Valiant Shield Edition

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CVW 2 Hornets Step Up To The Challenge

By MCSN James R. Evans
Penny Press staff

More than 200 U.S. military aircraft are participating in Exercise Valiant Shield, a joint exercise that will put those aircraft and support crews who maintain them to the test in a dynamic environment.

Stepping up to meet that challenge are Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 2's F/A-18 Hornets of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 137 "Kestrels", VFA-2 "Bounty Hunters", VFA-34 "Blue Blasters" and VFA-151 "Vigilantes."

"With the ability to engage air threats, attack ground targets and perform aerial refueling, the Hornets have quickly become the Navy's "go-to" aircraft for almost every mission that can be launched from a carrier," said Lt. Cmdr. Greg Newkirk, a pilot assigned to VFA-137.

Throughout Valiant Shield, the Hornet Squadrons, flying from USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72), will be showcasing these abilities.

"Our squadron will be doing the whole gamut, which includes strike group defense as well as offensive air-to-air, maritime interdiction, and we'll also be tanking other aircraft," said Newkirk.

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Awards

Spotlight Sailors

ET3 Raechel Moermond

Combat Systems/ CS-3

Reported on board:
March 10, 2005

Advice to new Sailors:
"Don't be afraid to ask questions and don't be afraid to state your opinion as long as it's respectufully stated."

Reason she joined the Navy:
"To do something different, to get a change of scenery."

Something ET3 Moermond is looking forward to:
"All of the RIMPAC sporting events in Hawaii."

PR2 (AW) Kristen Glumack

HSL-47/ Para Loft

Reported on board:
Jan. 2005

Hobbies:
"Going to the beach and hanging out with friends."

Reason she joined the Navy:
"To get the opportunity to see the world."

The most memorable event in PR2 Glumack's career:
"Being a part of the Hurricane Katrina relief efforts."

Want to remember all the exciting ports we hit this underway? How about remembering the 5,000 people you spent five months with? If yes, then cruise books are now on sale on the aft mess decks. Get your orders in today!

June 14, 1989

USS Houston (SSN 713) becomes entangled with a submerged tow cable from the commercial tugboat Barcelona. The submarine pulls the tug boat underwater, resulting in the death of one crewmember.

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News

Operation Summer Force Preservation

From Fleet Master Chief (AW/SW)
Jon R. Thompson

A few weeks ago we entered what we like to call the Critical Days of Summer. From Memorial Day to Labor Day, the Navy incurs more off-duty mishaps and traffic deaths than it does the entire rest of the year. The statistics are always disturbing, especially since most of the deaths were preventable.

I always try to illustrate my points with current events. Most of you know what happened to Pittsburgh Steelers Quarterback Ben Roethlisberger. 'Big Ben' was involved in a motorcycle accident and, because he wasn't wearing a helmet, suffered serious damage to his face, jaw and teeth. I don't think it takes a rocket scientist to figure out if he was wearing a full-face helmet he would have walked away from that accident with only minor damage.

Face it, the decisions you make affect your life and those around you. A poor choice can cost you a lot – physically, financially and emotionally. What's more, I truly believe the law of averages work against us and when any of us tempt fate we are headed for a collision course with something bad.

My challenge to you this summer is to be there for each other and remind everyone to be alert, aware, and able to manage risk all day, every day. It seems to me the Navy's on-duty safety record is superb because we practice operational risk management all the time. We are safety experts. However, as soon as some of you take off your uniforms, I think you also drop your guard and forget to factor in risk and safety. The results often hurt the Navy's readiness.

Now, if you're reading this thinking you're safe and you won't get hurt, consider the following statistics:

220 Sailors and Marines died in PMV and off-road duty recreational mishaps from summer 2002 to summer 2005.

73% were between 18 and 26 years old.

45% were drivers or passengers in cars or light trucks.

31% of the total fatalities involved alcohol use.

25% died in shore/recreational mishaps.

25% were motorcycle riders.

Shipmates, it's obvious the younger you are the more at risk you are. The average rank of those who have died in the past four years is E3 and the average age is 22. The majority of the mishaps took place between 12:00-3:00 a.m. Sunday. We in the command master chief world often say, 'nothing good happens between midnight and 2:00 a.m.' Each year many of you prove that statement true.

The summer is so dangerous because it's the period where many of you go on family vacations and often travel longer periods than you should without a rest or break. It's when the weather is ideal for outdoor and water activities. And it's also a time for cookouts and picnics, which often include alcohol consumption.

Now before you think I'm a prude and think no one should ever drink alcohol, let me address alcohol consumption. First and foremost, no one in the Navy under 21 years of age can consume alcohol because it's the law…period. For those of you over 21, all any leader can ask is for you to drink responsibly.

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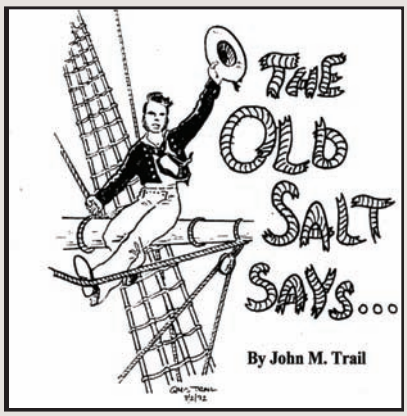
Spinning Yarns

"Ahoy mates," when you hear a shipmate "spinning yarns" or "swinging the lamp," they are telling sea stories. Spinning yarns, a term for story telling was coined in the days when Sailors would be put to work taking "junk line" (old and worn out line) apart to make yarn, baggywrinkle, oakum and other "small stuff." As this was one of the few shipboard tasks where the men could usually sit down and converse at will, this act of spinning the yarn apart became synonymous with free and unrestrictive conversation, and since this was sometimes done below decks during inclimate weather a lamp was lit and hung from the overhead so the Sailors could see, hence a "swinging lamp" as it moved to the rhythm of the ships roll while underway.



Week At A Glance

News

Lincoln Hosts Foreign Military Observers

By MCSN Justin Blake
Penny Press staff

Sixteen foreign military officials and civilians visited USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72) June 17-18 during Exercise Valiant Shield 2006 in the Pacific Ocean.

Observers from Russia, India and Japan arrived aboard Lincoln on June 17 via a C-2A "Greyhound" from Fleet Logistics Support Squadron (VRC) 30, flying from Anderson Air Force Base, Guam. The visitors were aboard Lincoln for two days and enjoyed tours of the carrier as well as observing operations during the exercise.

After arriving aboard Lincoln, guests were greeted by Captain C.A. McCawley, Lincoln's commanding officer.

"It is an honor and pleasure to host you onboard Abraham Lincoln, and on behalf of the embarked crew I would like to welcome you," said McCawley.

Rear Adm. Bill Goodwin, commander, Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group, commented on the unique opportunities presented during the visit and the upcoming exercise.

"We are here to join with It is a test of our command and control to bring three carrier strike groups together." "A tremendous training activity that we don't get to take part in very often," said Goodwin.

Valiant Shield 2006 exercises the U.S. military's ability to conduct robust, joint command and control operations and rapidly being together joint forces in response to any regional contingency. The exercise demonstrates the U.S. commitment to the Pacific region. Along with the Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group, USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) and USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) strike groups are also participating in the event.

Valiant Shield marks the first time three carrier strike groups have operated jointly in more than a decade.

During their visit, the guests toured the combat direction center, hangar bays, and bridge and watched flight operations from the flight deck.

"This was a great opportunity for this first-hand view of the professionalism of the crew of Lincoln," said Brig. Gen. Vikra Goswami of India's Joint Operations and Planning office, one of Lincoln's guests.

Photo By MCSN Geoffrey Lewis

Observers from Russia, India and Japan arrived aboard Lincoln on June 17 via a C-2A "Greyhound".

During their visit, guests attended a video telephone conference (VTC) with key ships of the exercise; USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63), USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76), and USS Blue Ridge (LCC 19) and Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet, Adm. Gary Roughead, to discuss the exercise and their visit.

Valiant Shield is a joint exercise showcasing the might of the U.S. Navy and the United States' commitment to the Pacific Region.

SUMMER

Continued from page 3

Drinking responsibly means NEVER driving after drinking. It means naming a designated driver. It also means preventing your shipmates from drinking and driving.

While alcohol does play a factor in many mishaps, it's not the only factor you need to consider. Some of the less-publicized things you need to do to be safe are:

Always wear a seatbelt and ensure everyone else in your vehicle wears theirs as well. Drive the speed limit. Get plenty of rest before a trip and don't try to drive too far in a single day.

Do not drive and use your cell phone or do other distracting activities. Maintain your vehicle. Respect road conditions.

In addition to driving safety, off-duty recreation mishaps are also high in the summer months. Here are a few tips to help keep you, your friends and your family safe:

Learn water survival skills. Don't leave camp fires unattended. Make sure your grills are in proper working order and never put your face over the grill.

Hydrate and don't over-exert yourself in the heat.

Stay out of storms, especially when lightening strikes are probable. Stretch before you exercise and don't overdo it.

Although most of what I have mentioned may seem like common sense, I know better. Each year the statistics prove common sense is often discarded. Why Sailors put themselves in risk is always a mystery. My hope is that each of you realizes life is short, accidents happen, and that our bodies are fragile. In an instant our lives can be shattered when we make a bad decision or discard safety.

Shipmates, have a great summer. Have fun with your friends and family. Go on vacation and have a good time – but above all, be safe. Think before you drink, plan before you drive, stretch before you work out, and try to keep in mind your limits. Your Navy needs each and every one of you.

Local News

VFA

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According to Newkirk, tanking missions are one of the most crucial assets of a carrier strike group.

Refueling other aircraft in flight allows an air wing to not only to fly longer missions, but also to operate in "blue water" areas, without support of land-based facilities and alternate airfields.

"We can go in the middle of the ocean and fly with no other landing options within thousands of miles. To do that safely, you need gas airborne so if a guy's having trouble getting aboard because of a pitching deck or whatever, he has enough fuel to make multiple attempts," said Newkirk.

For pilots and planners, the most significant training opportunity presented by Valiant Shield is the challenge of having so many planes in the air at once. The Kestrels and the Bounty Hunters will be sharing the skies with many different aircraft.

Also participating in the exercise are aircraft from the Kitty Hawk and Ronald Reagan Carrier Strike Groups, Marine Corps and Air Force, including B-2 Stealth Bombers from Whiteman Air Force Base in Missouri.

"There are a lot of people in the skies, so de-confliction is a real challenge," said Newkirk.

Navy aircraft from each air wing joined together with Air Force fighter escorts for an extended series of massive air strikes, according to Lt. Eric Peterson of VFA-137 aboard Lincoln.

"It is similar to flying sustained strike missions in the (Arabian) Gulf," said Peterson. He explained that the biggest challenge was control – the aircraft would fall under varying controllers, be they U.S. Air Force Airborne Warning And Control Systems (AWACS), Navy ships or E-2C "Haywkeyes". Aircraft will also be utilizing both Navy Super Hornets as tankers and Air Force KC-135 aircraft, making the coordination of events complex.

Valiant Shield is a joint exercise that demonstrates the U.S. military's ability to conduct robust, joint command-and-control operations and rapidly bring together joint forces in response to any regional contingency. The exercise also demonstrates the U.S. commitment to the Pacific region.

Valiant Shield marks the first time three carrier strike groups have operated jointly in the Pacific in more than a decade.

To learn more about Valiant Shield, visit the Web site at www.pacom.navy.mil.

Navy raises Tuition Assistance limits for Sailors

From NETC Public Affairs
Special *Penny Press*

To assist Sailor's in their pursuit of higher educational goals, as well as certifications and qualifications associated with their Navy career field, the U.S. Navy is raising the limits on Tuition Assistance (TA) available to all active duty members (officer and enlisted). They are now eligible for 100 percent of tuition costs, up to $250 per semester hour (SH), and up to 16 SH per fiscal year, an increase from the previous limit of 12 SH.

"Sailors in today's Navy need to be highly motivated and educated professionals," said Vice Admiral Kevin Moran, commander, Naval Education and Training Command. "The critical thinking skills developed through higher education are essential elements to the success of Sailors in the 21st century. It is our job to provide the opportunities for these highly valued and committed individuals to grow and develop in the Navy. All our programs must be responsive to this new Sailor, including Voluntary Education."

According to a Navy message sent to the Fleet June 9 (NAVADMIN 166/06), TA will remain at 16 SH throughout FY-07 and use will be closely monitored by NETC. If the rate of overall TA expenditures creates a danger of running out of funding prior to the end of the fiscal year, NETC may impose management controls and priorities to ensure that academic planning is not disrupted. Funding controls may include limiting TA requests over 12 SH to courses tied directly to degree completion.

"In addition to TA, the Navy College Program has two other significant programs to help Sailors earn a college degree," explained NETC Force Master Chief (SW/AW/SS/PJ) Mike McCalip.

"A visit to the local Navy College Office (NCO) is the first step for Sailors to learn what is available to them, from the wide variety of college level examinations, to the Navy College Program for Afloat Education (NCPACE). The Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES) Examination Program, the College Level Examination Program (CLEP) and the DANTES Subject Standardized Tests (DSST) program offer opportunities to help Sailors to take advantage of knowledge they already have and accelerate their progress toward degree completion."

McCalip said through these programs and others, Sailors can take tests in a variety of subjects and receive recommended college credit for each test successfully completed. There are also several college admission tests given through the NCOs, including the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT), the (ACT) Assessment Program. The Graduate Record Exam may be taken at certain testing sites off-base and

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Local News

Coordination, Control Vital To Carrier During Exercise

By MC1(SW) Joaquin Juatai
Penny Press staff

The everyday maneuvering of an aircraft carrier such as USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72) is difficult in the best conditions, but when you add the dynamic of moving two additional carrier strike groups through the same sea-space the challenge can be overwhelming.

Abraham Lincoln, USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) and USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) Carrier Strike Groups are operating in exactly those conditions during Exercise Valiant Shield, a joint exercise showcasing the capabilities of the United States armed services and their ability to rapidly bring together joint forces in response to any regional contingency.

According to Lt. Nichol Schine, a qualified officer of the deck (OOD) aboard Lincoln, the complex operational environment will be difficult, but not unknown to Lincoln's bridge watch-standing team.

"Within our own strike group, when we are operating at close quarters, you really have to pay attention to what's going on," said Schine.

"There are 15 ships operating together in the same sea space [during Valiant Shield]. It requires a lot of de-confliction".

OODs work in conjunction with operations specialists, who man the "Top" watch station immediately behind Lincoln's bridge. They are responsible for watching the sea-space in the immediate vicinity of the ship out to a distance of 50 nautical miles.

OODs also receive navigational advice from the ship's quartermasters (QM), who are responsible for making sure the ship is in the correct place at the correct times.

According to Quartermaster 3rd Class Kacey Carrol of Lincoln's navigation department, it's a big job.

"We'll make course and speed recommendations in order to keep Lincoln in our modified operating area," said Carrol.

"When we're operating in close quarters with a lot of other ships, the QM of the watch is very busy making log entries, making course and speed recommendations, and trying to make sure we stay where we're supposed to stay."

While the QMs help OODs keep the ship in the right position, there are always other considerations when maneuvering the ship, especially during flight operations. According to Schine, a major factor in keeping the carrier on a safe course is wind speed.

"Where the carrier goes is driven by the launch and recovery of aircraft," she said. In order to launch or recover, aircraft need around 20 knots of wind across the bow of the ship.

With three carriers in close maneuvering quarters, the challenge of avoiding an incident, according to Schine, is a big one.

"Keeping the communication paths open between the ships is critical," said Schine.

"The most important things to remember during the exercise are the safety of navigation and safety of flight."

Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group is currently under way on a Western Pacific deployment in support of maritime security operations and to conduct exercises with allies in the region.

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Local News

Lincoln Participates In Bone Marrow Registry Drive

MC3(AW) M. Jeremie Yoder
Penny Press staff

USS Abraham Lincoln's (CVN 72) Medical Department will partner with the C.W. Bill Young Marrow Donor Program to conduct a bone marrow registry drive June 28 - 29, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., on the aft mess decks.

Established by the Department of Defense, the C.W. Bill Young Marrow Donor Program, located in Kensington, Md., is managed by the Naval Medical Research Center. The purpose of the program is to increase the number of nationally registered personnel by providing medical supplies and logistic support for participating volunteers.

Through the years, the registration process has become increasingly easy. Today, participating individuals need only to fill out some basic identifying paperwork and have their mouth painlessly swabbed with a Q-tip; the process no longer requires a blood sample. The only disqualifying factors are active cancer and HIV.

According to the Public Affairs Office, Navy Region Southwest, nearly 30,000 people nationwide are waiting for a bone marrow donation, and, of that number, some 500 are from military families.

Conversely, less than 2 percent of registered individuals will ever be called upon to donate.

Lt. Kendall Lane, Lincoln's command sponsor for the program' said any individual who matches bone marrow types with an individual needing the donation, can decide not to donate.

She said that registration does not imply consent.

While the right to refuse to donate is always at the donor's discretion, the benefits of participating are readily apparent.

The two hour procedure, similar to having one's blood drawn, is conducted at Washington, D.C.'s George Washington University, and offers the donor a five day, all-expenses paid vacation with a friend, in our nation's capital.

Additionally, on board Lincoln and in conjunction with the registration drive, various prizes, including a trip to Hawaii, will be raffled off.

All participating individuals will be able to take part in a program that is painless, quick, and offers every participant the opportunity to be actively involved in saving the life of another.

For more information concerning the drive, contact the Medical Department at j-dial 7020.

School

Continued from page 6

DANTES will reimburse the Sailor for the cost of the test. The Sailor must personally fund the test administration fee.

NCPACE is an important program for Sailors afloat offering both academic skills and college (undergraduate and graduate) courses. McCalip said "NCPACE gives Sailors the opportunity to experience challenging education while on sea duty assignments preparing them for personal and professional growth."

In 2005, the Navy announced an educational initiative designed to encourage senior enlisted personnel to seek degrees to compliment their Navy training and experience. Beginning in fiscal year 2011, an associate degree or equivalent that is rating-relevant will be a prerequisite for advancement to senior chief.

"This initiative is part of the Navy's evolving strategy for our people and is an integral component of the Professional Military Education (PME) Continuum, which supports post-secondary education as a means of preparing Sailors for the highly technical 21st century," said McCalip. Navy NAVADMIN 203/05 outlines this senior enlisted education initiative. To be eligible for advancement to senior chief petty officer for the FY-11 selection board and beyond, Sailors must earn rating relevant associate degrees from an accredited institution. To review the list of rating relevant degree options from the Navy College Program Distance Learning Partnerships access the Sailor/Marine Online Academic Advisor (SMOLAA) via https://smart.navy.mil/smart/welcome.co or via Navy Knowledge Online at www.nko.navy.mil . "The Navy values education," said Moran. "Pursuing a college certificate or degree during off-duty time develops important characteristics such as time management and critical thinking. It enhances competencies in verbal, written and mathematical skills. Education is and will continue to be a key factor in the personal and professional development of our Sailors and Navy.

Local News

Shipmates

The strength of a warship lies in the hearts and hands of its crew

Photo By MCSN James Evans

Senior Chief Quartermaster (SW/AW) John Trail, right, and Quartermaster 3rd Class Kacey Carroll, left, use flashing light to communicate with the Oliver Hazard Perry-class Frigate USS Vandegrift (FFG-48) from the signal bridge.

Photo by SK1(SW/AW/SS) Richard Ward

USS Abraham Lincoln Safety Department's

Safety Sailor of the Week

YNSN Derrick Smithclark

While painting a bulkhead on the aft messdecks, Yeoman Derrick Smithclark, TAD to Supply's S-2 used the proper PPE (goggles, a respirator and nitrile gloves).

Since he was using a roller, he also had a cold work chit posted in the space.

Editor's Top 10

Signs you are taking a "Hollywood" Shower...

10. You've been in the water for so long that your entire body is a giant prune.

9. You've earned the nick-name "Aquaman."

8. In a giant evolutionary step, your lungs have turned to gills.

7. Capt. Card was still the CO when you stepped in the shower.

6. Cleanliness is next to Godliness after all.

5. You've gone through 12 bars of soap and 32 bottles of shampoo.

4. No matter how hard you wash, you just can't get clean enough for any type of inspection.

3. You start to think that you were a dolphin in a previous life.

2. You haven't been to work in two years.

1. Everyone's chanting your new name "@#$#%!!!"