo Zulu



Capt. Guido F. Valdes, commanding officer, Naval Health Clinic Corpus Christi, presents HM2 Catherine Diaz with her fourth Navy Achievement Medal Nov. 19 for superior performance while serving as a general duty hospital corpsman, Directorate for Healthcare Business from February 2010 to November 2015. Diaz trained 66 command customer service representatives on the Interactive Customer Evaluation system. (Photo by HM2 Jacob Welch)



Capt. Guido F. Valdes, commanding officer, Naval Health Clinic Corpus Christi, presents HM3 Shawn Grieg with his second Navy Achievement Medal Nov. 19 for superior performance while serving as a general duty hospital corpsman, Medical Homeport from November 2013 to December 2015. Greib led 14 staff in support of five providers in the delivery of healthcare during more than 15,120 patient visits. (Photo by HM2 Jacob Welch)



Capt. Guido F. Valdes, commanding officer, Naval Health Clinic Corpus Christi, presents HM2 Bradley Martin with his second Navy Achievement Medal to for superior performance while serving team lead, Medical Homeport and program coordinator, Patient Administration department from December 2012 to December 2015. Martin was hand-selected to train junior Sailors in operating the Teledermatology Clinic. (Photo by HM2 Jacob Welch)



Capt. Guido F. Valdes, commanding officer, Naval Health Clinic Corpus Christi, presents HM2 Jean Paul Vargas with his second Navy Achievement Medal Nov. 19 for superior performance while serving as aerospace medicine technician, Operational Medicine Department from December 2013 to December 2015. Vargas identified 105 unit identification codes erroneously reported for the command. (Photo by HM2 Jacob Welch)



Rear Adm. Dell Bull, chief of Naval Air Training congratulates Clyde Russell, IT specialist, CNATRA, for being selected as Civilian of the Quarter during an awards ceremony Nov. 5.



Adm. Dell Bull, chief of Naval Air Training Rear, presents certificates of recognition to the following individuals for years of service: Brett King (upper left), five years; Mark Esposito (upper center), five years; James Felts (upper right), 10 years; David Watson (lower left), 10 years; Robert Gerberding (lower middle), 30 years; and Justin Wallace (lower right), 35 years. CNATRA thanks them for their your dedication of service. (Photos by Richard Stewart, CNATRA public affairs office)



Rear Adm. Dell Bull, hief of Naval Air Training, presents the Navy Achievement Medal to Lt. Cmdr. Jonathan Hullihan, staff judge advocate for CNATRA, Nov. 5, for his professional service as staff judge advocate, Training Squadron Two (VT-2), from September 2014 to September 2015.





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