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Vol. 13, No. 03

Naval Air Station Corpus Christi, Texas

Thursday • February 1, 2007

Teamwork is the backbone of 'Sailors of the Year' success

Story and photo by Bob Torres

Two Navy Air Traffic Controllers, AC1 Kristen Walker and AC3 Jamie Rae Wright, focus on high standards, teamwork, and ATC facility goals – and have both been selected as Sailors of the Year.

"We're about the same age," said Walker of her protégé. "She's been an inspiration to me; she has her degree, and that's inspired me to go back to school."

"It really sets a precedent, that two people who work together are selected as Sailor of the Year and Junior Sailor of the Year," said Cmdr. Bruce Emero, Air Operations Officer. "Both from the same division, the same rating (AC), and both female; this is the first time I have seen that combination in my career."

Walker, a six-year veteran, and the Training Chief for her division, comes from a Navy background. Her father is a retired Navy Senior Chief, and her stepmother is a retired Lieutenant Commander. Walker enlisted from Florida.

Wright, from Bolling, Texas, is married and has a degree in Criminal justice. She enlisted in the Navy almost 18 months ago.

"I've always wanted to be in the Navy," said Wright. "I have a younger sister, Jodie (Beall), who's serving on the (USS) Stennis."

"When I was younger, my dad always said when you get somewhere new, find someone that you like, how they do things, and

emulate them," she continued. "I'm not saying I want to be exactly like her," she pointed to Walker with a smile. "I've found somebody that is doing well, Petty Officer Walker. She's confident and she's a really good air traffic controller."

It's obvious that they "feed" off each other. One moment they're dead serious and the next, one will say something and they both break out laughing. And then they go right back to being serious again.

"Here at this command, we support Training Air Wing-4. Our main objective is to train new pilots for the fleet," said Walker. "Our job is to expedite and maintain the safe, orderly flow of air traffic and prevent collisions. That's the definition, as per the book."

There is intensity in her look as she describes her position and pride is obvious in her demeanor.

"We work together," Walker continued. "I try to be everybody's mentor; Petty Officer Wright does things on her own and does well in her own right. In my 30 months here, I've learned a lot and I've grown a lot as a Sailor. I came here as a 2nd Class and I've gone through a lot of training transitions. A lot of people have helped me along the way."

And then, about some of the things she's learned:

"It's obvious when we get new pilots; you



AC3 Jamie Rae Wright (Left) and AC1 Kristen Walker have been selected as Sailors of the Year. It is extremely rare for two SOY's to be selected from the same rate and division.

can tell on the air," Walker continued with a smile, "because they're not familiar with the jargon. You can hear it in their voices, the confidence is not there. It's the beginning of their training. But when they leave, it's a feeling of achievement, absolutely, because we know

we're sending better-prepared pilots, based on their training here, to the fleet."

When asked what a typical day is like for an Air Traffic Controller, Wright responds, "We

Sailors continued on page 10

Reserve Marines drill at NAS Corpus Christi

Story and photos by Lt. j.g. Caleb H. Booher, Public Affairs

Under cover of darkness in the cold drizzle on Jan. 19, four Marine Corps Reserve platoons embarked on a 12-hour training mission in Marine Operations in Urban Terrain (MOUT). Members of Charlie Company of the 1st Battalion 23rd Marines took over the old base housing between Avenues D and E on NASCC.

The majority of that Friday involved rotating by platoon through various tactical training classes ranging from patrolling to sweeping potentially hostile, enclosed areas. These training exercises were in preparation for the all-night MOUT scenario.

At 7 p.m., they entered the rundown housing, carefully clearing each room, established a Command and Control Center, and settled in for the night. Other Marines acted as aggressors throughout the night, assailing their positions and patrols.

Charlie Company repelled the attacks and began taking prisoners. Through interrogations, they learned that the "insurgents" had a staging base located south of Ave. E. This became the mission objective-

Marines continued on page 10



A Charlie Company Marine, of the reserve component based at NASCC, investigates one of the abandoned base homes during the unit's weekend Marine Operations in Urban Terrain training event.

Marine Reserves looking for a few good officers

by Lt. j.g. Caleb H. Booher

Since the beginning of Fiscal Year '07, the Marine Corps has been stepping up its recruiting of Reserve Officer Candidates. Many reserve MOS's are short on infantry, armor and artillery officers.

NASCC's resident Marine Reserve components are feeling effects of the shortage, according to Maj. Kevin Cagle. Charlie Company has one company commander, but enlisted personnel are filling in platoon commander billets normally filled by a second lieutenant.

"This has little to no effect on the quality of their training," Cagle said firmly. But the obstacle arises when a unit is activated and enlisted men and women who have been filling officer billets return to their original MOS's and the leadership positions are filled by unfamiliar officers. While Cagle is confident that this kind of change has no effect on their performance in theatre, his major concern is that training one way and performing another is simply "not ideal."

In the midst of the Global War on Terror, the prospect of "joining the fight" has attracted Marine officers to active duty, but with new Reserve Officer Commissioning programs, the Marine Corps hopes to draw more to the Reserve ranks.

From The Skipper

Angels and Cupids coming here soon...

by Capt. T.E. Coolidge

Right about now there's a lot of excitement about this week's Super Bowl game with the Chicago Bears and Indianapolis Colts battling it out for the world championship. My team's not in it so I'm not that excited - but wait until next year!



Coolidge

For lots of folks, it's hard to get back into the swing of things, after all the "time off" that the holidays brought. But, let's all take a deep breath - and jump into the New Year and the projects it'll bring.

Pretty soon the roar of jet aircraft will be filling the air as the Blue Angels once again make their way to Corpus Christi skies. Most of you (and me) are not old enough to remember that this base has twice been the home for

the Navy Flight Demonstration team (the Blue Angels). That was in 1948 and then again in 1953, before the Blue Angels permanently moved to Florida.

Many of you don't know it but one of the first commanding officers of the Blue Angels, Dusty Rhodes, now retired and living in California, is expected to be here for this year's show. We're looking forward to visiting with him and hearing stories about "the REAL Blues."

During this visit, we'll also have a hometown pilot, Lt. Cmdr. John Allison of Flour Bluff, Solo Pilot #5 as he comes upon possibly his last year with the Blue Angels.

Allison has been a favorite as a "hometown-boy-done-good," and always looks forward to coming home. He's planning on doing something special with the Flour Bluff NROTC students that have earned an unprecedented 10 straight years as national drill champions. Allison was in that NROTC unit when

he was here in high school.

We're expecting record crowds this year, and we've learned good lessons from the last couple of Air Shows. Where in the past we had a problem with long crowd lines, our Security gurus are working out a syllabus that will allow audience access in a quicker, more efficient way. This year, you can even bring chairs to the show. And for those of you who had to wait in lines to get to your vehicles AFTER the show, we're working on fixing that too!

My intent is to have an Air Show here that will knock your socks off, and I want people walking away from the show saying, "Wow, I didn't know they could do that!" I think having the Air Show here April 14 and 15th is a great way to showcase what we do.

Some of you might be thinking that I'm projecting too far ahead - to April. Folks, I DON'T want you to forget February. What happens in February? Well think about it, al-

Captain continued on page 4

Chaplain's Column

Common decency is good for America

by Chaplain Timothy Gault

Irish rocker Paul Hewson (aka Bono) said, "America is not just a country, it is an idea. You have to defend the idea as well as the country, and that idea is being attacked."

But what is that idea?

Dr. Martin Luther King said, "I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: 'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.'" This basic idea is powerful and it characterizes what is best about America. It is this "idea" that is being attacked as our enemies assault our interests around the world. It is under attack by complacency, and in some cases, by the worst aspects of human nature in our homeland and even in our own communities.

We are all fully aware of the cost of the war on terrorism around the world. Many of us are deployed around the world in the fight, others are training here for the fight and still others support the fight through a variety of

means. The fight against terrorism is a team effort that requires diligence, commitment, and sacrifice, but one that is ultimately rewarding and necessary.

The "idea of America" is linked to common decency. To live out the idea "that all men are created equal" requires Americans to live out the "Golden Rule" (Do to others as you would have them do to you). The costs of ignoring this basic idea are more subtle but they are felt by all Americans. For example a recent Associated Press-Ipsos poll found that 70 percent of those polled believe Americans are ruder than they were 20-30 years ago.

A Swiss philosopher named Henri Frederic Amiel was relatively unnoticed and unsuccessful in his lifetime. His *Journal Intime*, full of self-observations, was finally published by others in 1883 after his death. In it he mused, "He who floats with the current, who does not guide himself according to higher principles, who has no ideal, no con-

victions - such a man is a mere article of the world's furniture - a thing moved instead of a living and moving being - an echo, not a voice."

If we want to have a better America and good communities, we should take the first step of acting on those basic things that we know are right, like being kind to each other. Interestingly, it was not until another writer translated Amiel's writings and published them in 1936 that interest grew in Amiel's ideas. It is great to have good ideas and even good dreams and intentions, but it is better to release the potential of those ideas through action.



Gault

Rosa Parks,

Chaplain continued on page 5

Health Watch

As Valentine's Day approaches, think about your OWN heart

by Anne Booher



Few people are aware that heart disease is the #1 killer of women in America. It claims more lives than stroke, breast cancer, and lung cancer. With statistics like that, the threat of heart disease in your life or in the life of someone you love cannot go ignored. This Friday, Feb. 2, grab your favorite red coat, dress, tie, or pin to show your support for raising awareness of heart disease in women.

National Wear Red Day was established by *The Heart Truth* campaign in an effort to make women aware of the risk and encourage them to take charge of their heart health. The campaign is meant to show women that there are simple steps they can take to decrease their risk for heart disease.

Start with keeping up-to-date doctor's visits. *The Heart Truth* campaign encourages you to "know your numbers." That is, your cholesterol (total, HDL, LDL, and triglycerides) and blood sugar levels. If your numbers show that you are at risk, also considering if you are a smoker, your physician will work with you to begin important lifestyle changes. With a knowledgeable and attentive staff here at Naval Hospital Corpus Christi, you'll be taken care of and off to a fresh start with tips on staying "heart healthy."

Exercising can be as easy as taking the stairs instead of the elevator, parking a little farther away from the store, or going to the gym here on base. And if you're nervous about going to a gym, just know that everyone there is trying to do the same thing as you: achieve health. If that thought doesn't help, you can sign up with a personal trainer who will make sure your diet and exercise regimen are right

for you.

Remember, nutrition is also a crucial part of maintaining your heart's vitality. Of course exercising is good for your body, mind and soul, but if you follow your workout with a trip to the barbeque pit and follow that with a pastry, you're not getting a lot accomplished. Try to eliminate foods high in saturated fat, trans fat and cholesterol from your diet. It might be a hard thing to do at first, but eating fresh fruit, nuts and grains, and vegetables is a small price to pay for staying out of the hospital.

If you want to get started on the path towards a healthier heart, join the staff of NHCC this Friday, Feb. 2 and wear red. Let the women in your life know that you care and are doing something to help. For more information on National Wear Red Day, *The Heart Truth* campaign, and heart disease, please visit www.HeartTruth.gov.

Wingspan

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Writer/Photographer
LI2 Paul Hewitt

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Carlos Rodriguez, Pilot for a Day, Jan. 23



From top to bottom: Lt. Jared Schaff; Lt. Robert Rajotte; Pilot for a Day, Carlos Rodriguez; younger brother, Luciano Rodriguez; George Ruiz, founder of the Pilot for a Day program, pose during the most recent evolution, Jan. 23.



CNATRA, Rear Adm. Donald Quinn presents Carlos Rodriguez with an "Honorary Pilot for a Day" certificate. Carlos, 11, has a Malignant Peripheral Nerve Sheath Tumor. He has undergone three major surgeries, chemotherapy and radiation since 2003. Amazingly, Carlos handles all communications for his family since both his parents are deaf. (Photos by Lt. Robert Rajotte)

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Commissaries ring up increased savings for military families

by Bonnie Powell, DeCA Public Affairs

Commissary customers are ringing in the New Year with record-breaking savings. As a result they should be “resolving” to shop their local commissary more often.

“I’m proud to announce that average customer savings for a family of four have risen to nearly \$3,000 annually,” said Defense Commissary Agency (DeCA) Director and CEO Patrick Nixon. “As an agency, we always deliver the message that our savings are an average of 30 percent or more” worldwide, but savings have actually been holding steady at about 32 percent for several years now.”

DeCA has not revised its savings messages for over a year, but using current United States Department of Agriculture figures for retail grocery food purchases consumed at home, a family of four shopping at the commissary on a regular basis can now save \$2,957 annually on groceries. The figure formerly used was \$2,700.

“Considering the rising cost of food, our buyers and the manufacturers and vendors that sell groceries in the commissary system have done a great job in maintaining outstanding customer savings over commercial grocery stores,” said Nixon. “It all adds up to savings that can be used by military families to meet the rising costs of college, vacations, new cars – or even gas for their cars.”

Under the latest calculations, couples can save \$1,885, and singles can save \$1,029 by shopping regularly at their commissary.

DeCA’s average savings calculations are based on an annual price comparison study, which compares commissary prices on approximately 30,000 items with those of local supermarkets, major grocery store chains and super centers. The study also takes into account state taxes and the 5 percent commissary surcharge, which goes to renovate commissaries and build new ones.

Figures for fresh meat and produce, as well as data for locations outside the contiguous United States, are obtained through random sampling. Weighting techniques take into account such factors as cost of living in a variety of areas and regions, as well as customer buying habits.

The commissary benefit also offers an efficient return on investment for the American taxpayer. “The commissary benefit has always been recognized as one of the military’s most valued benefits,” said Nixon. “When you take customer savings into account, commissaries deliver more than two dollars in benefit to military customers for every tax dollar expended to support the system, and we’re extremely proud of that accomplishment.”

GLC Superbowl party scheduled for Feb. 4

by MC2 Jeffrey A. Fretland, Gonzalez Liberty Center

It’s that time of year again! Pull out those pennants, souvenir ball caps and shirts and root for your favorite team! The annual base wide Super Bowl Party will be held Sunday, Feb. 4 at the Gonzalez Liberty Center. Doors open at 2 p.m., and patrons are invited to participate in a Madden X Box pre-game tournament beginning at 3 p.m. The game is expected to begin at 5 p.m.

“Everyone seems to be looking for a good place to watch the Super Bowl,” explained GLC Programming Coordinator Christina Lewis. “This is a great atmosphere for people to congregate and share a love of football.”

GLC Manager John Frisco added the Super Bowl Party brings in many different military and civilian people from the various tenant commands. It affords them an opportunity to relax and socialize that they otherwise wouldn’t normally have in the workplace.

“This event provides a lot of unity and camaraderie for folks to enjoy and cheer their favorite NFL teams for a common cause,” said Frisco.

Free food and prizes will be available. For more information, contact the GLC staff at 961-3768/6405/6406

Captain continued from page 2

most exactly in the middle of the month, a little red-colored guy comes out with his red bow-and-arrows and launches “love” arrows at your sweetheart. Okay – Valentine’s Day.

And I’ll bet a lot of people don’t know where the tradition came from. Well, according to my readings, Valentine’s Day came from a Roman Priest, Valentine of Rome, who suffered martyrdom (he was killed for his beliefs!) and buried on the *Via Flaminia*. According to his biography, he was a priest and a doctor who treated patients even if they couldn’t pay. A miracle he performed was in curing a young blind girl and granting her the ability to find a loving husband.

A second opinion for Valentine’s Day is that it was named after Valentine of Terni, a Bishop who was killed and also buried in the *Via Flaminia*. Some people say it was the same person. So, you might think that Valentine’s Day started out pretty brutal!

Valentine’s Day began in the United States in the 19th century when the first mass-produced Valentines were embossed paper

lace cards. In 1847, Esther Howland took inspiration from an English valentine she received and began making cards in the stationary store her dad owned in Worcester, MA. That began the exchanging of cards and love notes that has now expanded to sending flowers and chocolate candy and even includes sending jewelry.

I’ve got to admit to a bit of pride in knowing that in the old wooden sailing vessel days, Sailors used to carve shells and tusks they collected into “scrimshaw” works for their loved ones. Hard to believe that in the tossing and turning of those old ships, Sailors were able to work beautiful art, sometimes painstakingly small – for a loved one.

Folks, I hope this has given you a hint – don’t forget your loved one on Valentine’s Day. There, I feel better! I know my wife will get something special for Valentine’s Day, and she’ll be proud of me for reminding you to show your affection to that special one you love!

See ya on the beach!

MWR continued from page 12

on Feb. 19 in observance of President’s Day. For more information, call The Club at 961-2541

Pizza Sub Pub

The hours of operation are Monday through Friday 10:30 am to 8 p.m. We are asking for your suggestions on how we could better serve you. For large orders of Pizza’s (5) or more we ask that you give us 1 day’s notice so that we may prep. Soon we will have a “Pick up Order” requestor for call in orders ask for details at the Pizza Sub Pub. For more info, please call 961-2249. Pizza Sub Pub is located in Building 149.

Super Bowl Party at GLC

Stop by and visit the Gonzalez Liberty Center and watch one of the many Navy Motion Picture Service movies they have to offer. The “new releases” include: A Good Year; Operation Stormbreaker; Borat; Deck the Halls; Flags of Our Fathers; Little Miss Sunshine; Man of the Year; Stranger Than Fiction; The Grudge 2; The Prestige; The Santa Claus 3.

February Programs:

Super Bowl Party: Feb. 4, at the GLC doors open at 2 p.m. enjoy pre-game Madden 2007 tournament at 3 p.m. The game starts at 5 p.m. share in free food, prizes and lots of football fun!

February 14 & 28: Last Buck Night: Dinner & Movie at 5 p.m. For more information on any Liberty Program, call the GLC at 961-6405. The Gonzalez Liberty Center is located in Building 1260 on E Street. Hours of operation are from 11 a.m. – 10 p.m.

Youth Activity Center

Come by the Boys & Girls Club located on the corner of E St. and 9th St. to place your order. Let our terrific staff take the stress out of shopping for that special someone this Valentine’s Day. All bouquets come with one Valentine mylar of your choice and four latex balloons. All base deliveries are free of charge. For more information, please call the Youth Activities Center at 961-2355.

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MWR News and Events

by Laurie Garcia, NAS MWR

Auto Safety Tip from the Auto skills Center

A "Dipstick" never lies. Some of the fluids under your hood have a dipstick to let you know the correct amount of fluid that is required for that system to operate efficiently. Many new vehicles have see-through reservoirs, as well as the use of dipsticks to determine proper fluid levels. Always refer to the owner manual for specific fluid use.

For more information regarding concerns or questions about this safety tip or for demonstration call us at 961-3470.

Celebrate Valentine's at the CCBC

Let the Corpus Christi Bay Club help you celebrate Valentine's Day with a special candlelight dinner dance on Wednesday, February 14. What better way to say "Happy Valentine's Day" to your loved one than with a delicious romantic dinner? Dinner starts at 5 p.m. and will be served until 8:30 p.m. The buffet will feature: Fresh garden salad and Waldorf salad, Chicken Supreme, Steamship Round of Beef, Shrimp Newburg, Various

Vegetables, Potatoes, Rice, New Orleans Style Bread Pudding, Apple Cobbler, and Iced Tea or Coffee. The cost for this great dinner is \$16.95 for members and \$17.95 for non-members. Gourmet desserts, Wine specials and Irish coffee will be available for sale.

Special Events for February:

Feb 2: Winter Texan's and Member's Appreciation Night with all you can eat Shrimp-A-Peel from 5 p.m. - 8 p.m. Cost is \$15.95 for members and \$16.95 for non-members.

Feb 14: Valentine's Day Candlelight Dinner Dance. Dinner from 5 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.; Dance from 6 p.m. - 10 p.m. - RESERVATIONS REQUIRED

Feb 16: "Winging" ceremony is scheduled in the main ballroom at 4 p.m.

Feb 16 & 23: Mongolian BBQ

Reminder: The club will be CLOSED

MWR continued on page 13



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History Channel's 'Mega Movers' production crew, standing on 'Alpha' pier at Naval Station Ingleside, films the arrival of the heavy lift motor vessel Condock V contracted by Military Sealift Command to transport mine countermeasure ships to the Middle East. Photo by Ed Mickle, Public Affairs Officer Naval Mine And Anti-Submarine Warfare Command.

History Channel films MCM heavy lift ability

Ingleside TX—History Channel's 'Mega Movers' production team arrived and focused their cameras on the 1300-ton USS Gladiator (MCM 11) during the first week of Dec. documenting its heavy lift transport aboard the 347 foot motor vessel Condock V.

Working with Military Sealift Command (MSC), the crew filmed the entire operation of preparation, loading and transport of the mine countermeasures ship aboard the heavy lift vessel owned by Condock Befrachtungs-Gesellschaft mbH of Germany, for an upcoming episode of the series, 'Mega Movers.'

"The show is one of thirteen for the new season," Field producer Chris Allingham mentioned. "This will be an hour long segment dedicated to the heavy lift of a Navy vessel and interjected with mine warfare history."

"It should be aired in two or three months depending on how the History Channel plans the schedule," he added.

The Condock V submerges so that a transported ship can be 'floated' onboard. Once aboard, the 'cargo' is secured using keel supports, blocks and lines, the 4700 ton capacity motor vessel then rises to the surface displacing the float-on water, a process known as ballasting.

The carefully orchestrated event by line handlers, ships' Captains and crews, Port operations personnel and heavy lift experts move the Gladiator from pier side aboard the partially submerged Condock V. Once positioned over keel support blocks and verified by Navy

divers the Condock V then ballasts up to its normal draft. Workers then secure the Gladiator for the ocean voyage.

"The coordination between the Condock, the Gladiator and the film crew has been tremendous," said Laura Seal, spokesperson for the Military Sealift Command. "Everyone involved has been very open and helpful, very accommodating"

This 'Mega Movers' team employed by '44 Blue Productions' includes a field producer, director of photography, two camera operators and an audio engineer. Within the group there are hours of television, network and commercial experience culminating in just under 100 years of experience in shooting episodes similar to this one.

Almost invisible to operations personnel, the team engages each other and key personnel asking pointed questions looking for clear answers in order to tell the story effectively.

"We're a group of folks who have done this many times before," Director of Photography Mike Elwell said. "We know how to tell a story, what to include, what not to, at least until the editors get a hold of the film."

The film crew gets one opportunity to capture the event, there are no retakes. However, armed with three High Definition digital cameras rolling aimed from different directions and a fourth HD time-lapse camera located in the crows nest of the Condock V, chances of missing anything are slim.

Chaplain continued from page 2

once an unassuming seamstress, is now called the "Mother of the Civil Rights Movement." When asked why she didn't give up her seat on the bus, she said, "All I was trying to do was to get home from work." But, she did not give up her seat because she knew what was right. Rosa Parks paid a price for being a voice

rather than a shadow, but she changed America for the better. She defended the idea that makes America great and she lived out the American creed to the best of her ability.

I think Bono is right; that the idea of America is worth defending. That is something all of us can do right here in Corpus Christi.

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Sohl, Navy 'Junior Pharmacist of the Year'

by Bill W. Love, NHCC Public Affairs Office

Naval Hospital Corpus Christi's Lt. David Sohl, Medical Service Corps, won the Navy's 2006 Junior Pharmacist of the Year Award. Winners were announced at a ceremony and banquet in Atlanta prior to the holidays.

"His goal-oriented outlook makes him a truly desirable asset to any team. He is the kind of person we want working with us. This is the person we want representing Navy pharmacy," stated Captain D. C. B. Albia, MSC, the executive officer at NHCC, in Sohl's written recommendation.

"He has been able to outstep his prescribed rank by continuously demonstrating his expert understanding of medicine, pharmacy operations, technology and leadership," Albia added of Sohl's reverent personality and eagerness to take care of customers. Sohl's reaction to the news about his award resonates that reverence. "Clearly the honor rests with the technicians who do the work," he said, "and the support of the chain of command. I am humbled and honored to be nominated and receive the award but feel the credit belongs to those on the front lines."

This is the third time in as many years that a pharmacist from NHCC has garnered Navy recognition for outstanding performance. Sohl, 27, from Hinton, Iowa joined the NHCC team, his first duty station, in September 2004 only three months after earning his doctorate in Pharmacy from Drake University, and receiving his commission.

In Sohl's nomination he was commended for having earned high praise and credibility among the medical staff. That, according to the endorsement, was evidenced by his appointment to the Executive Committee of Medical Staff (ECOMS). In addition, his col-



Lt. David Sohl, 27, from Hinton, Iowa is the third pharmacist from NHCC to receive recognition for outstanding performance.

laboration with the patient safety committee resulted in NHCC being ranked as the top ambulatory MEDMARX reporter for the Navy, a model for many throughout the Department of Defense. This data from this initiative is used across the country to prevent the recurrence of medication errors.

Sohl and his wife, Janel, have been married for four years and have two children. He says that his future plans include being a great father and continuing his Navy career. "What becomes of my career is still up to me, and I strive to perform beyond the level now expected of me."

Financial fitness for the New Year

by Lissa Ann Wohltmann, Navy Reserve Readiness Command

Buy low, sell high.

That financial advice doesn't help the average Sailor who hasn't the time to follow the stock market, nor the inclination to do so. Instead there's an easier solution that most Sailors can pursue every payday.

"Put enough money away as early as you can and just leave it alone," advised Charles Johnson a financial consultant and former Navy communications officer.

Sailors will always find ways to spend every dime they make, yet they first need to consider what is important.

"You can either buy toys today that will be worthless in the future," he said, "or you can invest your funds and enjoy (the financial benefits) for decades in the future."

The Thrift Savings Plan is considered the Sailors' most practical form of investment. This Federal Government-sponsored retirement savings and investment plan offers the same type of savings and tax benefits that many private corporations offer their employees under 401(k) plans. Unlike a Sailors' pension after 20 years in the Navy, the amount you receive after retirement age has nothing to do with your rate, rank or years of service. It is contingent upon the amount you invest.

The added benefit of this plan is that it's virtually painless. Once you sign up, it comes out of your paycheck automatically without the Sailor giving it another thought.

"You don't miss it because you don't see it," Johnson explained.

Another aspect of knowing your financial health is learning how you are using your money today. Do you always have enough money at the end of the month to pay for the little extras in life or are you constantly stretched beyond the limit of fiscal survival? Have you planned for life's unexpected disasters and have enough insurance to cover them? Do you stick to an actual budget or spend imprudently? And, finally, do you shop for necessities or is it more of a sport where the only loser is you?

If you want to improve your personal finances, you can start by taking a financial fitness quiz from Rutgers University. This should give you an idea of how well you've managed your money so far. Simply choose the score that best describes your current financial management practices, then when you are done, click on the "view results" button for either a surprise or a familiar supposition.

If you are beyond just the basics of maintaining excellent financial shape and indulge in the stock market, Johnson has a bit of advice.

"If the stock market fluctuates, don't panic" and sell off everything, he advised. Instead, use that opportunity to buy more stock because as it gets cheaper you have the finances to buy more.

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Marines continued from page 1

obtained early the following morning on the 20th when Charlie Company assaulted the enemy base and put down the threat.

The initial plan was to transport Charlie Company, comprised of reserve Marines from Corpus Christi and Harlingen, to Fort Hood near Waco for their training. But the rainy winter weather threatened to shut down the roads approaching Hood for the weekend. Instead of risking a cancelled training weekend, the unit staged a last-minute training event here at NAS.

"We like to drill abroad to get them into an unfamiliar area," said Maj. Kevin Cagle. "Drill attendance is high because we give them realistic training. My Marines are not bored."

According to Capt. William Creamer, roughly 60 percent of the unit has already been deployed and returned. The other 40 percent are new Marines fresh out of boot camp and A-School. "We have the seasoned Marines coming back with valuable knowledge based on real life," said Creamer, "and we have new ones coming in, bringing the most current training from their A-school."

All this knowledge and experience provides high quality, realistic training that instills a sense of purpose and accomplishment in these South Texas Marines, according to Cagle. They never know when they may be deployed, but they must remain prepared at



Members of Charlie Company return from a training patrol during their monthly weekend drill.

all times so as not to be taken by surprise when they finally do receive orders.

"We're training to go," said Capt. Creamer. "That's our mindset." He added that this attitude will go a long way in easing the transition when they do get called up. They will receive only a few weeks' training stateside before ultimately being stationed in Iraq, Afghanistan or other hotspots around the world.

Capt. Creamer commented that the facilities and services provided on the base have been invaluable for Charlie Company. Once a month, the Marines gather for drill and receive much needed medical, dental and chaplain services, which Creamer describes as "top-notch" and much appreciated. Certainly, these war fighters from South Texas deserve no less.

Reserve components of our nation's military are no longer merely "weekend warriors"; they have played and will continue to play a crucial role in our endeavors around the globe.

Sailors continued from page 1

muster at 6:30 a.m. We man up the tower and radar 15 minutes prior to the field opening. I get the 'hard stand' posted, do roll call, light up the air field because it's still dark, and check the weather. I clear the runway, so no one would be on it.

"I'm still training on a lot of positions," she continued. "I work on qualifications, I am working on two in the tower, one in radar. We have to pass proficiency exams, and I'm an OJT {on-the-job} instructor. I'm teaching others to take my place. I work day and night shifts; it's primarily day crew work, but we also have to allow our pilots to get night time training. So we have to allow them to fly at night, then we 'recover them' and go home."

This is said in a matter-of-fact voice with just a touch of possessive inflection and confident pride.

"The highlight of my day is when it gets really busy," Wright said, now leaning forward and speaking rapidly, but precisely. "If we're in the tower, when we all start working as a team, it's not like we have to say, 'Hey, will you help me,' 'What's going on over there?' It just happens. And everybody just starts working their positions. We've got really good ATCs here and we can handle any rush that comes upon us and the teamwork - is just amazing. When you're up in the tower and you're so busy that you don't have time to stop talking, it's just straight talking - my data controller is giving clearances and coordinating, listening to 'locals' so they can get a head's up and coordinating things just gets quicker. You've got your supe (supervisor)

in the back watching everybody's back, and making sure, 'Hey did you get that?'"

Wright takes a breath, then continues, "It's when that teamwork just goes, without anyone saying, 'Let's go.' It's like from doing nothing to everybody on their feet, responding."

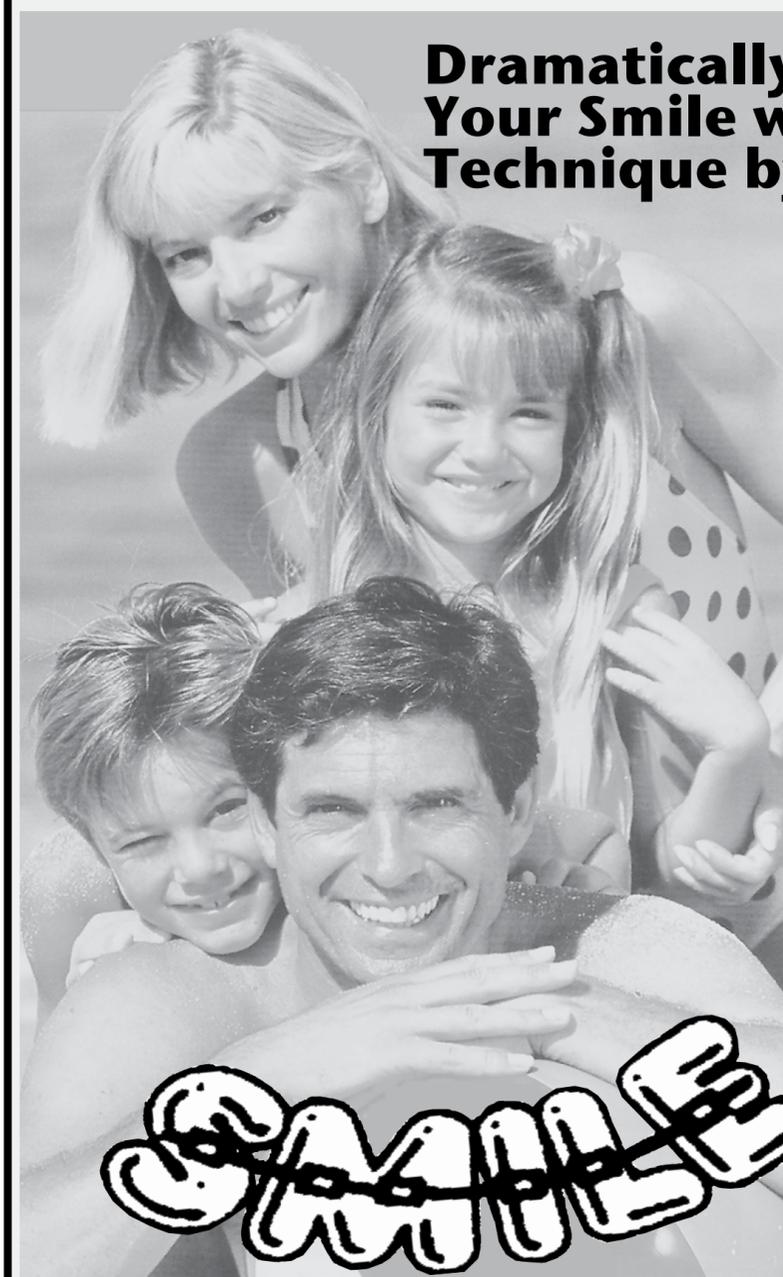
There are slightly more than 50 air traffic controllers assigned here and about one-half are on duty at any given time. They man the Air Traffic Control Facility and Outlying Fields. There is a Facility Watch Supervisor that is overall in charge of all ATC personnel, regardless of the airfield they are working.

As the Training Chief, it is Walker's responsibility to ensure that every Sailor is trained and certified through a rigorous training regiment.

"For me, a highlight is having the opportunity to work with a great group of people," said Walker. "By that, I mean my division. I am being prideful, because in our particular rate, we do take great pride in everything we do and we challenge each other, on a daily basis, to be the best that we can be.

"My working at positions is limited," she continued. "I may go to the tower to stay current {maintain her certifications}, or if they need me, but my job is about training more than 50 Sailors. I enjoy it when they come to me with questions because I know they're searching for knowledge and they want to learn. Then there's the point when they get it, when I know they've put 100 percent effort into receiving a qualification, and they know what they're talking about, and you can tell they are confident in their abilities. That's my highlight."

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HSV2 SWIFT
“A gold ring and chocolate.”

AD2 Chris Ruiz
HM-15
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Dave Munnell
CNI Millington
“A simple personal card.”

AWARDS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Winging Ceremony • Jan. 19



Capt. David N. Maynard, Commodore; Cmdr. Charles J. Cassidy CO Training Sq. 31; Lt. Col. Jon H. Ullmann, CO Training Sq. 35; Capt. John H. Korn, CO CGASCC; Capt Bill Marriott, USN (Ret) Executive Secretary of the DoD | Naval Aviators: 1LT Tyer Burnham; ENS Aidan Carrigg; ENS Brandon Daughtry; ENS Louie Ferro; LTJG Horace Leavitt; ENS Matthew Perry; LTJG Matthew Scheel; ENS Ryan Seymour; 1LT David Torres | Air Force Pilots: 2LT Edward Brennan; 2LT Brian Cote; 2LT Janelle Decker; 2LT Manuel Garcia; 2LT William Gugelman; 2LT Curtis Jones; 1LT Heather Lendrum; 2LT Matthew Mansell; 2LT Trevor McCormack; 2LT Matthew Novotney; 2LT Daniel Pallister; 2LT William Rabe; 2LT Brooke Thomas

Security Awards • Jan. 16



From left to right: MA2 Brian Gutierrez, Letter of Commendation; Officer Thomas McKenna, 30 years of service; MA2 Erwin Caldwell, Navy Achievement Medal (1st); MA1 Robert Lyles, Flag Letter of Commendation; MA3 Jay Knox, Navy Achievement Medal (1st); MA1 Charles Kittle, Navy Achievement Medal (3rd); MA1 Damien Holmes, Flag Letter of Commendation; CM1 Steven Bridges, Good Conduct Medal (3rd); MA2 Jonathan Barnes, Good Conduct Medal (2nd) (Photo by LI2 Paul Hewitt)

Sailor of the Year



Bravo Zulu to AC1 Kristen Walker, NASCC's Sailor of the Year!