Major league eaters break records onboard *USS Fitzgerald*

Story and photo by Ens. Carissa Guthrie, USS *Fitzgerald* Public Affairs

GUAM – While the crew of USS *Fitzgerald* (DDG 62) consistently looks to set the bar in all warfare areas at sea, the Sailors turned to a different type of challenge during a recent port visit: competitive eating, Aug. 13.

As part of the Navy Entertainment Major League Eating (MLE) Tour, *Fitzgerald* hosted a competition onboard with Sailors competing alongside the world's number one-ranked eater Joey Chestnut, 2011 Rookie of the Year Adrian Morgan and veteran Crazy Legs Conti.

The contest is one of several during the two week tour throughout the Western Pacific region featuring a variety of foods including "Nathan's Famous Hot Dogs," chicken wings, kimchee and noodles. The crew to *Fitzgerald* offered up a challege of their own, 20 hard-boiled eggs.

With multiple glasses of water at the ready, the competitors dove into their plates with the crew of *Fitzgerald* cheering their shipmates on in the race against the clock.

After an incredible display of speed and enthusiasm, Adrian Morgan beat Joey Chestnut with an astounding time of one minute and twenty-four seconds.

While the world record is held by Sonya Thomas with 65 eggs in six minutes and forty seconds, Adrian Morgan claimed *Fitzgerald* as new ground for his personal victory. It is his first win as a professional.

"It's was great to see the crew have some fun after all the incredible work they have done at sea the last few months," said Cmdr. Brian Mutty, commanding officer of USS *Fitzgerald* (DDG 62). "The Major League Eaters were quite impressive and I am proud to add another record to the books onboard *Fitzgerald*."

(Left) Joey Chestnut, who is currently ranked number one by the Major League Eating-International Federation of Competitve Eating(MLE-IFCE) Inc., gobbles down hrad-boiled eggs during a visit to *USS Fitzgerald* (DDG 62) Aug. 16. The hard boiled eggs were part of a challenge posed by the Fitzgerald crew, The chellege was to see who could eat 20 hard-boiled eggs in the shortest amount of time. Chestnut lost the competition to (MLE-IFCE Rookie of the Year Adrian Morgan, who consumed his eggs within one minute 24 seconds.

Fitzgerald is the twelfth Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer and is forward-deployed to Yokosuka, Japan as part of Destroyer Squadron 15 and the U.S. 7th Fleet.

Navy convenes phase I Enlisted Retention Board

By Navy Personnel Command Public Affairs

MILLINGTON, Tenn. – Phase I of the quota-based Enlisted Retention Board (ERB) convened Aug. 22 at Navy Personnel Command (NPC).

Due to record-high retention and low attrition the board will review the records of ERB-eligible E-4 and E-5 Sailors from 31 overmanned rates to determine who will be recommended for retention.

Phase II of the ERB will convene in September to review the records of eligible Sailors in pay grades E-6 to E-8.

While programs like Perform to Serve and the selective reenlistment bonus have been effective tools at optimizing and stabilizing force strength, the impact of national economic trends on retention behavior coupled with billet shifts in the force necessitate the execution of the ERB to meet congressionally-mandated end-strength and to rebalance the force, according to Quinn.

"We simply have more people who want to stay Navy than we have billets for," said Quinn.

The quota-based board will review approximately 16,000 records of Sailors who meet the eligibility criteria outlined in Navy administrative message (NAVADMIN) 129/11 and will identify approximately 13,000 Sailors for retention based on available quotas. An estimated 3,000 Sailors will not be retained on active duty.

"Each record reviewed by the ERB represents years of service by the individual candidates facing the board," said Quinn. "The board affords each eligible candidate fair and equitable consideration for the opportunity to stay Navy."

The board is composed of a flag officer as president with officers and master chiefs serving as board members and each phase will have separate memberships according to Navy administrative message (NAVADMIN) 129/11. Board membership is comprised of members from different ratings, geographic locations and warfare specialties.

The number one factor considered by the board is sustained superior performance according to NAVADMIN 129/11. The board will examine the official military personnel file of all candidates for declining performance, such as recent documented misconduct and substandard performance indicators.

In addition to these performance indicators and any correspondence the member submitted, board members will be given retention quotas to apply based on rating, pay grade and years of service and must determine the most fully qualified Sailors.

These will be key factors in determining whether retention is in the best interest of the Navy, according to the message.

The board will retain the most fully qualified Sailors with potential for further service.

"We value every Sailor and family, so the decision to establish this board was made after careful consideration," said Quinn. "We simply had to face the reality of the situation. Unlike the drawdown nearly 10 years ago, we are providing the opportunity this time, on a level-playing field, for all to compete to stay."

Once the board results are approved by the chief of naval personnel this fall, Navy Personnel Command will notify commanding officers so they may personally contact and provide counseling to each Sailor not being retained. Phase I results are expected in October and Phase II results in November.

Commands will have seven days from the time they are notified of the results by NPC to inform and counsel their Sailors. Bupers Online will then show results.

After being notified, Sailors not selected for retention but qualified by their ASVAB scores to convert may compete for a Selected Reserve PTS quota. Sailors will have access to the Navy's Transition Assistance Management Program and post-separation benefits allowed by law.

Each phase is expected to last four weeks.

The ERB was announced earlier this year to help Navy meet its congressionally mandated end-strength and to rebalance the force.

For more information on ERB, including Phase I Precepts, visit the Navy Personnel Command ERB Web page at www.npc.navy.mil/boards/ERB/.