

WINGSPAN



Vol. 15, No. 27

Naval Air Station Corpus Christi, Texas

December 31, 2009



2009: A year of fun; a year of tragedy

by Rod Hafemeister

This past year has been a time of changes for Naval Air Station Corpus Christi and the men and women who work there.

It began far away, with a new boss at Navy Region Southeast and the old boss becoming commander Navy Installations Command.

On Jan. 9, in Jacksonville, Rear Adm. Townsend "Tim" Alexander took over CNRSE and Rear Adm. Michael Vitale left to become CNIC.

It was the first of many changes. In February, Cmdr. Bruce 'Omar' Emero retired, have filled in as NASCC XO for a year while XO Cmdr. Bruce Lankford was deployed.

In April, Capt. Randal Kelley assumed command of Naval Health Clinic Corpus Christi, relieving Capt. Robert Sorenson.

In September, Rear Adm. William Sizemore II relieved Rear Adm. Mark Guadagnini as Chief of Naval Air Training.

In October, NASCC changed Command Master Chiefs, as CMC Pat Flavin retired and CMC Ken McGlothlin took over.

McGlothlin was one of many Sailors who transferred from Naval

Station Ingleside as it wound down operations and prepared to close in April 2010.

The Base Realignment and Closure Commission orders that will close Ingleside also meant the almost 800 men and women of Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron 15 (HM-15) moved out in September for a new home on the East Coast.

All the changes meant a big drop in the use of MWR facilities. So NASCC got permission to open some of those facilities to area civilians.

The MWR Guest Card program kicked off in September, allowing civilians to use the golf course, marina and outdoor recreation facilities, RV park and Bay Club after undergoing a criminal background check and paying a modest annual fee.

And of course the public got a couple of other treats. In April, the Navy's Blue Angels demonstration team headlined the biannual Air Show aboard NASCC, thrilling thousands of visitors.

In May, the base served as a leg of the annual Beach to Bay Marathon.



Santa helped end 2009 on a happy note, here taking requests from children at the NEX.

Photo by Bob Torres

And August brought the annual Navy Regatta, with dozens of civilian sailors racing to NASCC on Saturday and back downtown on Sunday.

NASCC also found itself on "Big Navy's" radar. This year, we were visited by the Chief of Naval Operations, the Vice Chief of Naval Operations and the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy.

That plus increased attention from CNRSE and CNIC has resulted in increased funding for repair and improvements to NASCC.

November brought tragedy, as two instructor pilots from Training Squadron 28 were lost when their T-34C crashed in the Gulf during a training flight.

Now, a New Year dawns. May it bring only good to NASCC!



TAMUCC students help Ombudsman program

Page 5



Students create mural for TW-4

Page 4

Final Flight: Blue Angels' F/A-18 retires to NASCC



One of the older F/A-18s in the Blue Angel fleet taxis from the NASCC airstrip to a seaside hanger Dec. 18. The aircraft is being retired, will be demilitarized and will become a static display in front of the Chief of Naval Air Training headquarters.

Story & photo by Rod Hafemeister

A Blue Angel came to earth Dec. 18 at NAS Corpus Christi – it's final resting place.

The airframe is too old to use for aerobatics anymore, so it's being retired.

And the Chief of Naval Air Training was able to get it assigned here, where it will be demilitarized and become a static display in front of the CNATRA headquarters.

Marine Corps Reserve Lt. Col Len Anderson flew the F/A-18 with the distinctive pattern and the # 1 markings to NASCC.

"I flew as solo with the Blue Angels from 2002 through 2004," Anderson said. "It was an honor to bring her on her final flight."

Skipper's Column

by Capt. Randy Pierson

**Capt. Pierson is on leave
his column will return next issue**

Chaplain's Message

by Lt. j.g. Rob Fasnacht, Chaplain

I thought when I moved to Corpus Christi 12 months ago that I would have to put all my sweaters, hats and scarves away.

Much to my surprise, I was able to don my wool sweater while we went Christmas Caroling through base housing the evening of Dec. 17.

We had a great group of people who came together to spread holiday cheer throughout the base.

We walked the streets wearing warm sweaters, stocking caps and scarves, and safety vests.

We sang carols such as "Silent Night," "Rudolph, the Red Nose Reindeer," and "Joy to the World."

Every so often, we would stop, collect a toy for the Marine Corps Reserve's Toys for Tots and then break into a rousing chorus of "We Wish You a Merry Christmas."

Truly, it was a great event, and our group was a snapshot of life here on base; a mixture of young children, retirees, and current active duty with spouses.

It was a family event, and NAS Corpus Christi is a family place.

I was blessed to see your generosity of time to come out and support us and your generosity of giving by providing much needed toys to Toys for Tots.

As I quickly look back on 2009, the NASCC Family has seen many changes.

We witnessed HM-15 move to Norfolk, Va. We grieved with the passing of two of our pilots. We celebrated as we won numerous awards.

I look forward to 2010 as I continue to serve my God and this Country with you.

May God bless you, and I thank you for a great 2009.



Fasnacht

Editor's Corner

by Rod Hafemeister



Hafemeister

Okay, let's just get this out of the way for the nitpickers out there.

Yes, there is no Year Zero in our current calendar system. So yes, a century goes from, say 1901 through 2000.

And yes, the millennium did not really begin on Jan. 1, 2000 but on Jan. 1, 2001 – but for most of us, that just meant two excuses to throw millennium parties.

But in common usage, decades typically start with a year ending in "0" and end with the year ending in "9" – the '60s, the '70's, and so on.

Which means this is the end of the "Oughts" decade (as in ought-two, ought-three – yeah, it's ugly) and Jan. 1, 2010 will be the beginning of the 20-teens decade.

(Anyone who comes up with a better term for the coming decade gets my vote!)

Anyway, I figured this is a good time to look back on the last 10 years.

Think back to Jan. 1, 2000. Many of you were still in school, maybe even grade school.

You probably did not have a cell phone; in 2000, they were just starting to get both small enough and cheap enough to eventually become common.

I bought my first cell phone for about \$200 in fall 2000 on a pre-paid plan. Prior to that, for most of the '90s, I'd used the bag phones (like a desk phone with battery and antenna in a bag) that we checked out from the newspaper's editors when we were chasing a

breaking story.

You certainly didn't have an iPod – it didn't hit the market until October 2001.

And you probably hadn't bought any of the existing, expensive and not very good digital music players available at the time.

Most likely, you had traded in a boom box for a Walkman playing music tapes or, if you had the bucks, a portable CD player.

You probably taped shows on a VCR; no one had heard of DVRs then.

At the office, the fax machine was still more important than email.

If you were in a business needing computers, you probably had one on your desk. By the mid-90s, every reporter in my newsroom had his or her own Macintosh, and much (but not all) of the newspaper was laid out on-screen, using much less capable software than I use today.

We also had dedicated high-speed Internet access on our desks, because we needed to be able to search for information.

At home, I was excited when I jumped from 14.4K baud to 56K on my dial-up connection. Today, I get 50meg on my WiFi!

(That was the era that spawned "Cyber Monday," the Monday after Thanksgiving, when people misused their high-speed online access at work to shop for Christmas.)

The WorldWide Web was confusing and often unreliable. Search engines were buggy, kludgy and not always accurate or up-to-date.

Then, in fall 1997, came Google.com – and the Web began to become our workspace and our playground.

Real estate was still considered a sound investment, guaranteed to appreciate in price.

Cable television was what you got so you could get a better broadcast signal; those extra

Another decade ends

channels were sometimes cool, but sometimes just dorky.

I guess that hasn't changed much.

Most significantly, when you went to get on an airplane, no one expected you to take off your shoes.

As 2000 dawned, there were plenty of problems, but in general the country was optimistic. The economy was doing well, unemployment and inflation were both down and, in fact, Federal Reserve regulators worried it was growing too fast and raised interest rates to slow it.

Maybe too much. By early 2001, the 10-year-long expansion had abruptly ended and a recession had begun.

The next shock was much worse – the nation reeled as terrorism hit the homeland on Sept. 11, 2001.

It hit our economy, it hit our collective psyche and it changed the way Americans look at the world.

It led to a war in Afghanistan, a war in Iraq and the euphemistic "operations other than war" in dozens of places around the world.

We've now been at war for more than nine years – more than twice as long as the US involvement in World War II.

As our now-retired CMC, Pat Flavin, used to say, many of the men and women in uniform today have never been in the military during a time of peace.

And they are not likely too soon; although the war in Iraq is slowly tapering down, the one in Afghanistan is ratcheting up.

And no one can say for certain where and when the next one may come.

So as we close this decade and begin the next, take a moment to think about the men and women still in harm's way.

When you raise that New Year's toast, raise it for them.

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Wingspan is published every other week by D.J. Young Publishing, 145 Naples, Corpus Christi, Texas 78404, a private firm in no way connected with the U.S. Navy, under exclusive written contract with Naval Air Station Corpus Christi, Texas.

The editorial content is prepared, edited and provided by the Public Affairs Office of Naval Air Station, Corpus Christi, Texas. Stories and photos not otherwise attributed are written by the *Wingspan* staff. The address is: Commanding Officer, NAS Corpus Christi, Attn: *Wingspan*, 11001 D St. Suite 143, Corpus Christi, Texas, 78419-5021. All news releases should be sent to the above address.

Please call (361) 961-2674 for deadline information.

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Starbase's Marsha Turner to retire after four decades of teaching

Story and photo by Rod Hafemeister

Marsha Turner has been teaching for more than 40 years, but in January she's going to hang it up.

For awhile. Maybe.

"We're going to go traveling, that's going to be our major thing for the next few years" she said about her retirement plans.

"The first thing we're going to do is go to Cape Canaveral and see a Shuttle launch – this gives us the time in case there's a delay.

"Then we want to go see the United States West, go to Italy."

But she admits that she'll probably also do volunteer work, do some writing, maybe help some people work on grants.

Turner is always looking for something new.

She's been a major influence in the Starbase Atlantis science and math outreach program since it began at Naval Air Station Corpus Christi in 2006.

So most people are surprised to learn she began her career as a history, social studies and English teacher in an inner city Detroit school.

But her wanderlust emerged early.

From Detroit, she got hired by the Air Force to teach in Misawa, Japan.

While there, she met her husband-to-be, Bruce.

When they returned to the States, she found herself teaching in a small school in south Georgia, near the Florida border – a

white teacher in what was still a segregated black school; one that was given short shrift by the school district.

But she made it work, often buying supplies from her own pocket.

A growing family and more moves had her working as a substitute teacher.

"I subbed for my youngest son's first day of high school," she said.

Then, in Hawaii, she met Crystal Trujillo.

Trujillo had just gotten the job to start a Starbase Atlantis there, and Turner had just lost a job, so they worked together for a short time.

Then Turner followed her husband to Washington D.C. and found herself working at the Navy Yard Starbase.

And by summer 2006, Trujillo had dragged her to Corpus Christi to open the Starbase here.

"We started it together," Turner said. "At first, it was just the two of us."

One day recently, she was teaching a group of fifth graders how to use the scientific method to determine how much fuel a rocket needs – using film canisters, a long tube and Alka-Seltzer tablets!

"I never thought I ever would be teaching something as low as fifth or sixth grade, but I've really enjoyed this," she said. "I never thought I'd be a science teacher; I ended up loving it.

"There's absolutely nothing like the rush you get when you realize the kids are getting it."

Starbase Atlantis falls under the Naval Education and Training Professional Development and Technology Center (NETPDTC).

In late November, Turner's co-workers surprised her. They told her they had to all attend a teleconference with the folks from NETPDTC headquarters in Pensacola.

But when the conference began, the people on-screen held up the Civilian of the Quarter Award for the Fourth Quarter of 2009 and told Turner they'd be shipping it to her right away.

And then joining her in the room were her husband and son.

"I can't believe how sneaky you all were!" she said. "This is a real honor."

But now, it's time to move on and spend some quality time with the husband that has supported her as much as she's supported him.

Looking back, Turner said it's been a marvelous career.

"I loved it all – I love teaching," she said. "Teaching has been fascinating."

(right) Marsha Turner is as excited as the kids when an Alka-Seltzer rocket blasts up the launch tube in a Starbase Atlantis class.



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Three TW-4 pilots help with beautification

by Lt. Bethany King, TW-4 PAO

Three former NROTC mates at the University of Minnesota combined their talents to create a mural and help beautify the T-34 Issue/Maintenance spaces of Hangar 56.

None of them have a structured art background, but they all do some sort of art as a hobby, whether it be drawing, sketching, painting, pottery, or design with computers.

Although the idea for a mural came from Training Air Wing Four Commodore Capt. Dave Price, it was a totally voluntary effort on the part of the three young officers to make it happen.

When they heard about the request for a mural to be painted for the maintenance space, they jumped at the opportunity to use their talents.

Their workspace was soon defined on the living room floor at Ensign Alex Bos' house.

When asked if each of them had a specific role in the creation of the mural,

Bos answered, "We shared in all parts of the project from getting materials, creating the design, to sketching and painting."

The final design shows two T-34C Turbomentors flying in formation over Corpus Christi Bay, with the USS Lexington in the background.

Bos is a graduate of the University of St. Thomas with a Business major,

He attended NROTC at the University of Minnesota.

A newly winged aviator, Bos begins his training at VT-30, at Naval Air Station Jacksonville, in January.

His partners in the mural were Ensign Jordan Stewart and Ensign Ryan Hagness.

Both are graduates of the University of Minnesota with Aerospace Engineering majors.

Stewart will begin his training at VT-31 in January.

Hagness, a newly winged aviator, begins his training at VT-30 at NAS Jacksonville in January.



Ensign Alex Bos and Ensign Jordan Stewart hold up the mural that they, along with Ensign Ryan Hagness, created to be hung in the T-34 Issue/Maintenance spaces in Hangar 56. The mural shows two T-34Cs flying in formation over Corpus Christi Bay, with the USS Lexington, the Bay Bridge, and cityscape in the background.

Photo by AWSC (AW/NAC) Paul Hercl

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'Third time is a charm' for Texas A&M Corpus Christi Class

by Barbie Baker

Who ever said negative things happen in "threes" obviously never spent any time with the Professor of the Business Leadership and Managerial Effectiveness class at Texas A&M Corpus Christi!

For the third consecutive year, Dr. Karen Middleton of TAMUCC and her fall semester students partnered with the Naval Air Station Corpus Christi Ombudsman program on troop support projects for their annual class Service Learning Project.

Due to the hard work and dedication of this group of students, more than 100 deployed service members received Christmas care packages.

And the NASCC Ombudsman is stocked with 25 "Community Appreciation Baskets" to be presented to our brave Sailors when they return from deployments.

The class worked in five small groups to seek donations from community businesses and individuals while sharing leadership responsibilities for their group.

Each year, the numbers of care packages and baskets this class produces has increased.

The 2009 class in-kind and monetary donations reached approximately \$8,000 combined.

The close of each semester's project is celebrated on "Presentation Night" on the last

night of class. This year, it was held Dec. 9.

Each group presents its project and explains the goals, challenges, successes, and personal insights of the experience.

The common theme in the student's personal reflections is of a new appreciation for the service and sacrifice of our brave military.

As the outgoing NASCC Ombudsman, I want to give a huge "Thank You!" to Dr. Middleton and her students and the Corpus Christi community for their generous support of our service members.

I also want to express my special appreciation to NASCC Executive Officer Cmdr. Bo Lankford, for being the guest speaker and awards presenter for the second year.

I also want to recognize Bob Torres, NASCC Public Affairs Officer, for photographing the presentations for all three years; the Piece Maker's by the Bay of Rockport, for the beautiful hand made patriotic quilts for the last two years; and the following for their generous donations for postage: Navy League Corpus Christi, NASCC Chief's Mess, NASCC First Class Petty Officers' Association, and my personal family and friends.

I am looking FOURward to next year!



(left) Cmdr. Bruce 'Bo' Lankford, Naval Air Station Corpus Christi Executive Officer, presents a U.S. Navy Community Service Certificate to Dr. Karen Middleton for her support of the Ombudsman program through her class at Texas A&M Corpus Christi. (right) Outgoing NASCC Ombudsman Barbie Baker examines the certificate with Middleton.

Photos by Bob Torres

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Use space heaters safely - or don't use them at all

by NASCC Fire Chief John Morris

Though we are fortunate to live where a really cold day may be in the high 30 or 40's and the need for supplementary heat in our homes is less likely, it is still important to be aware of the potential fire hazards associated with cold weather.

As I write this article, it is in the low 50's, following one of our first significant cold fronts of the season.

My first thought as the front approached is that our firefighters were very likely going to be responding off-base to a fire involving the use of a space heater.

A few factors increase the likelihood of home fires, and the first cold snap and residents' need to stay warm often precipitates an increase in fires.

Frequently, those fires occur in older homes and mobile homes that may not have central heat and air conditioning.

The culprit often is careless use of a space heater.

According to a newly released National Fire Protection Association study, heating equipment was involved in an estimated 64,100 reported home structure fires in the United States in 2006.

The study includes fires associated with chimneys and chimney connectors, space heaters, central heating, fireplaces, water heaters and heat tape.

These fires accounted for 16 percent of all home fires and were responsible for an estimated 540 deaths, roughly 1,400 injuries and \$943 million in direct property damage.

Although space heaters, excluding fireplaces and chimneys, were responsible for 30 percent of home heating fires, they accounted for 73 percent of fire deaths related to home heating.

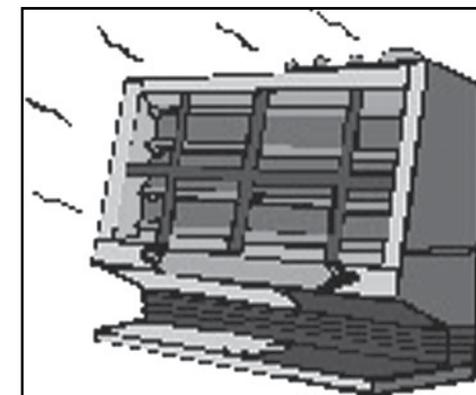
Space heaters also were responsible for 58 percent of injuries and 51 percent of the associated property damage.

Space heaters are a greater fire risk than central heating systems – they tend to be closer to household combustibles and people occupying the home, and they tend to require a more direct role by occupants in fueling, maintenance, and operation.

Even so, any widely used heating device can be used safely, if the rules of safety are followed.

NFPA suggests the following for safe heating:

- Maintain a three-foot separation between things that can burn and heating equipment.
 - Make sure a space heater carries the mark of an independent testing laboratory and is legal for use in your community. (Some communities do not permit portable kerosene heaters, for example.)
 - Install your stationary (fixed) space heater according to manufacturer's instructions or applicable codes. Better yet, have it installed by a professional.
- Plug your electric-powered space heater into an outlet with sufficient capacity and never into an extension cord.
 - Use the proper grade of the proper fuel for your liquid-fueled space heater, and never use gasoline in any heater not approved for gasoline use.
 - Refuel only in a well-ventilated area and when the equipment is cool.
 - Use only dry, seasoned wood in a fireplace or wood stove to avoid build-up of creosote, an oily deposit that accounts for most chimney fires and the largest share of home heating fires generally.
 - Use only paper or kindling wood, not a flammable liquid, to start the fire. Do not use artificial logs in wood stoves.
 - Use a sturdy fireplace screen to prevent sparks from flying into the room.
 - Allow ashes to cool before disposing in a metal container kept a safe distance from your home.
 - Turn off space heaters when the room is unoccupied or when manufacturer's instructions say they should be turned off.
 - Portable space heaters are so easy to knock over in the dark that they should be turned off when you go to bed, but make sure your primary heating equipment for bedrooms is sufficient to avoid risks to residents from severe cold.
 - Do not use your oven to heat your home.
 - Make sure fuel-burning equipment is vented outside, venting is kept clear and unobstructed, and the exit point properly sealed around the vent to avoid deadly carbon monoxide build up in the home.
 - Inspect all heating equipment annually, and clean as necessary.
 - Test smoke alarms monthly; install a carbon monoxide alarm in a central location outside each sleeping area.



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CFC final tops \$1.09 million

The final numbers for the 2009 Coastal Bend Area Combined Federal Campaign are even better than they looked a few weeks ago: The total amount raised was \$1,096,817 – demolishing the 2008 record of \$1,030,799.

CFC Director Shannon Chaves announced the total at a Dec. 10 victory luncheon for the loaned executives and key workers from the various federal agencies.

“What an incredible year!” she said.

The chart below lists the total raised by each agency as of Dec. 9.

Corpus Christi Army Depot	\$603,789
Defense Distribution Depot – Corpus Christi	\$20,527
Federal Aviation Administration	\$21,087
Federal Bureau of Prisons – Three Rivers, Texas	\$31,541
Miscellaneous Federal Agencies	\$25,370
Naval Air Station Corpus Christi	\$63,325
Naval Air Station Kingsville	\$17,035
Naval Health Clinic Corpus Christi	\$29,160
COMOMAG	\$1,607
Naval Station Ingleside	\$4,125
Training Air Wing Four	\$69,138
Training Air Wing Two	\$19,011
United States Postal Service	\$39,067
United States Coast Guard Sector Corpus Christi	\$24,503
Customs & Border Protection – Air & Marine	\$32,353
U.S. Army Research, Development and Engineering Command	\$18,699
U.S. Border Patrol	\$76,480

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The Military Spouse Career Initiative is designed to advance military spouses into portable careers by providing them with education and training in high-growth, high-demand occupations. Career Advancement Accounts are flexible education funding accounts with money that can be used to pay expenses directly related to post-secondary

education and training, including tuition, fees, books, equipment, etc. The Department of Labor (DOL) and the Department of Defense (DOD) are pushing this initiative in eight states.

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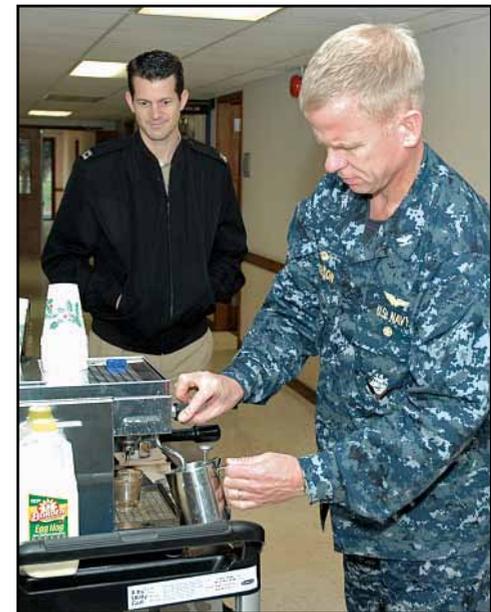
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Party Time!



December means Party Season at Naval Air Station Corpus Christi. Dancing was the order of the evening for the NASCC Holiday Party (top left) and NEX Holiday Party (second from top, left), while Breakfast with Santa was held at the Child Development Center (third from top, left) and the USO held a Holiday Lunch (below left). NASCC firefighters brought 'Big Luis' to the CDC to present the kids with the karaoke machine Luis won during the Halloween Spooktober costume contest (above right). And NASCC Commanding Officer Capt. Randy Pierson demonstrated his coffee bar barista skills at a headquarters holiday brunch.

Photos by Bob Torres (1, 2, 3), Maria Bullock (4) and Rod Hafemeister (5, 6).



Congratulations

NASCC's new Second and Third Class Petty Officers



Naval Air Station Corpus Christi frocked three new patty officers and advanced four others on Dec. 10. Pictured with NASCC Commanding Officer Capt. Randy Pierson, from left, are: AC2 Christopher Smith, RP2 William McCall, MA3 Kyle Beisel, ET2 Mark McRea, AC3 Omowale Browne, MA2 Corrina Saylor and AC3 Brittany Dietert.

Photo by Rod Hafemeister

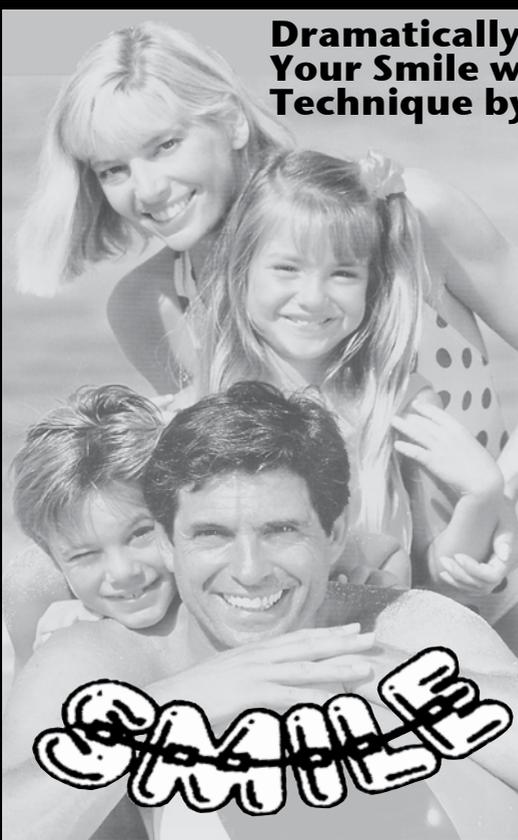
Embry Riddle Fall 2009 Graduation



The Fall 2009 graduating class of Embry Riddle University held its commencement on the USS Lexington Dec. 18.

Photo by Maria Bullock

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CCAD's Sgt. Maj. Beckman retires



Sgt. Maj. Charles Beckman (r.) receives his retirement certificate from Col. Joe Dunaway, Commander Corpus Christi Army Depot, at his Dec. 9 retirement after 30 years in the Army, including serving as CCAD's senior enlisted since July 2006. Other honors included the Order of St. Michael and Legion of Merit for his service to the Army and local community. "It's been great working with all the folks at the depot," Beckman said. "These are some of the best employees I've ever seen in my 30 years."

Photo by Ed Mickley, CCAD PAO



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NHCCC CMC Hodges retires



Master Chief Hospital Corpsman (SW/AW/FMF) Clarence Hodges (left) during his retirement ceremony Dec. 11, received the Meritorious Service Medal for his leadership role as Command Master Chief, mentoring 223 Sailors, at Naval Health Clinic Corpus Christi. NHCCC CO Capt. Randy Kelley made the presentation. Hodges is from Troy, Ala., enlisted in the Navy in 1982 and earned a Master's Degree from Webster University. Hodges and his family will reside in San Antonio.

Photo by Bill Love, NHCCC PAO

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AM2 Eagle (and family) re-up



NASCC Commanding Officer Capt. Randy Pierson presents Certificates of Appreciation to AM2 Katrisha Eagle's husband Thomas and son Tommy at her Dec. 18 reenlistment. The family will be moving soon to Eagle's new assignment in Japan.

Photo by Rod Hafemeister

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January 6 and 7* - Wednesday and Thursday - in offices during office hours

*Payment due by 6:30 p.m., January, 7.

January 9 - Saturday - 10 a.m.-2 p.m.**

East Campus, Harvin Student Center • West Campus, Coleman Center

**Payment due by 6:30 p.m., January 11th.

Saturday Registration

Hours of Online registration (mydmc.delmar.edu):

Weekdays: Monday - Thursday, 7:30 a.m.-7:30 p.m.,

Friday - 7:30 a.m.-12 noon

Weekends: Friday, 8:30 p.m.-Monday, 6 a.m.

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Del Mar College offices are closed for winter break
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Registration Help Line: 361-698-2330

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AE2 Thurgood Lane reenlists



AE2 (AW/SW) Thurgood Lane received the Oath of Enlistment from NASCC Executive Officer Cmdr. Bruce 'Bo' Lankford in a Dec. 21 reenlistment ceremony.

Photo by Rod Hafemeister

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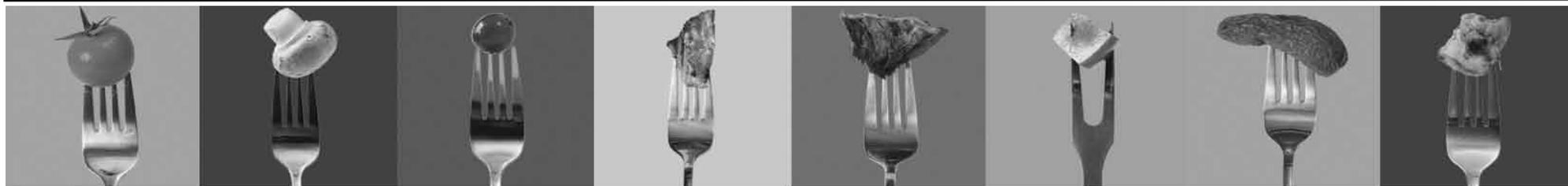
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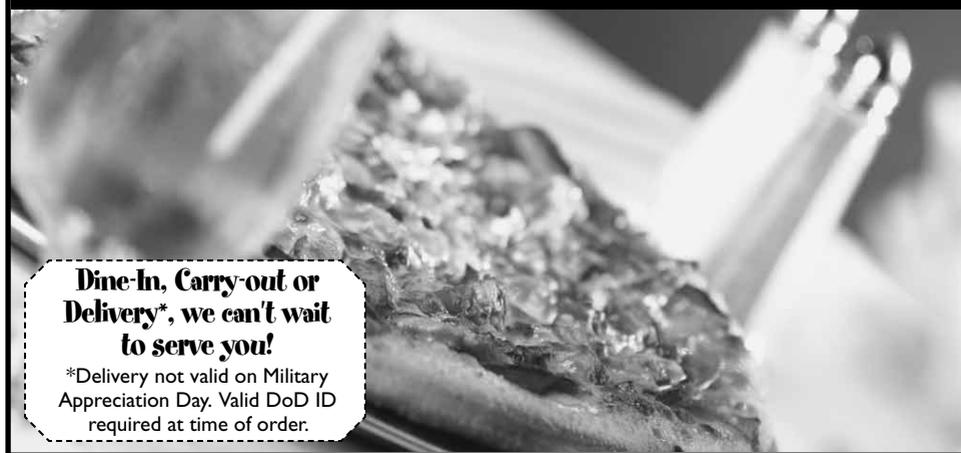
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What's Happening

by Tina Konwerski

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January 16, 2010 - 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. 2010 Corpus Christi FITNESS EXPO at Briscoe-King Pavilion North Padre Island - Get in shape, Lose weight, Feel Great. There will be giveaways from Golds, Academy and more. Face painting and bouncy toys for kids, as well as a Wii fitness game. Horses on the beach will be there with a horse or two. Come join in the family fun.

New to Corpus Christi – WANT TO MEET SOME PEOPLE ... Join the fun 1st Tuesday of EVERY month – BUNCO for charity benefiting the Ronald McDonald House of C.C. From 7:30-9 pm @ Stingers on Airline out on the patio. \$5 minimum donation requested.

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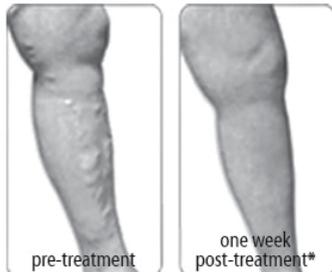
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