

Tropical Times

March 16, 2012



44th Independence Day
Of Mauritius

20th Republic Celebration

The ID

The Filmau Club dancers perform a dance number as part of the celebration for the 44th Anniversary of the Independence of the Mauritians, at the Filmau Club in Diego Garcia, British Indian Ocean Territory, March 10.





Submitted By
Lt. Cmdr. Robert Spencer
Command Chaplain, NSF Diego Garcia

For us sports fans, we usually associate the term "sudden death" with a playoff game. Years ago in the National Football League, if a game ended in a tie, the game would continue into overtime. The team that scored first would suddenly be the winner of the game, thus the term "sudden death."

This term also applies to the end of life when someone unexpectedly dies. This is the unfortunate case from a few weeks ago with Davy Jones. He was a 1960s teen idol and a member of the pop group "The Monkees." He was only 66. For some people this age may seem old. For those of us who grew up watching this guy on his TV show and listening to him on the radio, 66 is not really old. It is not unusual for people today to still thrive in their 80s and 90s.

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What is Sudden Death?

Jones supposedly lived an extremely healthy lifestyle. He was a vegetarian and exercised regularly. He was doing everything right, yet, he suddenly died from apparently natural causes. That same week we saw the sudden death of Andrew Breitbart, a lesser known public figure, who was a conservative activist and blogger who was a rising star in the world of politics. He was only 43.

To die so suddenly from natural causes and at a young age, even when a person is supposedly doing everything right, shows how vulnerable we all are. Are there any guarantees in life? Does it really matter what we do or what precautions we take that will make any difference in our longevity or the quality of our lives?

I say yes, but that doesn't mean a long life is assured. For example, how do we explain someone who has never smoked, yet they die from lung cancer? Or the person who smoked three packs of cigarettes a day for 20 years and never had a problem with their lungs? It's crazy. I guess what we can draw from this is that we are never fully in control. We may think we are, but that is misleading.

Our Creator is always in control, yet, we do not know when He will call us from this life. What we do know by our faith is that He wants us to be happy and to live a productive life while glorifying Him in the process. More importantly, He wants us to live with Him in eternity, but that is out of His hands.

So how much control does He have if He has to sur-

render this aspect? It will be our decision whether we live with Him in eternity. He gives that up for us to decide. He will not force anything upon us because He made us free and He wants us to remain free. For those who believe in life after death, we should live each day as if it were our last simply because it very well may be. Until then, glorify God by living a happy and productive life. You will be a better person for it.

"... as you can see, I am so old that I may now die at any time." (Genesis 27:2) (2 Timothy 4:8)

Diego Garcia NEWS

Swim Qual! Swim Qual! Swim Qual!

By Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class April D. Adams

DIEGO GARCIA, British Indian Ocean Territory - "Don't do that!" "Just relax..." "Great job!" "Get off your back!" These are some of the things you would hear a test proctor shout during swim qualifications. Earning a higher level swim qualification is not only a huge factor in some Personnel Qualification Standards; they are also required for special programs. Mass Communication Specialist Seaman David Jordan knows this first hand.

"I'm going to air crew candidate school, which is a lot of air and water survival training," Jordan explained. "We have to know how to survive in the water, so this is a very valuable part of my future training."

To pass the 2nd class Navy swim qualification, swimmers must be able to do an abandon ship movement, swim a 25 yard American crawl, a 25 yard breast-

stroke, a 25 yard sidestroke, tread water for five minutes and float on their backs.

Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Shawn W. Lauer, the swim test proctor, has specific expectations for Sailors pursuing their 2nd class swim qualification.

"The first thing I'm looking for during the test is to see that the swimmers are comfortable in the water," said Lauer.

"Even if they can swim, I want to see that they are comfortable, so if they were in an emergency situation, they're able to survive and not be a danger to someone else."

The second thing is how well they execute the different strokes.

"For the 1st class test, the lengths on all the strokes are doubled and they need to be at a very high proficiency," explained Lauer. "The water-treading portion is definitely where I see most people struggle."



DIEGO GARCIA, British Indian Ocean Territory (Mar. 14, 2012) Master-at-Arms 3rd Class Adam Pyron takes a deep breath while executing the breaststroke as part of the 2nd class Navy Swim Qualification. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class April D. Adams)

Like all test, there is always one part that one may struggle with.

"Treading water for five minutes was the hardest part of the test," said Master-at-Arms 3rd Class Littlefox Larry.

He admitted to having a tough time with the water-treading portion of the test.

"If you don't understand the techniques you're supposed to use you're going to be spending more energy than you should and tire yourself out quickly, which is exactly what I did!" exclaimed Larry.

"The hardest part of the test was definitely the part when

we tread water," Jordan said. "After going back and forth swimming laps in the pool, for someone who isn't really a great swimmer, it's really hard and a lot of my energy had already been exerted at that point."

Both Jordan and Larry passed their 2nd class swim qualification and hope more opportunities come about this qualification.

44th Independence Day Celebration 20th Anniversary, Republic of Mauritius

Diego Garcia residents gathered March 10 at the Filmau Club to celebrate the 44th Anniversary of the Independence of the Mauritians. "One of the unique things about DG is the diverse population we have here not only within the military, but also base operating contractors," said Capt. David L. Tidwell, Commanding Officer of U.S. Navy Support Facility Diego Garcia. The highlights of the evening included music, dance performances and speeches from the CO and the British Representative, Cmdr. Richard Marshall.



PACOM

Change of Command



Adm. Samuel J. Locklear III, relieved Adm. Robert F. Willard as commander of U.S. Pacific Command during a change of command ceremony on March 9, in Honolulu, Hawaii, in which Secretary of Defense (SECDEF)



Leon E. Panetta delivered the opening remarks. Panetta congratulated Adm. Robert F. Willard on his retirement after the ceremony.



NEWS *from around the fleet*

Navy Announces New Drug Testing Parameters after Year of Record Low Positives

From Navy Personnel Command Public Affairs

MILLINGTON, Tenn. -- To align with new DoD policy announced in February, Navy will begin testing for more commonly abused prescription drugs during random urinalysis starting May 1. This follows a record low in Sailors testing positive for illicit drug use.

Since 2001, the rate of urinalysis testing in the Navy has increased and remained at a steady rate for the past 10 years. As the testing has increased, the amount of members testing positive has decreased each year. Testing has been done for marijuana (THC), cocaine, and heroin among other drugs. For fiscal year 2011, there were a record low number of members who tested positive for illicit drug use with a total of 1,515 samples out of the 1,184,160 samples tested last year.

"We are really pleased with these results but while the drugs we've been testing have been on a de-

cline, prescription drugs are on the rise. In the past three years amphetamine positives have increased 34 percent and oxycodone positives by 23 percent," said Dorice Favorite, director, Navy Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention Office (NADAP).

The DoD announced Feb. 1 that more commonly abused prescription drugs will be added to the standard testing panel for all urinalysis samples submitted for testing. These prescription drug families include benzodiazepines, hydrocodones and hydromorphones (i.e. Xanax, Vicodin and Dilaudid).

"In addition to oxycodone and amphetamine, the Navy already tests for codeine and morphine," said Favorite.

Testing at the service-level will begin in May. The 90-day warning order from announcement to implementation is to allow ample time to ensure military members have their prescriptions properly docu-

mented in their health records. Additionally, the warning order provides members who are using prescription drugs that have not been prescribed or given by their health care provider to self-refer for treatment.

"We are concerned about service members who are using prescription drugs without proper authority and potentially addicted," said Favorite. "If you have a problem, this is the time to ask for help."

According to Favorite, Navy's policy on substance abuse is zero tolerance.

"Substance abuse puts lives and missions at risk, undercuts unit readiness and morale, and is inconsistent with our Navy ethos and core values of honor, courage, and commitment," said Favorite.

If a member is using, possessing, promoting, manufacturing, or distributing drugs they face disciplinary action that could result in unfavorable separation from the Navy.

SAN DIEGO (Jan. 14, 2011) A

Sailor assigned to the amphibious assault ship USS Bonhomme Richard (LHD 6) places a urine sample in a box during routine random testing. The ship is in dry dock for maintenance and upgrades through April. (U.S. Navy photo by Chief Mass Communication Specialist Joe Kane)



"We recommend members seeking substance use counseling talk with their doctor, chain-of-command or self-refer to a substance abuse rehabilitation program," said Favorite.

This program is part of the 21st Century Sailor and Marine initiative that consolidates a set of objectives and policies, new and existing, to maximize Sailor and Marine personal readiness, build resiliency and hone the most combat-effective force in the history of the Department of the Navy.

For more news from Navy Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention, visit www.npc.navy.mil/support/nadap.

Up-to Date Emergency Data Vital for Family Readiness

By Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class (AW) LaTunya Howard,
Navy Personnel Command Public Affairs

MILLINGTON, Tenn. -- Off-duty accidents and illnesses were among the leading causes of death for Sailors in calendar year 2011, said a Navy official March 9.

"As service members, we usually remember to update our emergency data prior to a deployment or individual augmentee assignment," said Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Dana Swope, leading petty officer and licensed mortician, Navy and Marine Corps Mortuary Affairs. "Non-combat related incidents such as car accidents, happen daily so we should get in the practice of verifying our records at a minimum of twice a year."

Sailors must keep their Record of Emergency Data (DD form 93) and Dependency Application Record of Emergency Data (NAVPERS 1070/602 also known as your Page 2) updated with their primary and secondary next-of-kin upon marriage, divorce, the birth of a child or any other significant life changing event.

During a Page 2 update, Sailors should identify a person authorized to direct disposition (PADD) of the deceased.

"The PADD is the individual the Sailor appoints to oversee arrangements after their death and whom we will

take our direction from in fulfilling the Sailor's final wishes," said Swope.

According to Swope, the Page 2 and Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI) forms are among the first documents the Navy will turn to in the event a Sailor is very seriously injured or dies.

"Unfortunately, we sometimes find out when we need to notify family members of injury or the death of a service member, that the information [in the Page 2 and SGLI] is outdated or incomplete which hampers the notification process," said Swope. "Not maintaining up-to-date Page 2 information could delay notification to next-of-kin and the distribution of death benefits."

Also, during a Page 2 update, Sailors should identify three people that they would desire to be bedside should they be injured and incapacitated. The Navy has a Bedside program that allows up to three family members to be present at an injured service member's bedside should the injury be sufficient enough to warrant it.

While illness and death are not the most popular topics to discuss, Swope suggests Sailors address the subject with their loved ones.

"Sailors can take a great deal of stress off their family by

making sure someone knows their final wishes," said Swope. "When a Sailor or Marine dies, a uniformed casualty assistance calls officer (CACO) is assigned to contact their family. CACO notifies the family of the death of their service member and they assist the family through the entire process."

The CACO is assigned by a regional office under Commander, Naval Installations Command.

A Sailor's designated beneficiary may receive multiple death benefits, i.e. death gratuity, SGLI, unpaid pay and allowances and possible survivor benefit entitlements of the service member.

Death gratuity is a benefit paid to beneficiary/s designated by the Sailor at no cost to the Sailor. The total amount payable is \$100,000, and Sailors may designate up to 10 people to receive it. The amount paid to a beneficiary is specified on the Sailor's Page 2.

SGLI is a life insurance benefit that Sailors elect to purchase through payroll deduction. The coverage is available in \$50,000 increments up to \$400,000. The designated beneficiary/s are identified on the Sailor's SGLV 8286, SGLI Election and Certificate. Sailors should access their electronic service record in Navy Standard Integrated Personnel

System and their Official Military Personnel Files to verify Page 2 data information regularly.

"We have seen firsthand how out dated emergency data can delay notification of next-of-kin and even result in benefits being distributed to former spouses," said Swope. "I encourage Sailors to review their records and keep them up-to-date."

Contact the Personnel Support Detachment or personnel office if changes to beneficiary data are needed.

Maintaining personnel and service records is a key element of readiness, one of the five areas of the 21st Century Sailor and Marine initiative which consolidates a set of objectives and policies, new and existing, to maximize Sailor and Marine personal readiness, build resiliency and hone the most combat-effective force in the history of the Department of the Navy.

For more information on death benefits, Sailors should contact the Navy Casualty Assistance office at 1-800-368-3202/901-874-2501/DSN 882-2501 or call the Navy Personnel Command (NPC) customer service center (CSC) at 1-866-U-ASK-NPC, email CSCMailbox@navy.mil or visit NPC's website at www.npc.navy.mil.

What's happening in Diego Garcia

Texas Hold'em Tournament

WHEN: MARCH 16
AT 6:30 P.M.
WHERE: ISLAND ROOM

Interactive Customer Evaluation (ICE)

DO YOU HAVE COMMENTS OR SUGGESTIONS ON SERVICES PROVIDED?

YOUR FEEDBACK IS VALUABLE. SUBMIT YOUR ONLINE COMMENTS, FEEDBACK AND SUGGESTIONS TO SERVICE PROVIDERS VIA [HTTP://ICE.DISA.MIL](http://ice.disa.mil)

Tax Assistance

THE VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE (VITA) TAX CENTER WILL BE OPEN TO MILITARY AND CIVILIAN PERSONNEL UNTIL APRIL 18, IN THE LEGAL OFFICE. CONTACT LNI ROBINSON AT 370-2922 TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT BETWEEN 1 - 4 P.M. MORNING APPOINTMENTS MAY BE CONSIDERED FOR SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES.

Blood Donations

THE BLOOD BANK IS CURRENTLY IN NEED OF ALL BLOOD TYPES. ALL HANDS ARE ENCOURAGED TO GET SCREENED FOR ELIGIBILITY. TO DONATE PLEASE CONTACT THE BRANCH HEALTH CLINIC AT 370-4211.

CSADD Note

-THE COALITION OF SAILORS AGAINST DESTRUCTIVE DECISIONS WILL BE SPONSORING A NBA 2K12, PS3 TOURNAMENT ON SATURDAY MARCH 24, 1-4 P.M. AT THE LIBERTY CENTER.

-ALL HANDS ARE INVITED TO ATTEND.

-FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CALL IT2 BROOKS AT EXT. 370-2100.

PRT Preparation Tip

BE VIRGIN!

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES ARE SOME OF THE EMPTIEST CALORIES OUT THERE. REPLACE THEM WITH WATER, AND THE WEIGHT COMES OFF!

Attention All STA 21 Candidates:

CHECK OUT NAVADMIN 073/12 FOR THE LATEST UPDATES ON HOW TO SUBMIT SEAMAN TO ADMIRAL PACKAGES. DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS IS JULY 1, BUT BEFORE YOU SEND YOURS IN, READ FROM THE 'LESSONS LEARNED' IN THE NAVADMIN TO HELP AVOID ERRORS MADE IN PREVIOUS SUBMISSIONS.

MWR

MOVIES

Thursday
15

Friday
16

Saturday
17

Sunday
18

Monday
19

Tuesday
20

Wednesday
21

6 Person Dodgeball
Tournament
Fitness Center
5 p.m.
Military Only

Texas Hold'em
Tournament
Island Room
6:30 p.m.

Windsurfing Class
Marina
1 p.m. to 2 p.m.

Yacht Club
Sailing Regatta
Marina
2 a.m.

DG 21 Safety 6
5K Fun Run
Fitness Center
7:30 p.m.

Darts Tournament
Island Room
6 p.m.
Military Only

Chip and Putt
Golf Challenge
Coral Sands Golf Course
5:30 p.m.

Fright Night
Horror
R
8 p.m.

Final Destination 5
Thriller
R
8 p.m.

The Sitter
Comedy
R
10 p.m.

Contagion
Drama
PG 13
8 p.m.

New Year's Eve
Romance
PG 13
10 p.m.

Real Steel
Action
PG 13
8 p.m.

**Mr. Popper
Penguins**
Comedy
PG 13
8 p.m.

In Time
Action
PG 13
8 p.m.

Drive
Crime
R
8 p.m.

Tropical Times

United States Navy Support Facility
Diego Garcia British Indian Ocean
Territory

Commanding Officer

Capt. David L. Tidwell

Executive Officer

Cmdr. Stephen E. Petras

Command Master Chief

CMDCM(SW/AW) Robert L. Johnson

Public Affairs Officer

MC1(SW) Arthur N. De La Cruz

Tropical Times Editor

MC3 April D. Adams

Command Journalists

MC2 (AW/EXW) Emmanuel Rios
MCSA Eric A. Pastor

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Navy.

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**Submissions to the Tropical Times are
due to the editor no later than close of
business Tuesday**

SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

Anyone can be a victim of sexual assault.

Resources are available if you need someone to talk to confidentially.

Contact the Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC) at 370-4421

Monday - Friday 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Pager 370-9300 ext. 1826 - 24/7

Page the on-call SAPR Victim Advocate at 370-9300 ext. 1825.

