

SEABEE COURIER

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Balikatan 2013



ZAMBALES, Philippines - Builder Constructionman Brittany McGrath, assigned to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 5, leads U.S. and Philippine Seabees, and a group of Barangay residents, in pulling a suspension cable for the San Pascual foot-bridge. The project is one of seven engineering civic action projects being performed by Combined/Joint Civil Military Operations Task Force units supporting exercise Balikatan 2013. Balikatan is an annual Philippine-U.S. bilateral exercise. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Chris Fahey/Released)



Mississippi Gulf Coast
Honor Flight Grand Homecoming
April 23, 7 p.m.

Gulfport-Biloxi International Airport

Make signs, wave flags and cheer
for the heroes of
"The Greatest Generation"

Arrive early, enjoy entertainment while you
wait, free parking (carpool if possible)

Join the rest of the world
and celebrate our planet



Naval Construction Battalion Center (NCBC) Earth Day will include displays by Pascagoula Audubon Society, Mississippi Museum of Natural Sciences, Mississippi Power Renew Our Rivers, Public Works Energy Table, Wild at Heart Rescue, NOAA Fisheries, Harrison County Conservation District and much more! Stop by and increase your awareness of the environment.

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Skipper's Log

Celebrating military children

By Capt. Rick Burgess
Commanding Officer Naval Construction Battalion Center

Monday, I had the honor of signing a proclamation recognizing April as the Month of the Military Child and Child Abuse Prevention Month. It's a timely reminder of our responsibility to recognize the unique challenges that military children face.

As military members, we sometimes take our families for granted, especially our children. Aspects of our work that may seem routine to us – TAD trips, deployments and PCS moves – may be significant stressors for them.

A personal "sea story" illustrates how easily we can overlook the impact on our children. As an O-4 with three small kids, I was preparing to PCS from overseas back state-side. By this point, my wife and I had moved several times together and were getting pretty good at it. We had talked with the children about moving, explaining that we would be getting on a plane, moving to a new house, etc. Though we thought we had prepared them adequately, we could have done a better job of it, because as the packers

arrived and began disassembling our furniture, my son (then three) ran to me with a frantic look on his face, exclaiming, "Dad, the men are breaking my bed!"

I believe military children develop resiliency skills far superior than that of their non-military peers. But they don't magically acquire them all at once. Nor should we assume that everything is right in their world simply because they appear okay on the surface or are "toughing it out." Fortunately, we have a wealth of resources at our disposal to help prepare our kids for the challenges they face.

FOCUS (Families OverComing Under Stress) is a great resource to help teach your family resiliency, coping skills, communication skills, goal setting and much more.

Military and Family Life Consultants, who work with schools and other military support programs worldwide, can also help. They are licensed clinical providers who assist members and families with issues they may face through the cycle of deployment. They are also able to educate teachers on the unique stressors that military children en-

counter.

Deployments are not the only anxiety inducers for military children. Some families will move this summer and children must leave their friends, school and otherwise normal routine. This can be particularly hard for teenagers who might find it tough to adjust to a new place.

If you are just coming on board or heading to another base, I encourage you to seek out a school liaison officer for your educational needs. The NCBC School Liaison Officer is Kevin Byrd. He is the go-to guy for all things related to schools in the area. Locally, he helped introduce Student 2 Student (S2S). This program is designed like a sponsorship for kids. It helps relieve some of that "new school/new friends" pressure.

Pressure and stress come with the territory; however, the Navy works hard to help alleviate some of that strain from members and families. The Fleet and Family Support Center can lend a hand when you don't know where to turn. They offer dozens of programs and resources which help family resilience and adaptability, including deployment support



Capt. Rick Burgess

for Sailors and their families, emergency preparedness and response, financial education, personal and family wellness education and counseling, and much more.

Even with all these great programs available to you and your family, it all starts at home. I encourage each of you to take a little extra time with your children to explain the significance of what you do and to let them know how proud you are to have them as a member of your family. Take a minute to thank them for their sacrifices. In a military family, it takes everyone to accomplish the mission.

Thank you for your sacrifices and for your resilience. I hope you and your family have a great and safe summer!

Semi-annual Scholarship Golf Tournament

The Society of American Military Engineers (S.A.M.E.) is holding a scholarship fund raiser golf tournament May 17, at 1 p.m., at Bay Breeze Golf Course, Keesler Air Force Base. Lunch will be served at noon and is included in the \$75/player fee or \$260/4 person team fee. The event features a \$40K Shootout from mulligan participants. Mulligans will be available for purchase for \$5 or 3/\$10. To register, go to <http://www.samegulfoasttournament.com>.



Buzz on the Street

By CECN(SCW) Lucinda Moise
NCBC Public Affairs

"What is one of your favorite memories regarding your child and military service?"



"Coming home from being underway and seeing my children waiting for me on the pier."

ET1(AW/SW) Kevin Holscher
NCG2

Hometown: Corning, Calif.



"Fright Night at Seabee Lake. My daughter really liked it a lot."

BUCN Jackie Schwacke
NMCB 74

Hometown: Pontotoc, Miss.



"Returning from deployment and my daughter being excited to see me."

UT2(SCW) Robert Orgill
NMCB 1

Hometown: Windsor Lockes, Conn.

Around the



Center

Capt. Lori Laraway (front right), Navy Expeditionary Combat Command (NECC) warfighter resiliency program manager, and May Jacobs, NECC force family readiness director, facilitate a Command Family Readiness Team Mobile Training for military command leaders and civilians from base support services attached to NCBC Gulfport at the Tactical Training Facility, April 11. The three main topics of the one-day training were: Sailor and Family Readiness, Warfighter and Family Resiliency, and Crisis and Trauma. For more information concerning family readiness, visit www.issuu.com/necfamilyprograms. (U.S. Navy photo by Chief Mass Communication Specialist Ryan G. Wilber/Released)



Construction Mechanic 2nd Class Charles Barrow, assigned to Naval Construction Group (NCG) 2, instructs Construction Mechanic 1st Class James Allison, of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 74, on CAT C12 diesel engines valves and injectors as part of Construction Mechanic "C" School, Diesel Phase, at Naval Construction Training Center (NCTC) on board NCBC Gulfport, April 10. Diesel Phase is one of the phases of CM "C" School, in which students learn how to maintain, repair and replace valves, injectors and Jacobs Brakes for Civil Engineer Support Equipment (CESE) engines. (U.S. Navy photo by Construction Mechanic 3rd Class Katchen Tofil/Released)

Construction Mechanic 3rd Class Nathan Abbott, assigned to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 133, Alfa Company, executes a set of weighted lunges at the Fitness Center on board Naval Construction Battalion Center (NCBC) Gulfport, April 12. Strength training, along with proper nutrition and cardiovascular training, is an important part of maintaining proper physical health in line with the Navy's Culture of Fitness. (U.S. Navy photo by Chief Mass Communication Specialist Ryan G. Wilber/Released)





Susan Martinez, Navy Wives Club of America (NWCA) regional president, addresses attendees of a NWCA Regional Conference during a vote for Local Chapter President at the Fleet and Family Support Center (FFSC) on board NCBC Gulfport, April 6. The NWCA holds a regional conference twice a year to discuss matters they would like to be addressed at the yearly national conference. (U. S. Navy photo by Construction Mechanic 3rd Class Katchen Tofil/Released)

Navy Wives Club holds conference on Center

By CM3(SCW) Katchen Tofil
NCBC Public Affairs

The Navy Wives Club of America (NWCA) came to the Fleet and Family Support Center (FFSC) on board Naval Construction Battalion Center (NCBC) Gulfport for the club's central regional conference, April 6. The conference's purpose was to share specific charitable donations and money-making ideas with individual clubs, give annual reports and review bylaws for annual revisions.

The NWCA is the country's only non-profit national organization of Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard enlisted spouses. It was incorporated June 3, 1936 in Long Beach, Calif. Since its inception, clubs have been chartered throughout the world. In October of

1984, the NWCA received a Federal Charter from the United States Congress. The purpose of NWCA is to unite all sea service enlisted wives with bonds of mutual friendship, assistance and for the welfare of their families, bases and communities in which each lives.

During the conference, the presenters discussed growing memberships, events that worked and did not work to grow membership and ways to help members that may not live near a club. Ideas that the club felt needed to be brought up at a higher level were also discussed.

"At regional we gather all of our business and vote on things that we want to take to the national level, things that are important to us in our re-

gion, and things that we would like to see happen or discussed at national," said NWCA Regional President Susan Martinez.

The Navy Wives Club of America is interested in re-establishing a club in the local area. Those who are interested in joining an organization that promotes the health and welfare of any enlisted member of the Navy, Marine Corps or Coast Guard, should contact Darlene Carpenter at 228-342-3371 or Tina O'Shields, at 228-357-0513. Visit www.navywivesclubsofamerica.org for more information.

Editor's note: Background information for this article was obtained from www.navywivesclubsofamerica.org.

Navy Memorial celebrates Year of Military Women

By MC1 Brandie Wills
Navy News Service

The United States Navy Memorial hosted the official kickoff of the Year of Military Women during a ribbon-cutting ceremony, April 11.

This is the first time the Navy Memorial will be honoring not only Navy women, but also the women who have, and still serve in the Army, Air Force, Marine Corps and Coast Guard.

Chief of Naval Personnel, Adm. Scott Van Buskirk was the guest speaker at the event, and said he was honored to attend the ceremony, because he knows how essential women's leadership and contributions have been to the Navy and the nation.

"I know that first-hand, and I see that each and every day when I have the opportunity in my job to go out and meet the men and women who serve in our Navy and also in our Marine Corps," said Van Buskirk.

Senior leaders from each of the services, and members of congress attended the event and were able to get the first look at the collection of original uniforms worn by pioneering World War I Yeoman (F) and female Marines. Among the most significant is a uniform worn by Capt. Mildred McAfee, the first director of the Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service, or WAVES, who commanded 82,000 women during World War II.

The Executive Vice President of the Navy Memorial, Cindy McCalip said the memorial

wanted to include women or all branches of service to highlight the common bond between all military women.

"Women tend to support other women whether it be from one service or another service," said McCalip, "so it's important that we keep that connection going and we didn't want to alienate any women in the military, so we're trying to be very inclusive of all the services."

The exhibit highlights many of the women who made military history through their leadership and determination.

"In our military, we judge leadership abilities by the capacity to get the job done well," said Buskirk. "Man, woman, people of color, white, Hispanic: that doesn't matter. What matters is that you can meet the mission and you can get the job done. And as demonstrated day in and day out, our women aren't just meeting that mission, they're leading the way, going above and beyond."

Fleet Master Chief April Beldo said that events like Year of Military Women allow for the opportunity to recognize the past contributions of women to the armed forces.

"If it wasn't for those women who went before me, I would not be standing here today," said Beldo. "This allows me to give honor and homage to the hard work that they did while they were serving."

Celebrations of the Year of Military Women will continue throughout the year and will include book signings, golf tournaments and symposiums.

Sexual Assault: Not in My Navy

By Vice Adm. Matthew L. Nathan

U.S. Navy Surgeon General and Chief U.S. Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery

Many of you are familiar with my philosophy of "Ship, Shipmate and Self." In the Navy and Marine Corps, we ensure the mission is accomplished, we watch out for our comrades and we must take care of ourselves. When it comes to preventing and stopping sexual assault, the same applies. Sexual assault strikes at the dignity, health, and welfare of our people, it erodes trust and cohesion, and it undermines the readiness of our force. Together, we must combat sexual assault crimes.

April marks Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month. During this month, Navy Medicine will focus its efforts on awareness and prevention of sexual violence through command-level education and special events. Sexual assault prevention is a priority year-round, but this month I want to stress what Navy Medicine is doing to tackle this

issue and how we must come together to prevent sexual assault every day of the year.

While we work to eliminate this crime from our service, we will continue to care for the victims when these unfortunate incidents do occur. It is crucial we support the sexual assault victim and hold offenders accountable. When a victim tells us that they have been sexually assaulted, we believe them and protect their privacy. We must create safe environments free from sexual assault and harassment.

Navy Medicine is committed to the quality of care we provide to victims. We're increasing the capability to provide timely, readily accessible medical-forensic examinations (Sexual Assault Forensic Examination - SAFE). Last month, we made revisions to Navy Medicine policy establishing training requirements for health care providers to conduct SAFE examinations. Standardized SAFE increases capability and improves the patient experience. Standardization also allows for consis-

tent evidence collection and reporting whether it is at one of our military treatment facilities at home or in a forward-deployed operational area.

Recent sexual assault prevention and response program changes have also resulted in increased access for patients and improved readiness for our Navy Medicine providers. Specifically, as a result of the recent SAFE policy update, our Regional Commanders are ensuring the availability of sexual assault medical response capability 24 hours a day, seven days a week for all our service members. Navy Medicine Regional Commanders are also in the process of appointing a Regional Sexual Assault Program Manager to ensure that the Department of Defense standard of care of sexual assault victims is met at the local medical command level.

Awareness and support of those affected by sexual assault is critical, but prevention is vital. We are leaders at every level, and I expect you to exert compassionate and intrusive leadership to stamp out

anything that fosters a condition where sexual assaults could occur. Look into any trends or occurrences of sexual assault, unwanted behavior, or on-duty or off-duty atmosphere where trouble can arise. We also need to pay attention to the use and prevent the abuse of alcohol. In many cases, alcohol is a contributing factor in sexual assaults.

Every command has access to a sexual assault response coordinator for witnesses and/or victims to report issues. Don't be that person shaking their head after the fact saying "I saw this coming and I didn't do enough to prevent it."

I take this issue very seriously, and I expect you to do the same. We will be a stronger military, a stronger Navy and a stronger Navy Medicine enterprise as we stand together to combat sexual assault crimes.

Somewhere out there is a young man or woman who is considering either joining, or staying in our Navy. As they consider the pros and cons for themselves, one of them must

Sexual Assault
Awareness Month

April is designated Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM). The Safe-Helpline provides live, one-on-one crisis support. CALL: 877- 995-5247 CLICK: www.SafeHelpline.org; or TEXT: 55-247

never ever be fear of sexual assault or inappropriate sexual behavior. Not in my Navy! Not in our Navy!

I am so very proud of the work you do each day. Let's lead together to a Navy that sets the example in honor, courage, and commitment. Thank you for your service and as always, it is my honor and privilege to serve as your surgeon general.

April 18, 2013

Seabee Courier

5



Bee Wash
June 5 - 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Nominate your washer:
Call 228-871-2610

See Something Wrong, Do Something Right!

NCIS has two new anonymous ways to report crimes or suspicious behavior with the use of discreet and secure online or texting tip lines.

To report information by Cell text:

1. Text "NCIS" to the short code 274637 (CRIMES) from any cell or smart phone.
2. Receive a response, for example: "Your alias is: S2U5 Call 911 if urgent! If replies put you at risk, text "STOP"
3. Begin dialogue

To report information Online:

1. Go to www.NCIS.navy.mil, click on the "Report a Crime" tab and select the icon for "text and Web tip Hotline."

There is a reward of up to \$1,000 for information leading to a felony arrest or apprehension.



Navy's Military Equal Opportunity Network now Online

By Ensign Amber Lynn Daniel
Diversity and Inclusion Public Affairs

The Navy Equal Opportunity (EO) Office has created the first centralized database within the Navy to track military Equal Opportunity formal and informal complaints.

The Military Equal Opportunity Network (MEONet) is a standalone online web-based program that standardizes, tracks and reports administrative actions associated with the primary duties of Equal Opportunity Advisors and Command Managed Equal Opportunity Program Managers.

The Military Equal Opportunity Network (MEONet) is located at www.navyimeo.net, and details on the MEONet launch can be found in NAVADMIN 097/13. Equal Opportunity Advisor and Equal Opportunity Program Manager accounts for MEONet will be created by the Navy EO Office.

The MEONet allows Equal Opportunity Advisors and Command Managed Equal Opportunity Program Managers the ability to track formal and informal EO complaints, including hazing, from initiation to resolution. Additionally, it offers features for users to track general assistance provided to military members. MEONet can also generate standardized, printable Memorandum for the Record (MFR).

The MEONet also serves as a

valuable tool for Navy command leadership to assess command climate. The centralized database provides leadership the ability to identify complaint trends and implement corrective actions.

"MEONet is a valuable new tool in our Equal Opportunity Advisors and Command Managed Equal Opportunity Program Manager's toolbox," said George Bradshaw, Director of Navy Equal Opportunity. "The MEONet is also an additional tool to be utilized during a command climate assessment, helping commanders foster and maintain a climate of inclusion within individual commands."

The MEONet will augment current EO data collection, including the tracking of all general assistance provided to Sailors by Equal Opportunity Advisors and Command Managed Equal Opportunity Program Managers. It can also generate general status reports, including reports broken down by type of complaint, and demographic data of alleged offenders and demographic data of complainants.

For more information on Navy Equal Opportunity, visit http://www.public.navy.mil/bu-pers-npc/support/equal_opportunity/Pages/default.aspx.

For more news from Chief of Naval Personnel - Office of Diversity and Inclusion, visit www.navy.mil/local/cnp-diversity/.

Armed Forces MC 2013 Navy-Marine Corps Relief

Fund Poker Run . . . A poker run to benefit the Navy Marine Corps Relief Society (NMCRS) is scheduled for April 20 at the AFMC Clubhouse, 11007 Wolf River Road, Gulfport. Registration is at 10 a.m., first bike out at 11 a.m. and last bike in at 4 p.m. For more information, contact call 228-229-2816.



Seabees of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 4, work on a maternity ward in Kontali, Djibouti, March 11. The Seabees are building the maternity ward along with seven other buildings, to complete the project in support of Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa to help strengthen institutional capabilities. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sergeant Caleb Pierce/Released)

Seabees build medical facility in Djibouti

By Senior Airman Rachel Waller

CJTF-HOA Public Affairs

With few medical assets located in the southwest region of Djibouti, the nearest hospital for the village of Kontali is about a 30-minute drive to Dikhil. Otherwise, for women in labor or the infirm, it's often a journey made on foot.

Thanks to the Seabees of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 4, deployed from Port Hueneme, Calif., in support of Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa, a maternity ward is being built here that bridges the gap and helps strengthen Djiboutian institutional capabilities.

"In emergencies, I can take a taxi or ambulance to get to the hospital in Dikhil, but if there is a hospital across the road, I can go there," said Aeesha Hussein, a 30-year-old Kontali village mother. "I can have a baby here; there is nothing better than this."

Once construction is complete, the eight-building facility will house a maternity ward, patient rooms, nursery, cooking area, bathrooms, two buildings for water storage and an incinerator to burn medical waste.

"The buildings will be self-sustaining," Petty Officer 2nd Class Vincent Decaro, NMCB 4 crew leader, said. "They'll have running water, a food-preparation area and solar power panels."

The energy harvested by the solar panels will power all eight facilities. Additionally, the concrete buildings are engineered to withstand heavy winds and seismic activity from several active volcanoes in the region.

"We're also building relationships with the local community and we are engaging with the government, local villagers and the Djiboutian army in the area," said Ensign James Kwasny, officer in charge of Detail Kontali.

Mohamed Houmed, the Kontali village chief, gave his thanks to the U.S. Navy for the ongoing

construction of the maternity ward.

"Thank you for coming here," said Houmed. "Having a clinic in the region is a better thing and we think this is going to help our people in the future. This is going to help us a lot."

Previous Seabee units have worked on the project, from conducting military-to-military engagements with the Djiboutian army and civil engagements with the villagers to pouring concrete and teaching stuccoing techniques.

"They are really good at stuccoing," said Kwasny, about the villagers.

Before NMCB 4 redeploys this summer, four of the eight buildings are scheduled to be 100-percent complete.

"To come here and help people is a great opportunity for the Seabees," said Kwasny. "That's why you see the smiles on a lot of their faces; it's because they are doing something they really enjoy."

NMCB 11 CBR certification



Seabees assigned to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 11 simulate a Detailed Equipment Decontamination (DED) during a Chemical, Biological, Radiological (CBR) Certification Exercise at a training field on board NCBC Gulfport, April 16. DED is used to decontaminate vehicles that may have been exposed to agents while in a CBR environment. NMCB 11 continues to train in preparation for deployment later this year. (U.S. Navy photo by Construction Mechanic 3rd Class Katchen Tofil/Released)

Call out for military women to participate in Mobile Bay Golf Classic

The Ladies Professional Golf Association is honoring 30 service women who have served in Afghanistan or Iraq during the Mobile Bay Golf Classic, May 16-19 on the Robert Trent Jones Golf at Magnolia Grove Crossings Course, Mobile, Ala. The event will feature 144 of the top

LPGA golfers. Military participants will be stationed by two's at the course holes during the four day tournament. Each pair will hold the flag for the caddy at the designated hole and will be greeted by top LGPA stars such as Stacy Lewis, Paula Creamer and Michelle Wie as they cycle

through the hole. Pairs will do this each day for either the 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. or 1 - 6 p.m. shift. Participants will be fed breakfast and lunch. Military women, who meet the criteria and would like to participate, are asked to send an email to robert.c.mims@navy.mil no later than April 30.

Underwater Construction Team (UCT) ONE

UCT 1 is searching for highly motivated Seabees and CEC officers looking for a career and lifestyle change.



Join an ELITE force and travel as a small, professional team. Execute specialized construction, diving and demolition skills with the latest and greatest technology and equipment.

Contact UCT CCC/Diver recruiting team at 757-462-3988/4313 or Email YNC Aberle at christopher.aberle1@navy.mil; SW1 Dohse at ryan.dohse@navy.mil or visit www.facebook.com/seabee.diver for more information.

The PWD Gulfport Trouble Desk is located at the Regional Call Center

**Regional Call Center Phone Number:
1-855-462-8322**

~ Call Center Operational 24/7

~ All Routine and Emergency Service Calls will be called into the RCC

~ Only Building Managers and Authorized Callers can place Routine Service Calls
(Anyone can call in an Emergency)

Questions? Contact PWD Requirements or your Facility Management Specialists (FMS): PWD Gulfport, 228-871-4270/4288; Alan Walker, 228-822-5129; Rick Ricker, 228-871-3983; Stephen Murray 228-871-2192

'The Meat & Potatoes of Life'

By Lisa Smith Molinari
Military Spouse Contributor

Battery by blender!



"MOLINARI!" the ER nurse bel-lowed, jolting my Navy husband and I out of our waiting room stupor. Tearing our eyes from hypnotic crime show reruns playing on the wall-mounted television, we scrambled to move our 12-year-old daughter, who'd been placed in a wheelchair to elevate her lacerated foot.

"So, what happened?" the nurse asked.

"It was the blender," I blurted, nervously.

"The blender?!" the nurse looked in horror at our daughter's foot, wrapped in a dishtowel.

"Well, no, her foot wasn't actually in the blender . . . it was on the floor . . . and the blender was in the freezer."

"In the freezer?" the nurse asked, confused.

"I . . . it was me . . ." I mumbled culpably, "I put the glass pitcher in the freezer. When my daughter opened the door, it fell out and cut her foot."

"Ah," the nurse seemed relieved to not be dealing with a frapped foot, "let's take a quick look." As our daughter winced and whined, we carefully unraveled the dishtowel. "Hmmm . . . looks like you're gonna need a few stitches young lady."

The nurse fired questions at us – "full name, date of birth, address, phone number, Tricare prime or standard, sponsor's social" – while tapping away at her computer.

Then, after a pregnant pause, she looked intently at us and carefully enunciated, "Has your daughter ever had stitches before?"

"No," I answered immediately.

My mind waffled and my eyes darted as I thought, "Should I tell her about that face plant she did into the side of the backyard playset? She didn't need stitches, but if I don't mention that, will she think I've got something to hide? Why is she asking this question anyway? Does she think we're abusive parents with a long history of suspicious ER visits? I guess the whole blender story does sound a bit suspect, and I was the one who put the blender in the freezer to begin with. I should've known it would slide off that bag of chicken tenders!?! It was my fault! I'm sure she's alerting the police right now! I think I hear sirens!"

"Sit tight in the waiting room. When the doctor is ready for you, we'll get you all fixed up." the nurse said with a smile.

We settled back into the waiting room, just in time to see Matlock render a withering cross examination. Stagnating under the unfor-giving fluorescent lights for another hour, we reassured our daughter, analyzed the people around us, leafed through dog-eared magazines, and watched an episode of "Hill Street Blues."

Just as I thought cobwebs were forming, our name was called. The x-ray technician, the billing rep, the nurse, the doctor – they all asked the same questions. First a battery of rapid-fire queries regarding tedious details were launched in robotic succession, followed by one carefully worded question delivered police-interrogation style.

I can't recall if the final question was "Has your daughter had stitches before?" or "Are you the abusive parent who negligently

put the blender in the freezer sideways?" but I am certain that they had it out for me.

I prayed they wouldn't find out about our two older kids, who have had their share of ER visits in past tours. Three broken bones, two pulled elbows, and at least a dozen stitches; with such typical excuses -- fell off the couch, fell off the playset, fell into the playset, fell down the stairs. It all sounded so textbook, I was sure that the police were on their way to haul me off to jail.

But finally, after 30 minutes of treatment and three hours of waiting, we were released. Feeling like some kind of middle-aged jailbird, I sheepishly wheeled my daughter back to the ER entrance.

Suddenly, "YOU'RE UNDER ARREST!" blared from the waiting room. I considered bolting, but I was really looking forward to our upcoming PCS to Rhode Island, and besides, I would need to pack my fiber pills and contour pillow before I could lead a life on the run. Just as I turned to face the wall and spread 'em, I noticed that the order had come from CHiPs Officer "Ponch" Poncherello on the wall-mounted TV, and I realized that I was free to go.

On our way back to base, while my daughter sipped a conciliatory Whataburger chocolate shake, I turned to her in an effort to re-lieve the still-fresh pang of guilt, "Lollipop, if I hadn't put that blender in the freezer sideways, none of this would've happened. I'm so sorry."

"It's OK, Mom," she said between sips, "it's not you're fault. It was just an accident." Along with my heart and that chocolate shake, my mother's guilt finally melted away.

Get more wit and observations from Lisa at her blog, <http://themeatandpotatoesof-life.com>.

HEALTH WATCH

By HM3 Jessica Martin
NBHC Gulfport

National Medication Take Back Day is an initiative deployed by the U.S. Department of Justice and the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), in conjunction with the local law enforcement agencies around the nation, in efforts to keep prescription drugs off the streets.

On Apr. 27, police agencies across the Gulf Coast will be participating in the nationwide

event from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. at the collection sites listed below.

If you have any prescription medications that you no longer use or that have expired, please bring them for drop off – the agencies will handle the rest!

Efforts to promote and/or participate in this event will directly contribute to improved safety throughout communities and is greatly appreciated by local law enforcement agencies.

Gulf Coast Collection Sites

Participant's Name	Collection Site
Pass Christian Police Dept	Pass Christian Public Library 111 Hiern Ave., Pass Christian
Gulfport Police Department	2220 15th Street, Gulfport
81st Security Force Squadron	Keesler AFB Main Exchange 506 Larcher Blvd., Biloxi
Biloxi Police Dept	Biloxi Police Dept 170 Porter Ave., Biloxi
Hancock County Sheriff's Department	Hancock County Sheriff's Department, 8450 Highway 90, Bay St. Louis
Wiggins City Police Dept	County Maintenance Barn 523 South First Street, Wiggins
Stone County Sheriff's Department	Stone County Sheriff's Department, 1420 Industrial Park Road, Wiggins
Slidell Police Department	Slidell Police Department Central Station, 2112 SGT Drive, Slidell



Fraud, Waste and Abuse Hotline: Due to limited IG resources throughout the Southeast Region, all Fraud, Waste and Abuse hotline work will now be handled by the Region. To report Fraud, Waste and Abuse, contact the Region at: Toll Free 1-877-657-9851 Comm: 904-542-4979 DSN 942-4979 FAX: 904- 542-5587, E-mail: CNARSE_HOTLINE@navy.mil.

Focus on Education

DoD program helps service members transition to teaching

From Navy Personnel Command Public Affairs

Placing veterans in the nation's classrooms to serve again is the goal for the Troops to Teachers program, officials said April 12.

"We are here as a counseling and referral asset to help eligible veterans transition into second careers as teachers," said Cliff Yager, director, Troops to Teachers for Tennessee and Northern Alabama, during a Transition GPS briefing at Naval Support Activity Mid-South.

The purpose of the Department of Defense program is to help eligible current and former military personnel begin new careers as teachers in public schools where their skills, knowledge and experience are most needed.

Veterans possess many of the qualities that make a good teacher; a sense of service, leadership, discipline, maturity and life experience, said Yager. He added that studies show that beginning teachers who are military veterans score much higher in peer assessments and assessments from principals and superintendents than their peers coming to the classroom straight from college.

"It is partly understandable because you are not only talking about an older more mature group of individuals, but people who have also had other life experiences," said Yager.

Yager and other Troops to Teachers representatives from across the nation recently met to discuss their role in assisting service members and veterans. In addition to counseling and referral, state Troops to Teachers representatives help applicants identify teacher certification requirements for the state they wish to teach, programs leading to certification and employment opportunities in their state.

Additionally Yager and other state representatives will reach out to service members earlier while they are still on active-duty and identify education requirements so that interested service members may begin working toward their teaching certifications before leaving the service, enabling a smoother transition into teaching.

"If a service member thinks that they might want to be a teacher, they should contact Troops to Teachers and register for the program," said Yager. "We can help them with that decision process, investigate whether teaching is right for them and we can help them walk through the process."

Service members can learn more about Troops to Teachers and locate a state representative at www.proudtoserveagain.com.

www.proudtoserveagain.com.

Child Abuse Prevention Month

Capt. Rick Burgess, commanding officer, NCBC Gulfport, signed proclamations for Sexual Assault Prevention and Child Abuse Prevention Month at the Fleet and Family Support Center (FFSC) on board NCBC Gulfport, April 15. April is also the Month of the Military Child, in which the Department of Defense (DoD) recognizes the support provided by and sacrifices made by military children. (U.S. Navy photo by Construction Mechanic 3rd Class Katchen Tofil/Released)



NCBC School Liaison Officer, Kevin Byrd is located at MWR, Building 352, 1706 Bainbridge Ave., NCBC, 228-871-2117 (office), 228-224-4521 (cell) or email: kevin.r.byrd@navy.mil

Child Pride Day

Honoring military and DoD children for all the sacrifices they make as part of a military family.

9 a.m. to 2 p.m. April 20
FREE in the Marina Park

- Parade & Opening Ceremony
- Food - \$1 per plate
(includes hamburger or hot dog, chips and beverage)
- Games & Educational Displays
- Boat Rides & Inflatables
- Security Forces Working Dogs Demo
- Performances by Asian Pacific Dancers, Youth Center Dance, Cheer & Tae Kwon Do Students

To volunteer, call 377-4116.

In the event of rain, Child Pride Day will be held inside the Youth Center.



377-4116
www.keesler81fss.us

Two parking locations - Youth Center ballfields and the Bay Breeze Event Center. Free shuttles will run between these locations and Marina Park throughout the day. Youth 12 and younger must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian.

Thanks to our sponsors:

• AAFES • Adams Produce • Chic-fil-A • DECA • Domino's • Dunkin' Donuts • ForestCity • Gator Ranch • Gulf Islands Waterpark • Harris Jewelry • Home Depot • Keesler Federal Credit Union • Kraft Foods • Lazer Craze • Merchants Foodservice • Mississippi Surge • Nestlé • Sam's Club • Sweet Stuff Inc. • Reinhardts • USO

Federal endorsement of sponsors not intended.



Lynn Meadows Discovery Center

246 Dolan Avenue, Gulfport is holding "Navy Night" April 20, 5 - 8 p.m. The evening will feature light refreshments and lots of fun! Admission is free to all military service families. Call 228-897-6039 for details.

Coastline Community College holding early summer registration

- Coastline Community College is holding early registration for their summer term (June 18 - Aug. 11) through May 28. For additional information, contact Dr. David Drye in the Navy College Officer, building 60, room 239 or at 228-871-3439/2785 or at the website, <http://military.coastline.edu>



FREE Movie Program at the Training Hall: Take a load off. Sit back and watch the big screen all by yourself for some alone time, or make it a family night and

bring the whole crew! Stop by the Snack Bar on your way in to get that buttered movie popcorn and those other goodies that help you get lost in the moment. Forget what was playing? No worries - put the movie hotline in your phone, 228-871-3299 and call anytime!

FREE Movies at the Training Hall have been suspended until further notice.

Please continue to check Face-

book or call the movie line 228-871-3299 for updated scheduling. We apologize for the inconvenience.

Fitness

Warm weather is here and the pool is open. Dive in for great exercise or bring the kids out for some fun in the sun. The pool is open Monday – Friday from 5:30 – 8 a.m. for active duty military only. From 8 a.m. – noon, all other eligible patrons can enjoy swimming laps and from noon – 7 p.m., the pool is open to the entire family. Water aerobics is also back by popular demand on Mondays and Wednesdays from 11 – 11:45 a.m.

Summer is right around the corner. Are you ready for the beach? The CDC Fitness Center has everything you need to help lose pounds, tone up target areas or just plain feel better. The Center has top of the line cardio and strength training equipment and plenty of it - so you don't have to stand around waiting for machines. There are also racquetball and basketball courts, softball and soccer fields, and a running track. Equipment is available for rental at the front desk. And don't forget to finalize that healthy routine with a relaxing visit to the sauna.

Information, Tickets and Travel

Is a busy spring schedule preventing you from stopping by ITT to learn more about all the fun local attractions? Well then,

just pick up the phone and give us a call. ITT can answer your questions about attractions and ticket prices and then place your order right over the phone. Call today for more information.

Visit an island and be home in time for dinner. Ship Island Excursion tickets are now on sale at ITT at great low prices for adults and children. Vouchers are valid now through Oct. 27. Ship Island is located 11 miles offshore and consists of Mississippi's undeveloped barrier islands. Call ITT today for more details.

Visit Disney World or enjoy an exciting Disney Cruise where dreams come true! Stop by ITT beside the NEX and receive a FREE child's Disney growth chart the last Wednesday of every month. Call 228-871-2231 for details.

Liberty Center

The Liberty program offers multiple recreation opportunities for the single Sailor or unaccompanied active duty personnel of NCBC Gulfport. This FREE facility has Wi-Fi, pool tables, individual TVs with headphones that play cable or movies, a big screen with recliners, computers and a fully equipped video game room. Liberty also provides FREE shuttles to shopping and dining areas and an exciting monthly calendar of trips offered at discounted rates. Call or visit NCBC Liberty on Facebook

Disney Military Salute Tickets Available at



Enjoy a 4-Day Hopper pass that gives you access to all 4 parks for ONLY \$153.25 (Regularly \$306).

Other packages available.

Call (228) 871-2231 to place your order today!

for hours of operation and additional details. Search NCBC Liberty.

Whether you are new to Cajun country or just a fan of good food, you will enjoy the 21st Annual Crawfish Fest. Hop aboard Liberty's FREE shuttle Friday at 6 p.m. and explore this local cultural favorite!

Need an island getaway, but have to be back to work on Monday? The Liberty Center has the answer with a Ship Island Excursion trip. The FREE shuttle to these undeveloped barrier islands leaves on Sunday at 11 a.m. Purchase your tickets ahead of time from ITT for a discounted price of only \$24!

Navy Outdoor Rec

You can be sure to find the best prices around at NOR. Stop by and pick up a price list for all of your spring outdoor plans from boats and camping gear to party favorites like bounce houses. NOR's pricing can't be beat. NOR is open Monday, 8 a.m. – 1 p.m., Thursday and Friday 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. and Saturday 7 a.m. – 1 p.m.

FREE Batting Cage and Driving Range: No more tokens needed for either of these outdoor favorites. Stop by and take a swing or improve your stroke on your own time! Rent bats, clubs and other gear from Outdoor Recreation at super low prices during business hours.

Food and Beverage

Don't sit around in your room bored when you could be having fun with friends at the Beehive. Sit back and enjoy the flat screens, play a little pool, and just have fun! With an excellent beverage selection, you are sure to find your preference. Call 228-871-4009 for info.

Does the warmer weather make you want to get out of the office? Well call in a To Go order from The Grill and swing right around the corner to Seabee Lake. De-stress and enjoy the pleasant scenery while you dine at one of the picnic areas. The Grill is open Monday – Friday from 6:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. and offers a lunch delivery option, too from 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. Need an office menu? Let us know. Call 228-871-2494.

Anchors & Eagles: Great service and good times are what you can expect at Anchors & Ea-

gles. Open Tuesday - Thursday 2 - 9 p.m. and designated for chiefs and officers. Stop by and shake out the day with comrades.

Youth Activities

"Take me out to the ball game. Take me out to the crowd." Practice your favorite chant and head out of town for an all American minor league baseball game. Enjoy the Mobile Bay Bears and dinner with the YAC Saturday from 5 until 11:30 p.m. for only \$7. Seats are limited so sign up today!

Make a Dirt Cake with the YAC's Triple Play Cooking Club on Tuesday. It may look like dirt, but it won't taste that way. Stop by from 5:30 – 8:30 p.m. to get in on all the FREE fun.

Technology is the future. Stay in the know with Netsmartz Technology Night Wednesday from 5:30-8:30 p.m. No cost.

MWR Program contact information

Anchors & Eagles	228-871-4607
Auto Skills Center	228-871-2804
Beehive All Hands Club	228-871-4009
Child Development Center	228-871-2323
Fitness Center	228-871-2668
Information, Tickets & Travel	228-871-2231
Liberty Center	228-871-4684
Seabee Heritage Center	228-871-3619
Navy Outdoor Recreation	228-871-2127
Shields RV Park	228-871-5435
The Grill	228-871-2494
Training Hall	228-871-4750
Youth Activities Center	228-871-2251
Main Office	228-871-2538

NCBC Helping Hands volunteer opportunities

RAMP FOR DISABLED CHILD - There is an urgent need for three volunteers to construct an ADA compliant ramp in Gautier for a child with disabilities. If you can help, please contact Cynthia Singletary, 228-388-2401 or singletary.life@gmail.com.

USO GULF COAST - The USO Gulf Coast needs 14 - 16 volunteers to work at the USO information at the Gulfport - Biloxi International Airport. The desk will be staffed seven days a week between 8 a.m. - 6 p.m. Volunteer shifts will be five hours long (8 a.m. - 1 p.m. and 1 p.m. - 6 p.m.) Volunteers are responsible for greeting guests, directing them to the USO lounge and answering general questions about local hotels, restaurants, casinos, and events in the area. Resources will be provided to volunteers to assist with recommendations. To register to volunteer please visit www.USO-Volunteer.org.

BRANTLEY GILBERT CONCERT - The Seabee Ball Committee is looking for 50 volunteers to support the Brantley Gilbert

Concert, April 18 at the Coast Coliseum. If you are interested, please contact LT Nathan Chenarak (new Seabee Ball officer in charge) at Nathan.chenarak@navy.mil.

HONOR FLIGHT - The April 23, Honor Flight is in need of 62 volunteers in the morning to help the veteran's as they arrive at the Gulfport airport, and 200 or more that evening to welcome them home. This is a big event for the community and we have historically been the first to greet the veterans and the first to welcome them home. Uniform for the event will be Type I or III. Muster for the morning is 5 a.m. The evening time is still to be determined, but in the past it has been approximately 6:30 p.m. Contact Chief Ryan Wilber at ryan.g.wilber@navy.mil ASAP if you wish to volunteer.

SMOKIN' THE SOUND AND SMOKIN' THE LAKE - Smokin' the Sound and Smokin' the Sound, April 26 - 28, and Smokin' the Lake, May 4 - 5, are returning to the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Race organiz-

ers are asking for volunteers to sell and attach wrist bands to event spectators, direct spectators to viewing areas and perform other volunteer services. Volunteers will be provided with a meal. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Chief Ryan Wilber at ryan.wilber@navy.mil or stop by the NCBC Public Affairs Office, building 1, room 205, no later than April 12.

NORTH GULFPORT SEVENTH GRADE PROCTORS - North Gulfport Seventh Grade, 4715 Illinois Avenue, Gulfport is in need of proctors for the state MCT2 testing. If you are available to act as a proctor, please attend one of the following training sessions: April 30, at 9:15 a.m.; May 1, at 3:30 p.m. and May 2 at 9:15 a.m. Training will also be provided the day of testing at 7 a.m. If you are available, please call Mrs. Henderson at 228-324-2570.

NORTH GULFPORT 8th GRADE PROCTORS - North Gulfport 8th Grade, 4715 Illinois Avenue, Gulfport is looking for test

proctors for May 1, 14, 15 and 16. Proctor training sessions will be April 24 - 30 in the Counselor's office. If you are unable to attend proctor training on the dates listed, other arrangements can be made. To volunteer, please contact Sherry Johnson, 228-864-8944 or Shejohns@harrison.k12.ms.

PASS CHRISTIAN BOYS & GIRLS CLUB SOFTBALL BENEFIT - Four volunteers are needed to serve as umpires at the "Bases Loaded for Boys and Girls Club Adult Co-ed Softball Tournament," May 4. The tournament will be held at Klondyke Road Fields, Long Beach. Teams are also welcome - fee is \$150 per team. Parties interested in volunteering or entering a team can contact Leah Ladner, Balfour Beatty Communities, 228-863-0424 or lladner@bbcgrp.com

LONG BEACH SCHOOL DISTRICT has requested proctors for the May State tests. Contact Christ Spinks, Assistant Superintendent, at 228-864-1146 for information.

ORANGE GROVE ELEMENTARY - Or-

ange Grove Elementary, 11391 Old Highway 49, Gulfport is in need of six volunteers May 1, to serve as test proctors and 35 volunteers, May 14, 15 and 16 to serve as proctors. Volunteers are asked to report to the school by 7:30 a.m. Please contact Stephanie Schepens, 228-365-0204 for more information.

CENTRAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - Volunteers are needed to serve as proctors at Central Elementary School, 1043 Pass Road, Gulfport, for state testing May 14 - 17. If you are able to help, please contact Jessica Mitchell at jessica.cincy@gulfportschools.org or 228-865-4641.

FIELD DAY VOLUNTEERS - Bel-Aire Elementary School, 10531 Klien Road, Gulfport is asking for 40 volunteers to help out at the school's Field Day May 17, 7 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. Volunteers will assist with running the games, helping out at the concession stands and supervising the bounce house. If you are interested, please send an email to ctclemons@bellsouth.net.

Seabee Memorial Chapel



NCBC Center Chaplains:

Lt. Cmdr. Paul Smith, Protestant Chaplain

Lt. Yoon Choi, Protestant Chaplain

For information concerning other faith groups, call the chapel office at 228-871-2454

Services: Sunday Gospel Service: 8 a.m.

Sunday Catholic Mass: 9:30 a.m.

Sunday Protestant Divine Worship: 10:30 a.m.

Weekday Catholic Mass: Tuesday, 11:15 a.m.

Chapel Offerings

Looking for a church?

The Seabee Memorial Chapel holds services every Sunday that might suit your needs. Protestant Services include a Gospel Service at 8 a.m. and Divine Worship Service at 10:30 a.m. Catholic Services include Catholic Mass at 9:30 a.m. There is also Catholic Mass Tuesdays at 11:15 a.m.

Seabee Pantry

The Seabee Pantry needs restocking. During the holidays, the need for food donations is at its highest level. Please donate as many canned goods and other nonperishables as possible. Donation drop-off sites are located at the Navy Exchange, Chapel, Commissary, Fleet and Family Support Center and Armed Forces Retirement Home. The Seabee Pantry is for anyone affiliated with NCBC.

Praise and Worship

The Seabee Memorial Chapel is looking for new members for the Praise and Worship Team for the Divine Worship Service at 10:30 a.m. Sundays. If you can sing or play an instrument, you are invited to come share your gift.

Women's Bible Study

Women's Bible Study is held Wednesdays at 11 a.m. at the Seabee Memorial Chapel. Free child care is available. For more information on all offerings that are available, contact the chapel at 228-871-2454.

Now Hiring - Industrial Mechanical Inc., of Georgia is interested in hiring veterans for the following positions: Mechanical Project Manager, Electrical Project Manager, Civil Project Manager and Engineering Draftsman. Applicants are asked to go to the company web site to complete our online application. Go to: www.industrialmechanical.com, click on CAREERS in the navigation bar, click on VIEW OUR CURRENT CAREER OPPORUNTIES to view the openings or fill out IMI's GENERAL APPLICATION and to upload your resume. After the online application has been submitted you are welcome to send an email to: eharpe@industrialmechanical.com Include in the subject line: (YOUR NAME) and JOB POSITION applied for.



SUPPORT

Family Readiness Groups

NMCB 1 FRG invites friends and family members to attend FRG meetings the second Monday of every month at the Youth Activity Center, building 335. Meetings are from 6 - 8 p.m. Children are welcome and babysitting is provided during deployment. Contact FRG President Jenny Richter, e-mail nmcbonefrg@gmail.com.

NMCB 11 FRG For more information regarding the NMCB 11 FRG, please visit www.facebook.com/nmcb11frg or email us at nmcb11frg@gmail.com.

NMCB 74 FRG All families of NMCB 74 are invited to the 74 FRG meeting the third Monday of each month. Meetings are at the MWR Youth Activities Center, building 335, behind the Grinder on NCBC. Socializing begins at 5:30 p.m., and meetings begin at 6 p.m. Bring a covered dish to share at our potluck dinner. Children are welcome. Email nmcb74fsg@yahoo.com or visit our Facebook page at "NMCB74 Fearless FRG" for more information.

NMCB 133 FRG invites all friends and family members to attend FRG meetings the first Monday of the month at 6 p.m. at the Youth Center. Children are welcome and babysitting is pro-

vided. Please bring a dish to share. For more information contact FRG President Jaime Royal at 317-730-4064 or email NMCB133fsg@gmail.com. Log on to the FRG site, http://www.wix.com/NMCB133_FSG/133frg.

FOCUS

Families OverComing Under Stress (FOCUS), provides resiliency training to service members and their families by teaching practical skills to help meet the challenges of military life, including how to communicate & solve problems effectively and to successfully set goals together. Confidential and free with family-friendly hours, contact FOCUS today! Call 228- 822-5736 or email Gulfport@focusproject.org

Gulfport Officer's Spouse Club

The Gulfport Officers' Spouses' Club is a social organization that has FUN while helping our community. We meet monthly and have special interest groups for almost everyone! For more information, email goscgulfport@yahoo.com. We hope to see YOU soon!

Navy Wives Clubs of America, Inc. The Navy Wives Clubs of America, Inc. is interested in reestablishing a club in the local area. If you are interested in joining an organization that promotes the health and welfare of any enlisted member of the Navy, Marine Corps or Coast Guard, please contact Darlene Carpenter at 228-342-2271 or Tina O'Shields, 228-357-0513. Visit www.navywivesclubsofamerica.org for more information on NWCA.

NMCRS

The Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society Thrift Shop is located in building 29 on Snead Street. The Thrift Shop is staffed entirely by volunteers, and child care and mileage are reimbursed. Retail hours of operation are Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Volunteers are always welcome. Visit the NMCRS offices at the Fleet and Family Support Center, building 30,

suite 103 or call 228-871-2610 to find out how to become a part of the NMCRS volunteer team!

Gamblers Anonymous

The Fleet and Family Support Center offers GA meetings every Thursday at 11 a.m. GA is a fellowship of people who share their experience, strength and hope with each other. All meetings are confidential and facilitated by GA. Come to a meeting or call Jim Soriano at 228-871-3000 for details.

TRAINING

Naval Sea Cadets The Gulfport branch of the Naval Sea Cadets are recruiting youth ages 11 to 17 for Sea Cadets, a nation-wide organization that help youth achieve personal success through nautical training. Meetings are the third Saturday of the month from 8 a.m. until 3 p.m., building 1, 2nd floor conference room. Contact Lt.j.g. Bowling at 228-313-9035 or coachcb@yahoo.com for details.

SOCIAL

Miss. Gulf Coast First Class Association is always looking for new members. Meetings are every Wednesday at 2:30 p.m., at the Fitness Center classroom. For more information, contact Association president, CE1 Daniel Shaver, 228-871-2145.

NCBC Multi-Cultural Diversity Committee is seeking members. Meetings are held the first and third Wednesday of the month at 9 a.m., at the Seabee Memorial Chapel. Contact BU1 Jerma Cloude, 228-871-2454 for details.

VFW Post 3937 Long Beach is open Monday - Thursday from noon until 8 p.m., Friday and Saturday from noon until 10 p.m., Sunday from noon until 7 p.m. The first Friday of the month is Seafood Night, the remaining Fridays are Steak Night. Breakfast is served from 7 to 10 a.m. on Saturdays. VFW meetings are held the second Wednesday of the month at 7:30 p.m. New members are always welcome. Contact

Post Commander Bill North at 228-863-8602 for info.

VFW Post 4526 Orange Grove is open daily from Noon to 10 p.m. and located at 15206 Dedeaux Road, Orange Grove. Meetings are the first Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. All are welcome and encouraged to attend. Call 228-832-0017 for more info.

NMCB 62 Alumni Group

Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 62 was recommissioned in Gulfport in 1966, and decommissioned in 1989. To become a member, go to <http://nmcb62alumni.org> or for links to Seabee historical sites. Seabee Veterans of America Island X-1 Gulfport are seeking Active Duty, Reserve, Retired or Seabees who left the military after a short period of time. Island X-1 Gulfport meets the first Thursday of each month at Anchors & Eagles at 7 p.m. Contact Joe Scott (secretary) at 228-669-8335 or elevenoaks58@cablone.net or log onto www.nsva.org for information.

D.A.V. - Disabled American Veterans, Chapter 5 invites Veterans and future Veterans to monthly meetings held the 3rd Monday of each month at 7 p.m. Call Service Officer, Silva Royer at 228-324-1888 to find out more about our organization.

HERITAGE

The Seabee Gift Store is located in the Seabee Heritage Center Training Hall, building 446. Hours are Monday -Friday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Saturdays from 11a.m. to 3 p.m. The shop has a variety of Seabee related memorabilia, books and DVD's. Contact the museum at www.seabeeuseumstore.org or call the gift shop at 228-871-4779 for information on all that is available.

To publicize your organization, send information to seabeecourier@navy.mil

NEX Layaway program helps customers budget money

By Kristine M. Sturkie

NEXCOM Public Affairs Specialist

In this era of budget constraints and rising prices, consumers across the country are looking to spend their money wisely. Military consumers are no different. However, military customers have the NEX to help them save on the purchases they do make.

"The non-pay benefits provided by the NEX are more important than ever to our military members," said Richard Dow, Senior Vice President, Store Operations, Navy Exchange Service Command (NEXCOM). "In addition to saving customers an average of 20 percent on purchases, the NEX has a year-round layaway program to help customers stretch their budgets even further. It's the easy, convenient way to shop, budget and pay for purchases

over time."

The NEX provides the convenience of a layaway plan with certain conditions for a wide variety of merchandise. The program requires a small initial deposit on the purchase with equal, periodic payments until the merchandise is completely paid in full. Once paid for, the merchandise can be taken home.

A minimum deposit of 10 percent of the purchase price plus a non-refundable layaway fee of \$5 is required. There are different layaway requirements depending on what items are purchased. Clothing, accessories and shoes can be placed on layaway for up to 45 days with three equal payments required 15 days apart. General merchandise, including jewelry and watches, can be on layaway up to 90 days with three equal payments re-

quired 30 days apart. Jewelry and watches with a minimum single item retail price of \$500 can be on layaway up to 180 days with six equal payments required 30 days apart. Computers, tablets, iPads, monitors, digital cameras, peripheral computer equipment, software and video games are not permitted on layaway. Layaway cancellations will incur an additional charge of \$5.

"Check with your local NEX for other specific details relating to our layaway program," said Dow. "Some NEXs must limit the type or number of items permitted on layaway due to space constraints."

For those customers purchasing items that aren't eligible for the layaway program, another option is the Military Star® card. Among the Military Star®

card's many benefits are 10 percent off the first day's purchases (up to the customer's credit limit) on newly opened accounts, 24-hour customer service, including online access, zero percent interest promotions and no annual fee.

"Our Sailors and their families have given so much and NEX is proud to help wherever we can," said Dow. "We are committed to delivering quality, value and savings every day and a great shopping experience to our valued customers. We want you to take advantage of all the benefits you have earned!"

