



THE DASHPOT



Issue 66 Newsletter of the Association of Minemen Summer 2009



FROM THE PRESIDENT Robert Hart

Once again I had to be reminded that the deadline for this contribution to the DASHPOT is closing rapidly, and I must gather my thoughts. With the Reunion approaching, we all need to make our arrangements for travel and lodging. The Reunion Committee is hard at work to make this gathering another success, the Scholarship Committee has the applications for scholastic assistance, and a proposal from Past-President Toby Horn has been received by your Board of Directors, of which you will learn more at our general membership meeting at the Handlery Hotel.

On May 25, Connie and I were privileged to represent the American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary of the Department of South Carolina at the Memorial Day ceremonies at the National Cemetery in Florence. Several hundred veterans, their families, and friends attended to hear the speeches and stirring music, and to witness the laying of a wreath by nine Gold Star Mothers. The West Florence High School AFJROTC presented the POW/MIA honors table explaining the elements and their meanings on the table. The Mullins High School MCJROTC conducted a flag folding ceremony and explained the meaning of each of the thirteen folds. It was a very moving and rewarding experience.

I have received the names of the Mineman of the Year recipients for Shore, Sea, and Reserve duty. These outstanding Minemen will be recognized and honored at our Reunion dinner.

There is also a request, from the DASHPOT editor, to query the membership and select someone who is interested in learning the procedures and duties of Editor and assisting the present editor with a view to eventually taking

Continued on Page 3 left.

35th ANNUAL AOM REUNION SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA OCTOBER 16-18, 2009

You are ALL welcome to attend the 35th. Annual Association of Minemen (AOM) Reunion and be part of a most memorable event. We are putting together the final touches for our Reunion in San Diego, CA. I want to thank everyone for their assistance especially the 2007 Association of Minemen (AOM) Committee, our President, our Directors, as well as all the involved members and friends, for their assistance in our pulling together our Reunion. We are looking forward to our 33rd annual Association of Minemen (AOM) being held from 16 October to 18 October 2009 in San Diego, California at the Handlery Hotel and Resort. This hotel location was selected by the AOM Reunion Committee Team to house our reunion as well as most of our annual meetings, functions and activities. Our 1996, 2003 and 2007 AOM reunions were also held at this same location and received "WELL DONE" from all those in attendance.

The Handlery Hotel and Resort is located at 950 Hotel Circle North in San Diego only minutes from the San Diego International Airport (Lindbergh Field) in the heart of Mission Valley at Hotel Circle. The 33rd Association of Minemen Reunion is being planned and operated by a nucleus TEAM consisting of GARY CLELAND, W. C. HOLLOWAY, JERRY CHIPMAN,

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PRESIDENT
Robert N. Hart (07-10)
1237 Patrick Hwy
Hartsville, SC 29559-7759
843-383-0882

mncrnh@roadrunner

VICE PRESIDENT
Ron Swart (07-10)
2020 Tupelo Court
Panama City, FL 32405
850-215- 9649

swartre@knology.net

SECRETARY/TREASURER
Curtis T. Christian (01- Morte)
303 Cypress Shores Rd.
Eutawville, SC 29048
803-492-4245

curtischristian@hotmail.com

PAST PRESIDENT
Bill Johnson (07-10)
341 Shadynook St.
Keyport, NJ 07735-5140
732-583-8546

bjjohns@earthlink.net

PARLIMENTARIAN
Warren Savage
10330 Settle Rd.
Santee, CA 92071
619-258-1478

CHIEFSKIP@aol.com

CHAPLAIN
Derick S. Hartshorn (08-Morte)
1204 4th Street Drive, SE
Conover, NC 28613-1827
(828) 464-4981

DerickH@charter.net

HISTORIAN
Jim Cernick
2305 Westlake Circle S.
Ingleside, TX 78362
361-775-1219

BARKINPIG@clearwire.net

YORKTOWN MUSEUM

LEXINGTON MUSEUM
Ron Swart

swartre@knology.net



THE ASSOCIATION OF MINEMEN



DEDICATED TO SERVING THE U.S. NAVY MINE FORCE

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incorporated in the state of
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mission of perpetuating
knowledge of undersea mine
warfare and championing its
necessity as one of
America's first lines
of defense.



2009 REUNION COMMITTEE
Warren Savage
10330 Settle Rd.
Santee, CA 29071
619 258 1478
CHIEFSKIP@aol.com

SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE
William (Swede) Carlsen
1925 Pilgrim Ave.
Bronx, NY 10461
718-792-2298

mncsswedeom@worldnet.att.net



BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Gary L. Cleland (05-09)
12201 Sunrise Ct.
Poway, CA 92064-2865
858-748-3835

William Fortner (05-09)
1020 County Road 856.
Cedar Bluff, AL 35959
256-523-7111

mk27@httswireless.com

Robert W. Wilson (07-10)
10 Illinois Ave
Port Monmouth, NJ 07758-1108
732-787-4174

FAX 732-787-5519 (call first)
MNCUSNRET@att.net

Robert "Stan" Stancik (07-10)
151 Westminster Blvd.
Goose Creek, SC 29445-1879
843 797 2275

rfstan@yahoo.com

Gary Elliott (08-11)
446 Hemlock
Sequim, WA 98382-3771
360-683-9569

gngelliott@yahoo.com

Bob Reed (08-11)
626 Pritchard Rd.
Oil City, PA 16301
814 678 2977

AOM STOREKEEPER
Ron Swart
2020 Tupelo Court
Panama City, FL 32405
850-215- 9649

Mobile 850-276-1750
swartre@knology.net

DASHPOT EDITOR
Bill Fortner
1020 County Road 856
Cedar Bluff, AL 35959
256-523-7111

mk27@httswireless.com

WEBMASTER
Phil Dechene
pdechene@triad.rr.com
AOM HOMEPAGE

home.triad.rr.com/aom/index.htm





FROM THE WEBMASTER

PHIL DECHENE

Below are recently changed or added e-mails on the AOM WEB Site. There have been several inquiries about e-mail addresses on the AOM WEB Site that are bouncing. If you are listed on the site please check to see if your address is correct. If changes are required or you wish to be listed on the site e-mail me the information at pdechene@triad.rr.com. Phil DeChene AOM WEB Master

E-mail – Active Duty

03/02/09 - John Pennington, MN1 (SW); john.a.pennington@navy.mil

E-mail – Reservist

E-mail – Retired

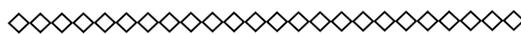
- 05/12/09 - David Badger MNC; dbadger@acsalaska.net
- 05/10/09 - Philip (Phil) Beckwith MNC; wyomnc1@yahoo.com
- 05/08/09 - David C. Barclay MNC; Barclay.David@att.net
- 05/08/09 - Karl P. Madsen MN1; karlpmadsen@gmail.com
- 04/09/09 - David W. Patton MNC; mncretired@hughes.net
- 04/04/09 - Henry Williams MNC; williams341263@bellsouth.net
- 02/17/09 - Mark P. Gorman MN1; mark.gorman@T-Mobile.com
- 02/09/09 - Dave Walker MNCM (SW); dwalker@presby.edu
- 01/30/09 - Patrick Haley MNC(SW); pat_9502@yahoo.com
- 12/24/08 - LCDR Tracey Kunkel (formerTy MN2); lcdrkunkel@yahoo.com

E-mail – Ex-Minemen

- 05/13/09 - Shirley L. Badger MN2 USNR; We3akbadgers@acsalaska.net
- 04/25/09 - Joddy Grider MN2 (SW); jgirder@cisco.com
- 04/19/09 - Marty (Liu) Randall MN2; dazekk@cox.net
- 03/18/09 - Eric Crews MN3; ecrews@wpceng.com
- 12/15/08 - Steffan Kichta MN3; laborgangkennels@hotmail.com
- 12/11/08 - Daniel J. Szarek MN3; danny.szarek@us.army.mil; dszarek@yahoo.com

E-Mail - Other Nations

03/02/09 - Jorgen Strange Lorenzen CDR; Royal Danish Navy; Roedovre, Denmark; Joergen@strangelorenzen.dk



AOM URL

Please remember that our AOM WEB Site is now: <http://minemen.org/>



Betty Wilson

Betty did quite well this afternoon. She went for a ANGIOPLASTY and two of her Arteries were found to be 85 and 90 % blocked. The Doctors inserted two stents and she had color in her face after the ordeal was over. She has an overnight stay and I will bring her home tomorrow morning. Now she has to wait for two more months before they will allow her to have her colostomy reversed.

Thanks for the Prayers

Willie Jane's Mom, Kate Jane's Mom, Kate

BINNACLE LIST

AOM MOST IMPROVED CADETS



On Thursday 07 May 2009 the Colleton County High School NJROTC Unit held it's 16th Annual Awards Night.

The criteria for the Association of Mineman medal award is that the recipient be:

- **In good academic standing**
- **Of high moral character**
- **Evidence a high order of loyalty to the NJROTC Unit, school and community**
- **Demonstrate exceptional potential for military leadership**
- **Be evaluated as the most improved Naval Science 1 cadet**

The recipients for school year 2008/2009 are from left to right C/SA Dominique Jenkins, C/SA Demetria Simmons and C/CPO Leah Glennon. Cadet Glennon was advanced to C/CPO a short time after receiving the award.

The Unit received the Unit Achievement Award for the effort put forth by the cadet this school year. This is the 12th consecutive year the Unit has been recognized for its outstanding academic/drill/color guard/orienteering/rifle/athletics and community service.

The Unit and myself would like to thank the AOM for its sponsorship of the AOM Medal Award.

V/R

**MNCS R. C. Spofford, Jr. USN (Ret)
Naval Science Instructor
Colleton County High School**

ASSOCIATION OF MINEMEN 2009 MINEMEN OF THE YEAR ANNOUNCEMENT

MINEMAN OF THE YEAR

UNCLASSIFIED//

MSGID/GENADMIN/NMAWC CORPUS CHRISTI TX/-/MAY// SUBJ/ASSOCIATION OF MINEMEN
2009 MINEMEN OF THE YEAR ANNOUNCEMENT /MINEMAN OF THE YEAR// POC/CHABOT
PP/MNCM(SW)/UNIT:NMAWC/-/TEL:DSN 861-4889// GENTEXT/REMARKS/

1. I TAKE GREAT PRIDE AND PLEASURE IN CONGRATULATING THE FOLLOWING SAILORS
IN BEING SELECTED AS ASSOCIATION OF MINEMAN, MINEMAN OF THE YEAR FOR 2009:

SEA- **MN1(SW) MICHAEL H. JUST JR** OF LCS MISSION PACKAGE DETACHMENT TWO

SHORE- **MN1(SW) MIKEAL L. NISSEN** OF MOBILE MINE ASSEMBLY UNIT ONE

RESERVE- **MN1 PATRICIA J. DIXON** OF NAVAL RESERVE MOBILE MINE ASSEMBLY
UNIT ONE 2.

THE SELECTION OF THESE OUTSTANDING PETTY OFFICERS WAS BASED UPON THE
HIGHEST SUSTAINED PERSONAL STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE,
TECHNICAL COMPETENCE, AND UNSURPASSED MILITARY BEARING. COMPETITION FOR
THIS YEAR'S SELECTION WAS PARTICULARLY KEEN AND THE MINEMAN SELECTED REP-
RESENT THE BEST IN A HIGHLY COMPETITIVE GROUP.

2. FOR PETTY OFFICER JUST, PETTY OFFICER NISSEN AND PETTY OFFICER DIXON,
YOUR DEDICATION TO DUTY AND PROFESSIONALISM ARE MOST IMPRESSIVE AND YOU
ALL SHOULD BE PROUD OF YOUR SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTIONS TO NMAWC, THE MINE
WARFARE COMMUNITY AND THE UNITED STATES NAVY.

3. I AM EQUALLY PROUD OF THE IMPRESSIVE LIST OF NOMINEES FOR THIS YEARS COM-
PETITION. I CONGRATULATE EACH OF THE OUTSTANDING MINEMAN FOR BEING SE-
LECTED TO REPRESENT THEIR COMMANDS.

4. ONCE AGAIN, CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OF YOU AND BEST WISHES FOR CONTINUED
SUCCESS.

*"Some people live an entire lifetime and wonder if
they have made a difference in the world.
Marines don't have that problem."*

Ronald Reagan

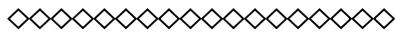


TAPS



Keiko Chipman

Keiko Chipman, wife of MNCS Gerald Chipman retired, passed away peacefully at Sharp Hospital in Chula Vista, CA. on 26 May 2009. They met in San Diego, CA and she was his bride for 37 years. Chip said, she will continue to be his beautiful companion for years to come. He still has two daughters, Tina and Lucille who will be reminding him of her.



George Dewey Hogge Jr.

WICOMICO - George Dewey Hogge Jr., age 76, died April 10, 2009 at his home surrounded by his loving family.

Born in Gloucester County, Dewey was a graduate of Achilles High School and a member of Providence Baptist Church. He was a past member of the Abingdon Ruritan Club and a member of the Achilles Masonic Lodge AF and AM, No. 281. In every sense of the word, Dewey was a native Gloucesterion. He joined the U.S. Air Force in 1951, served a tour in the

Philippines. During the transfer from the Philippines to MacDill in 1954, he married the love of his life, Patricia Ann Taylor. After his discharge from the Air Force, he was employed as a Radio Mechanic in the Mine Mechanism Branch of the Naval Mine Depot Ordnance Department. His first assignment was overhaul of the A5 Firing Mechanism. Subsequent assignments included overhaul of all the electronic, electrical and electromechanical mine mechanisms of that era. In 1957, he was promoted to Electronics Technician GS-9 in the Naval Mine Engineering Facility. He was promoted to GS-11 in 1966 and to GS-12 in 1968. In 1973, he became the Logistics Management Specialist and remained in that position until retirement in 1987. He was also a Mines Consultant with Vredenburg for three years. During his working career he received numerous awards to include Outstanding Performance, Superior Accomplishments and Beneficial Suggestion Awards and many Letters of Appreciation. He was so proud when he earned his Commercial Pilot License SEL, and flying was his favorite hobby. He also enjoyed fishing and woodworking. Dewey accomplished many things in his life span, but the most important to him were his wife, daughters and grandchildren. Being surrounded by his family gave him so much enjoyment and these were the happiest times of his life. His parents, Julia Nellie and George D. Hogge Sr; and a brother, Lawrence Hogge preceded him in death. He is survived by his devoted wife of 54 years, Patricia Hogge; three loving daughters, Jana Burnette and husband, Dave, Lisa White and husband, Bill, Paula Williams and husband, Gregory; eight grandchildren, each having a special place in his heart, Leslie Harris, Ryan Hogge, Phillip Longest, Dustin Longest, Jacob Hicks, Joshua Williams, Michael White and Megan White; a niece, Michelle Richmond and husband, Kevin; and his feline friend, Esroh. Funeral services officiated by the Rev. Dr. Richard Croxton, were held at 3 p.m. Monday, at Providence Baptist Church. Interment will follow in the church cemetery.

In Dewey's memory, contributions may be given to Providence Baptist Church, Building Fund, 3501 Providence Road, Hayes, VA 23072. Should you desire to send a card of condolence or call the family, the address is:

The George Dewey Hogge Family
 PO Box 73
 Wicomico, VA 23184-0073
 (804) 642-4392



Ann Horton

I regret to inform you that MNCM Paul Horton's wife Ann passed away peacefully at home in Reno, NV on 15 Jun 2009. Funeral arrangements are pending. Cards and letters can be

sent to:

Paul Horton
4465 Boca Way, #130
Reno, NV 89502

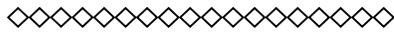
For further information please contact Jim Miller
858-695-1289

Jim



Eva McDonough

McDONOUGH, Eva - Eva Eleanor Yearwood McDonough, 71, of Ladson, wife of James F. McDonough, entered into eternal rest on April 16, 2009 at a local hospital. Born April 12, 1938, in Cornwall, NY to the late William Yearwood and Bernice Carrie Ostrander Wagner. Mrs. McDonough was a homemaker. Survivors include her husband, James F. McDonough of Ladson; two daughters, "Liz" Elizabeth Ann McKenna of Ladson, Susan Hatch of Goose Creek; two sons, Tim McDonough and John McDonough of Ladson; one brother, Fred Yearwood of Middletown, NY, seven grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. In lieu of flowers, donation can be made to the American Red Cross, 8085 Rivers Avenue, North Charleston, SC.



James Moriarity

Moriarity, James Michael (Mort) was released from active duty in the 80's he was an MN3. He was found deceased in his yard of the residence he lived in, he apparently died of a heart attack. This happened on 24 Nov. 2008. Mort had no next of kin in the area, his remains could not be released by the county coroner until it was determined who, what, when, and where he came from. MNC Wallick (ret.) handled the situation, and she provided Mort with a wake, and burial. This took place on the 1st of April 2009.

When I was talking with Wallick, she made a statement that I firmly believe fit Mort. Her statement was "Mort was Mort".

Richard Schommer reporting.

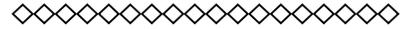


Nami Muessig

Kiyoko "Nami" Kamahara Muessig, 64, of Summerville, wife of John Edward Muessig passed away peacefully on Tuesday, April 21, 2009 at her residence. Mrs. Muessig was born November 20, 1944 in Kouchi, Shikoku Japan. She and her husband John were married in 1973 in Summerville and lived overseas during two

tours of his 30 years Naval service. They returned to Summerville in 1980. Surviving in addition to her husband is her daughter, Gina K. Muessig of Washington, DC. A memorial service was held on Friday, April 24, 2009 at 1:00 p.m. at Plantation Memorial Gardens Mausoleum Chapel.

In lieu of flowers, memorials, in memory of "Nami," may be made to: Hospice of Charleston, 3870 Leeds Avenue, Suite 101, North Charleston, SC 29405.



Kate, Jane's Mom

Thanks for all the prayers. Jane's Mom, Kate, passed away very quietly and peacefully last night at 10:45. She had a wonderful life of 95 years with many friends and family. Her home, children and gardening were her passion and her five grandchildren and six great-grandchildren were the loves of her life. She will be interred alongside her husband, Tom, in Newport News, VA at a private funeral service on Monday.

Toby sends.



The Editor's Corner

Between the monsoons and the cool days it seems that summer is just not ready to adhere to standard operating procedure. The garden is struggling along except for the twice-planted beans. I have more in the incubator. If they don't work, I will plant edible weeds.

As it was not wise to have only one person in the know about our financial system so it is with the Dashpot. At the moment, I am the only one who knows how to get it ready except for John Loonam and I don't think he could be talked into another run as editor. I would be thankful if someone would volunteer to learn the system and the software used. If Miz Dee kills me next week, you will be reading Marvel comics off the news stand. It takes several days to produce the finished product for printing and the web. Anyone with desktop publishing software can put the Dashpot together. Image manipulation needs to be done with software like PhotoShop which is not all that hard to learn. If you have any talent or desire in this area, let me know. It won't help you pick up chicks at the club, but it is a rewarding and satisfying endeavor. The pay ain't much though. :-)

Bill



USS PIONEER AND MCM CREW LEADER RESCUES THREE AT SEA

While transiting to her new port of San Diego from Ingleside, TX, MCM CREW LEADER, embarked in USS PIONEER (MCM 9), noted a small vessel at dusk just north of the Yucatan Peninsula on April 25th. As the bridge team watched the boat through binoculars, the occupants appeared to be waving a flare and then a strobe light, though it was difficult to see in the twilight. PIONEER changed course to investigate and OS3 Ciro Cardenas, one of the ship's linguists, used the topside 1MC to ask the vessel if they needed assistance. The question immediately sparked a great deal of activity onboard the boat, now identified as VENUS, with the occupants waving clothing and other items in response.

PIONEER launched her RHIB in heavy seas and 25 knot winds to investigate further and after taking minor measures to reduce any threat to the ship EN1 Jose Hernandez, another linguist, went aboard VENUS to determine that her engine was beyond repair. Additionally the three occupants did not have a radio and had been without food. The VENUS had left port at 0600 the previous day and was expected to return that same evening when the engine had died. By the time PIONEER located the boat it had drifted 20 miles from its initial position, was over 35 miles from land, and had already been reported as overdue.

With communications assistance from USS DEVASTATOR (MCM 6), ET2 Caesar Sosa, another PIONEER linguist, was able to contact the Mexican Coast Guard through a satellite phone and arrange for assistance for the VENUS. In the meantime PIONEER's Culinary Specialists transferred water and sandwiches to the grateful occupants. A true all-hands effort, the entire crew was engaged in assisting the vessel by all possible means including manning signal lights, conducting small boat operations, and providing engineering expertise. Finally at 0130 the Mexican ship VERA CRUZ arrived on the scene and PIONEER relinquished the rescue effort and regained her track toward Cozumel.

LCDR Mark Stefanik, Commanding Officer of USS PIONEER, stated, "I am exceptionally proud of the way my crew addressed this situation with compassion and their usual "can-do" attitude. From LTJG Gillette's (the Officer of the Deck) first report to the time we were relieved by VERA CRUZ the entire MCM CREW LEADER team thought outside the box and showed great determination despite the weather and long hours. I am glad we could help and I am sure there are some happy and relieved families ready to welcome the VENUS' occupants home."



Over the Tajirail

Tales from Long Beach
by Don Jones

My tours of duty at the Drill Mine Preparation Facility (DMPF) and MOMAUPAC, Long Beach, CA, were interesting and scary-funny at times. With COMINEPAC just down the street, you didn't know what off-the-wall thing you would be doing each day, where you would be going, or what out of the ordinary thing would happen.

SHORTEST ASSIGNMENT?: One morning at the front office, I saw a glum-looking MN3 report in from Japan and within 30 minutes or so the lucky guy had been offered and gladly accepted transfer orders back to Japan. I'm not sure why he got a crack at this assignment before anyone else knew about it. Quickie-orders like that were usually offered-up at quarters or at a gathering of the rates required.

WHEN THINGS WENT BANG: One evening the duty-section off-loaded a truckload of recovered Mk 49 drill mines inside the old aircraft hangar. A few hours later, the quietude of the relic hangar was shattered by a very loud bang and the sound of something metallic that ricocheted off the ceiling and clattered to the concrete deck. Apparently, no one had read the "Pass-down Log" which probably read, "When the recovered Mk 49 drill mines are returned, check to make sure all the clock-delayed recovery flares have been fired or rendered inoperable."

Mexican/Hispanic fishermen, loved the drifters from Long Beach mine plants that ended up South of the Border. A stencil on the mine case indicated that there was a \$50 (U. S.) reward for their safe return.

One day, my boss asked me to help him actuate ten Mk 66 parachute control units so they could be used for training by the Air Force. The Mk 66 used a thermal battery to fire an explosive fitting that opened the parachute at a preset altitude or after a short time-delay. We were a little leery of activating the thermal batteries, so we took the control units inside the detonator test & installation cage. Face shields and safety goggles were plentiful, but neither of us thought it necessary to actually use them. My partner wore thick glasses so his eyes were somewhat protected as he placed the first control unit, battery down, into the vise and pulled the pin. The round battery got hot enough to melt the solder holding the quarter-sized metal bottom plate in position. After activating the batteries on units 1 through 9 (one at a time), my partner turned the Mk 66s upside down and placed them on the workbench without incident. But on the last one, when he turned the unit upside down there was a loud bang when the thermal battery exploded. I thought he would be injured as his head and shoulders disappeared in a cloud of thick, white smoke and smoldering confetti-like material. I heard the round, metal bottom-plate bounce off the overhead and drop back onto the workbench. What caused that particular battery to explode & not the others was a mystery. We figured the melted solder allowed the high pressure, built-up by the very hot materials inside the battery, to straighten out the narrow metal rim of the battery forcing the bottom-plate skyward at high-speed.

Since I could transport explosives, I was often tasked to drive a 6X6 truck to Seal Beach to pick up small boxes of detonators and explosive-fittings and return them to DMPF by a slow route off the main thoroughfares. One sunny morning when faced with one of those onerous trips to Seal Beach, I called the Boat Pool and asked if I could use one of their LCMs to make the trip. I had no problems, coming or going. However, a few weeks later when a buddy set out by LCM to Seal Beach he encountered a dense fog-bank. Instead of returning to the Boat Pool to wait-out the fog problem, he kept going, possibly in circles, until several hours later he ran out of fuel. After the fog lifted someone spotted the LCM and it was towed back to the Boat Pool. I think that was the end of the LCM trips to Seal Beach.

DMPF issued close to a thousand drill mines each year. Surface plants were usually made by the YFU (an LCU fitted with mine rails). On one of these surface plants, everyone was amazed when a large bottom mine popped back to the surface like a cork. The charge case was empty, so it had to be recovered and returned to the shop.

One day when a dozen or so recovered bottom mines were sitting on the hangar deck, someone noticed that one was leaking water from a mysterious, small hole in the mine case. The 3/8-inch diameter hole appeared to have been "burned" through the metal case. At first, we thought lightning may have struck the mine. Then I theorized that an MSO's minesweeping electrode (short leg) may have been dragging along the bottom and touching the mine case when it was zapped with up to 7,500-amperes. What do you think happened?

One day when an 18-wheeler was transporting a load of drill mines down Route-5, another trucker keyed his CB-mike while passing and a flare was ejected from one of the drill mines. Up until that moment we didn't know that our drill mines had a RADHAZ problem. WO Putnam asked me to assist in designing an aluminum foil shield for the drill kit. We plugged every orifice with aluminum foil and cut a circular wooden disk on which we stapled aluminum foil for the

aft end of the drill kit. Putnam came up with an ingenious way to test “our” design. We put a small transistor radio that worked fine before putting it inside the drill kit. A thin string attached to the tuning dial allowed us to make sure we got absolutely no reception from the radio. I left the project before it was tested “on the road.”

DAMN THE MK 57 MINES, FULL SPEED AHEAD

Big problems encountered during the YFU’s recovery of inert Mk 57 mines, caused DMPF to make some “can-do-spirited” but very bad decisions. After recovering the buoyant mine case, the YFU’s crew lost some of the 900-lb. anchors due to them being dragged along the sea floor on a thin and very long steel cable. The yucky mercury-based anti-fouling compound on the cable created a messy and very hazardous problem for all concerned. The “solution” was to take the anchors out beforehand and cut off 800-ft. of the offending cable and dispose of it into the “metal disposal bin”. When the much wiser “metal bin” people refused to take the stuff, a big hole was hastily dug and the mercury compound-coated cable was buried.

Minemen were called onto the thick red carpets when an inert Mk 57’s case & anchor separation occurred inside the torpedo tube right before it was launched by a U. S. submarine. The anchor did a “Newton” and headed for the bottom while the buoyant mine case just had to rise up in time to have the sub’s bow planes snag the mooring cable. How in the world did this happen, one might ask?

While loading the Mk 57 into the torpedo tube, without an MN looking-on, a TM pulled the safety pins too soon and the spring-loaded caps on the aft-mounted “HAS” forced the safety bar off. This allowed the “locking pawls” inside the caps to drop freeing the pistons to move as soon as hydrostatic pressure was applied. The TMs pulled the mine out and (without noticing that the pawls were lowered) reinstalled the safety bar over the top of the HAS’s caps. When the torpedo tube was flooded the HAS started the 1-hour setting on the delay mooring clock. After several time-consuming practice runs over “the drop zone” the Mk 57 was launched and the “unheard of before” happened. Luckily for the MNs on the red carpet, a razor-sharp MN in the sub’s galley overheard the TMs discussing the problem they had loading the Mk 57. Henceforth, black marks on the Mk 57’s explosive section indicated that the mine should be inserted up to that point before pulling the safety pins.

HARD TO HIT MK 6’s

One day, off Coronado, the YFU planted 10 Mk 6 Mod 14 drill mines (2.5-ft.case depth) then we tried to hit the mines with the YFU. The mine cases were painted white with red stripes so they would be easy to spot. The YFU’s skipper (E-6) had a hard time seeing “dead ahead” mines because of the bow ramp. I climbed up the bow ramp and pointed to the mines when we got close. Try as we might after an hour of violent maneuvering we still hadn’t scored a hit on any of the mines. The current was just strong enough to cause the mines to “dip” to a depth a little deeper than the YFU’s draft. However, when the current slackened a bit, the skipper came up with a good idea. He maneuvered down-current of the mine line and let the current and wind carry the YFU broadside to the mine line. We popped five “special” mine detonators on the first pass. An acoustic detection device (Queen gear; possibly because of the shape of the device) lowered over the side indicated mine fires. The special detonators didn’t really explode they just popped the cap off the end. For safety reasons, the same-type detonators were used on the Mk 6 Mod 15 drill mines where divers had to go down to 100-ft. and pull on one of the switch horns with at least 11-lbs. of force to get an actuation.

Don Jones, MNMCM, USN Retired, jodo496usn@aol.com, Phone: 931-598-0864

Lost Ring

While stationed in SC, I found some rings with metal detectors at Short Stay.

Found: Rings lost at Short Stay. Thoroughly describe the lost ring as to type, initials, color, type metal, type stone, school, service/unit, etc. If I have it in my collection, I'll return it to you.

E-mail: jodo496usn@aol.com

Don Jones

Po Box 36

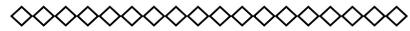
Sherwood, TN 37376-0036



bership coming your way. Thanks to Swede Carlsen, I finally gave one away. Check's in the mail Curtis.

Push AOM in the NEW school again, build it in the Mineshops, and sail it in the fleet. Don't stop the flow. Give AOM memberships as an award incentive, it's easy, I STILL have 11 FREE 1-year memberships for ANY new members who just contact me at barkinpig@aol.com. Until next time, take care, DTTAFSA, BPIG sends

From the Labyrinth of the Historian



Howdy AOM and Hello MW. Eddy Cochrane was right, and it's about time it's here, there ain't no cure. Summer, and time to go fishing. When you come back in from relaxing, please don't forget about all the Vets past and present that made freedom possible, including yourselves. Have a beer. Take the extra time to teach the younger kids whenever you can about your service and some military history, some nice "Sea stories"; they certainly aren't learning it in most schools. After that bit of patriotism and making sure your NRA membership is up to date, go through your pile of junk and send it to me. One day we may have one national museum just for Mineman. It is all scattered now, probably always will be. Sure would be nice to be able to travel to one place to see it all, it's possible, but not without all of your help.



I would like to give a hearty thanks to one of our oldest Mineman, if not thee oldest. 96 years old, MNC Lewis J. Dickerson, USN, Ret. He enlisted in 1934 and retired from Fleet Reserve in 1965. He was one of the early MNC's in 1952, and he had a long and rewarding naval career. Lewis sent me some old MW booklets and Dashpots, a whole pack of information that we'll be able to use throughout the years to come. Thank you for your service; and the time you took to contribute to the cause. It was an honor and pleasure to talk to you, and may the great Watch Bill list your name for many more years to come.



I'm going to try and send some WW2 pics of the 20th AF, fire bombing miners, these haven't ever been published anywhere. Look for them. I've been having trouble with email in and out, and phone lately, but please keep trying. You can reach me at the below address sometimes, or barkinpig@clearwire.net sometimes, or 361-775-1219 occasionally, and hopefully I can get it all corrected and back to normal.



Congratulations to MN2 Bob O'Keeffe, onetime sailor of the USS Fraser, DM24, one year mem-

Patriots Point might cut exhibits. Museum may focus mostly on Yorktown, lose some vessels

BY ALLYSON BIRD (CONTACT) The Post and Courier Wednesday, April 29, 2009

Financially strapped Patriots Point should cut loose as many as three of its four warships and focus its limited resources on the primary draw, the aircraft carrier Yorktown, Chairman John Hagerty said at a board meeting Tuesday. The aircraft carrier Yorktown is one of four museum vessels berthed at Patriots Point. The struggling attraction might have to reduce the number of exhibits it has to maintain. Its development authority is seeking a long-term plan to carry it into the future. "We have ships 25 years old and no structure in our funding to maintain them," Hagerty said. "That leads to some very difficult choices."

Over the past several months, the attraction's dire situation became increasingly clear: All four ships need repairs, and the Patriots Point Development Authority does not have the necessary money or any plan for how to get it. Experts gave the destroyer Laffey, known in World War II as "The Ship that Would Not Die," a year before the hundreds of holes in the hull sink it. Hagerty pointed out that the Laffey Foundation contributed some \$30,000 but that short-term costs exceed \$300,000 and long-term needs extend into the millions. "Can you imagine how we have blown our trust if she sinks?" Hagerty said. Instead, he told the authority, "Pick what we can do and do it right. Don't ever be in this position again." Other board members questioned the idea of turning a naval museum into a single-ship attraction, and the group decided to wait until its May meeting to take action. Officials reviewed the status of each ship. The submarine Clamagore might eventually head to a land-side exhibit, while the cutter Ingham could move to the care of a Coast Guard group in Florida. Hagerty hopes to focus resources on building an enclosure around the Yorktown, another deteriorating vessel. It carries onboard environmentally hazardous fuel, and also Patriots Point's crown jewel: the Congressional Medal of Honor Museum.

"I'm reading the writing on the wall, and I think we need to be realistic," Hagerty said. "I don't think we're going to have the ability to afford any more than Yorktown." Patriots Point Operations Director Bob Howard said the authority faces three options with the Laffey. Turning it into an artificial reef proves cheapest. The agency also could complete the Laffey's renovation if the money becomes available, or it could make minimal repairs to stabilize the ship. Howard said he is discussing the destroyer's repairs with five businesses, including two local companies, and her environmental threat with the state Department of Natural Resources, the Coast Guard and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. He said he should have an engineer's report on the ship by the end of next week.

The authority voted Tuesday to put out a request for professional services to develop a master plan for its waterfront property. The agency plans to pay the winning bidder \$250,000 from its reserves. Hagerty said state and federal repair money will never materialize as long as Patriots Point lacks a clearly defined, long-term plan. The attraction received a \$20 million funding request from U.S. Rep. Henry Brown, R-S.C., and a favorable reception from the state treasurer's office for potential emergency funding - but neither translates into immediate cash. "We need to do this so badly now," Hagerty said. "We need to get the right number to the people who are going to fund us."

Reach Allyson Bird at 937-5594 or abird@postandcourier.com.

Gun Clock



From a retired US Navy CPO (E-9), name and address unknown...

As a boy, I went aboard the WW I battleship U.S.S. Texas, which is now a museum near Galveston. A few days ago, I came into possession of a photo of the Texas taken in 1919. You'll note at the top of the superstructure, where the tower framework begins, is a clock with only ten numerals, rather than the normal 12. I'd wondered why the clock had only 10 numbers and tonight I found out why.

Prior to WW II, the practice was for battleships to line up, bow to stern, and fire their guns broadside at a common target. These "clocks" were actually indicators of range. When a battleship found the range to the target, it would set its range clocks--one on the front of the superstructure and one on the aft. One hand indicated ten thousands of yards and the other hand indicated thousands of yards, so if both hands were set at 1, the clock was showing that the range to the target was 11,000 yards.

Each ship would use binoculars to read its neighbor's clock and set its clocks to match the clock of the ship which had found the range. In that manner, prior to the use of radio, the range information was silently passed down the line of ships and all ships could set their guns to fire the same distance.

By the time that the Texas was put up as a museum at the San Jacinto battlefield, the range clock had been removed because the Navy no longer needed it. But I had that photo which made me curious and now we know a little something new, and old.

Don Decrona sends.

Fleet News

GREETINGS FROM THE DETAILER'S DESK



To all Mineman past and present!

For those of you that don't know me I am MNC (SW/AW) Chad Q. Payne. We are in the middle of executing our BRAC move from Ingleside to San Diego, for all you "seasoned" Minemen past and present you may remember the Charleston BRAC move! There are challenges associated with these moves that require us to be engaged and flexible and look out for our shipmates and help where we can!

As most of you know we are undermanned at the E-4 and below pay grades. With this being said when you are up for your shore tour, all E-5 and above should consider going to MWTC to be part of the solution and serve in a high visibility sailorization billet with great advancement opportunities. There are not many opportunities outside of the Mineman rate like recruiting (most common request to stay in TX, please accept that we are leaving and not coming back, prepare accordingly) and RDC. These options are few and have decreased as we have several billets that are within the rate that are going unfilled due to our current manning condition. There have also been several senior Mineman (Chief Petty Officer and above) that have submitted Fleet Reserve requests as a result of BRAC or so it seems due to the timing. This has created a lot of gaps that need to be filled as soon as possible.

Please ensure members going to billets understand that there may be screening requirements, check the appropriate MILPERSMAN to ensure the member is qualified before applying for or requesting a billet! Use your CCC as they are experts in screening requirements and the MILPERSMAN. This will alleviate a lot of lag time and if a member is not screened properly it wastes PCS funds that could be used to transfer other sailors, it also creates unwanted gaps that require months to fill!

Take care, sail safe and good fishing and golfing to all the retired Mineman!

MNC (SW/AW) Payne, chad
E-mail: chad.payne@navy.mil
DSN: 882-3760, COMM: 901-874-3760

Greetings and Salutations from Mobile Mine Assem- bly Group Central Drill Site (MOMAG CDS)

by MN1 Abel Gonzalez



our LCPO, MNC(SW) Curtis Stanley; myself, MN1(SW) Abel Gonzalez; and, MN2(SW) Brad Branum. We are located onboard NAS JRB in the great city of Fort Worth, Texas. Our mission here is to provide a centralized location for all SELRES Mineman; we provide the latest training for shipboard and mine shop procedures, administrative support and, exportable training to all NR MOMAUs from Seal Beach, CA to Colts Neck, NJ. MOMAG CDS was created in 1999 from a retired "hush house" previously used for testing B-52 engines. With the steadfast devotion, pride, and professional trades from a large group of dedicated Minemen, the retired test facility was converted into a fully functional mine training facility. Currently, MOMAG CDS is gearing up for the FY09 Reserve Mineman "A" School and Mine Conference, which will be hosted by NR MOMAU 12 DET 2 Austin. So if you are a Mineman: active, reserve, retired, or not, and will be in the Fort Worth area on July 25th, please come down and visit - see some old shipmates and meet some new ones!

Many active duty Minemen have only heard whispers of MOMAG CDS and we like it that way; the best kept secret in the Mine Force. We have three active duty Sailors consisting of

Please contact me to RSVP for the outing on July 25th: MN1(SW) Abel Gonzalez, 817-782-6060, abel.gonzalez@navy.mil



Yesterday I knew nothing...today I know that.



COMOMAG

MNCS Michael W. Cooley

COMOMAG recently bid farewell to LCDR Ashton after 26 years of honorable service with a traditional retirement ceremony held 22 May 2009. He served as Chief Staff Officer for Commander, Mobile Mine Assembly Group from September 2007 to May 2009. We would also like to bid farewell to LT Stephanie Cowart, SK1 Hylton, and SK2 Nunez who recently transferred to new and exciting assignments. We wish them all fair winds and following seas.



LCDR Ashton's Farewell Address



LCDR Ashton goes ashore.

The Service Mines Division (N31) has been busy working behind the lines to help support the MOMAU's and attended several conferences in support of improvements to the Mine Force. First was a PQS review which included all of the mine warfare PQS manuals in the fleet. The Underwater Mine Assembly Upgrade and the Versatile Exercise Mine System (VEMS) PQS manuals were both re-worked and updated during this review by MN1 Reinhart, MNC Sanchez, and MNC Stork. For our calibration techs out there, we also attended the 2009 TMDE conference in San Diego, CA recently. The TMDE conference put out a lot of good information regarding support programs to help obtain replacement equipment for our labs. They also discussed a new program the fleet will soon be receiving called METBENCH. METBENCH will help the labs by reducing the amount of time required to complete the paperwork. Finally, we would like to publicly congratulate MOMAU One on their outstanding MRCI and all of the MOMAU's for their hard work and dedication in supporting Service Mine Readiness.

The Exercise/Training Division (N32) has been supporting numerous MIW training events around the globe and RTD&E initiatives here close to home. Mr. Ed Simmons participated in the South Korean exercise Foal Eagle in late March with MOMAU TEN personnel, assisting with the mine lay aboard the ROK vessel WONSON while MNC Sanchez augmented the KEY RESOLVE battle staff with MNCM Kiper. Other 3rd quarter exercises supported include Arabian Gauntlet (Unit 11), Nautical Union (Unit 10), USS NIMITZ/CVW-11 CTX 09-1 (Unit 1), a VP-30 P-3 MINEX 09-1 (Unit 11), and the EODMU FIVE MRCI (Unit 1). RTD&E programs sup-

ported include AUTEK CSSQT (Unit 11), EMNS Testing (Unit 15), and Sea Lion MMS Testing (Units 11/15).



ROK Wonson



Wonson Loadout

MNC Brian Hawes completed the VEMS Afloat and VEM Ashore courses at Mine Warfare Training Center and will be our next VEMS SME replacing MNC(SW) Jeff Stork who is scheduled to retire around the first of the year.

Additionally, MNCS Cooley participated in the latest Mineman Advancement Exam Development Conference (AEDC) at the Navy Advancement Center in Pensacola, FL held in early April. He, along with 5 other MN SMEs from the fleet, including MNCS Don Peterson and MNC Ronnie Auman from ATG San Diego, MNC James Scott and MNC Mani Cantu from ATG Ingleside, and MNC Luis Ortiz from the LCS MIW DET reviewed the entire test bank to ensure all questions were accurate and relevant and wrote advancement exams for the next 2 years.

AWARDS and RECOGNITION:

Congratulations to MNCS Darrell Bostic, MNCS Ollie Collins, and MNCM Allen Alt for their selections to Senior Chief and Master Chief Petty Officer. Bravo Zulu to all the other advancements off the March exam cycle also! We had a lot of advancements throughout MOMAG and would like to say well done to all! Additionally,

our very own SK1 Hylton was recently selected for commission under the LDO program. He will make a great Naval Officer. Other awardees this past quarter include:

Sailor of the Quarter 1Q09 - MN1(SW) Kirk Myers

LCDR Andrew J. Ashton – Meritorious Service Medal

LT Stephanie Cowart – Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal

MNC(SW) Darrell Bostic – Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal

SK1(SW) Hensley Hylton – Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal

SK1(SW) Gabriel Nunez – Navy Achievement Medal

FAREWELL:

LCDR Andrew J. Ashton – Retirement

LT Stephanie Cowart – USS SAN JACINTO (CG 56)

SK1(SW) Henley Hylton – Student Officer Training Command

SK2(SW) Gabriel Nunez – COMNAVAIRPAC (Sea Component)



**MOMAU ONE
SEAL BEACH, CA**

by LT D. W. Martinez

CO's CORNER: Greetings from sunny Seal Beach! We've had a busy time with MRCI, Change of Command and several mine exercises.

MOMAU ONE Sailors are very excited. We've completed our MRCI with astounding results and are looking forward to a great summer.

HAILS & FAREWELLS: Fare winds and following seas to LT Bodine who transferred to USS ENTERPRISE (CVN 65) and GM2(SW) Ralston who transferred to Naval Hospital, Camp Pend-

leton. We recently welcomed aboard MN3(SW) Lopez from Navy Expeditionary Guard Battalion, Guantanamo Bay.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION: We are very proud to announce that MN1(SW/SC) Mikael Nissen was selected as Mineman of the Year 2009 (shore command). Congratulations to MN1(SW) Nichols, MN1(SW/SC) Merry, MN1 Robinson, MN2(SW) Ray, MN2(SW) Lopez, MN3 Curry, MN3 McKelvin and MN3 Stansbury. Also, congratulations to YN1(SW/AW) Thomas on her selection as Sailor of the Quarter and MN3 Curry on her selection as Junior Sailor of the Quarter.



MN1(SW/SC) Mikael Nissen Mineman of the Year 2009 (shore command) selectee.

ON THE HORIZON: Retirement ceremonies for MNC(SW) Wolfe and MNC(SW) Epton, MOMAU Fifteen relocation and preparations for September 2009 exam cycle.



MN1(SW/SC) Mikael Nissen



MOMAU TEN KADENA, JA

by MN1(SS) Frank Waller

This third quarter of fiscal year 2009 has witnessed some major events for us here at MOMAU Ten. We'll start off, as usual, with our hails and farewells. Team Ten had no farewells this quarter, but we would like to welcome in our newest arrival, MN2 Andrea Krouse who is joining Team Ten after spending 2 years at unit 12 in Misawa, Japan.

Team Ten sent one MAT team out this quarter. Their job was to board and help prepare the USS George Washington, CVN-73, to recertify in mine handling after an extensive dry dock repair period. The team spent a week onboard, and the George Washington crew couldn't have been more pleased with the exceptional training Team Ten offered them. The efforts of both Team Ten, and especially the hard work of the sailors aboard George Washington, aided the crew in being fully recertified in handling and building mines!

Back at the shop Team Ten has been aggressively preparing for 4th quarter 09's extensive exercise schedule. With 4 exercises already



Alt family does pinning honors.

slated, Team Ten has used the time here in quarter 3 to prep assets as well as personnel for the upcoming trips.



IT2 William Bilbrey



MN3 Camille Spain



MN3 Jason Purt



MN2 Jacob Knarr

Some recent successes to pass on from here at MOMAU Ten, as 5 sailors moved on to their next paygrade. Congratulations to newly frocked MN2 Jacob Knarr, IT2 William Bilbrey, MN3 Jason Purt, MN3 Camille Spain, and MN3 Kourtney Mixon. Job very well done!



MN3 Kourtney Mixon



MOMAU ELEVEN GOOSE CREEK, SC

by MNCS Shawn B. Barker

Greetings from the world's largest, most productive mine shop! It has been an extremely exciting and busy time here at MOMAU ELEVEN.

Team ELEVEN has been extremely busy this year once again supporting ET missions across the country as well as maintaining the world's largest Service Mine Stock. Team ELEVEN provided numerous ET shapes in support of four Multi-Service, Multi-Nation exercises.

MOMAU ELEVEN EXPANSION

The consolidation with Naval Munitions Command Detachment Charleston is right around the corner and Team ELEVEN has been extremely busy converting our new Explosive Operation Building. This multi-million dollar project will facilitate all of our explosive operations as well as our MK 65/67 buildups. We plan to start operations in early June.



MN1(SW) Hugh Mitchell and MN2(SW) Robert Lichford plan for the upcoming expansion.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

MOMAU ELEVEN showed its compassion for the community once again this quarter with a

great effort from our Team. One of our best and brightest Sailors, MN3 Nicole Primeaux, took the time to sponsor Ft. Dorchester Elementary during its annual PACT Testing. During this visit she as well as several other Sailors from MOMAU spent over 40 hours assisting in the proctoring of this exam.

WELCOME HOME

TEAM MOMAU would like to extend a hearty welcome home to MN1(SW) Ralph Maldonado. He safely returned home from a one year IA tour in Iraq. Our best wishes go out to him and his family.

JOB WELL DONE

Thanks are in order to the support provided by all NNPTC students. Not only did they provide our refurbishment process support, they also showed a willingness to learn. Given one day to train under the tutelage of MNCS(SW) Shawn Barker, these students proved to us that they could assembly Exercise and Training Mines with the best of them. Seven NNPTC students who had never touched a mine before squared off against four of our best and brightest. The battle was fought long and hard by both sides with Team MOMAU narrowly grasping the victory. Thank you all for the hard work, dedication and excitement.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Bravo Zulu and congratulations to the following Sailors:

ADVANCEMENT

MN1(SW) Alexis Sanchez
MN1(SW) Eric Zenero
SK1(SW/AW) Ladetrick Smith
MN2(SW) Miguel Alvarez
MN2(SW) Steven Kirkland
MN2(SW) Douglas Reynolds
IT3 Deshante Key

NAVY AND MARINE CORPS COMMENDATION MEDAL

CWO2 Travis Meyer

NAVY AND MARINE CORPS ACHIEVEMENT MEDAL

SK1(SW/AW) Penny Drouse
IT2(SW) Damien Gross

Senior Sailor of the Quarter: MN1(SW) Eric Gammersheimer
Junior Sailor of the Quarter: MN2(SW) Justin Tasse
Blue Jacket of the Quarter: YNSN Gwendolyn Champe

DEPARTURES

CWO2 Travis Meyer
SK1(SW/AW) Penny Drouse
IT2(SW) Damien Gross



IT2 Gross presents CW02 Travis Meyer with a departing gift.

ARRIVALS

MNC(SW) Paul Snyder
MNC(SW) Robert Allard
MN2(SW) William Holbrook
MN3(SW) Sergio Rojas
MN3(SW) Douglas Reynolds
MN3 Matthew Hamm



NAVY MUNITIONS COMMAND EAST ASIA DIVISION UNIT MISAWA

by MN2(SW) Barrows

Greetings from Misawa, Japan. We had some exciting winter months that included snow, snow and more snow. Snowboarding, skiing and building snowmen were just a few things we were able to do. While the shop has been very busy with training and maintenance, everyone looks forward to the summer months.

The critical days of summer are upon us and personnel have already taken positive steps to prepare for it. Personnel who live on base, don't have air conditioning. But, we have the next best thing. Fans, fans and more fans. Softball season begins in June and we plan on taking home first place. If we don't win first place, at least we had the best uniforms. That is no lie. Our jerseys are enough to make professional baseball teams jealous.

American Day is just around the corner and our shop is very excited to be a part of this great festival. We have personnel helping out with the parade, carnival games and coordinating events. The community in Misawa is so excited



for this annual two day event. There is food, games and so much more. This is a great way to show the Japanese locals are customs and traditions as Americans.

A trip to Mt. Fuji is in the works and possibly a Sendai baseball game. If you haven't been to a Japanese baseball game, you are missing out on an awesome experience. Although we have a lot of fun events planned, we are still focused on the merger

The merger has hit full throttle and there is no slowing down. Personnel have worked together very well in order to ensure a smooth transition from two commands to one. There have been many lessons learned during this process. During the merger, we conducted a joint build that included torpedoes and mines. The training opportunities and experiences are important in making sure this merger goes smoothly.

DEPARTURES

AO1(AW/SW) Cruz
SK1(SW) Powell
YN1(SW) Durnell
MN2 Krouse

ADVANCEMENTS

MNCS(SW) Collins
A01(AW) Burden
MN1(SW) Montalvo
MN1(AW) Stanley
MN1(SW) Stratford
MN3 Defrancisco
MN3 Valdez

AWARDS

AO1(AW) Allen – SSOQ
AO2(AW) Nistal – JSOQ
YN1(SW) Durnell - NMCCM



MOMAU FIFTEEN INGLESIDE, TEXAS

by MNSN Megan C. Shimonek

MOMAU fifteen has been busy preparing for our upcoming move to California but like always we still find time to help out our community. This quarter we have had several volunteer community events; MOMAU 15 has participated in a highway trash cleanup, The American Red Cross Bash 2009, Windfest, and NJROTC at Aransas Pass High School which helped them move onto nationals in Florida where they placed first. Congratulations on a job well done!

The Production Department has been hard at work completing the refurbishment of all CO-

MOMAG and Mine Warfare Training Center's display and training shapes. They have completed the Corpus Christi Harbor experiment in which they refurbished and assembled 6 under water improvised explosive devices. They also created two holiday balls one for St. Patrick's Day and one for Easter.

The Operations Department has been busy at work preparing work orders and transitioning the message traffic to an upgraded system. As always, they have dedicated their time to command training.

The Administration Department has been busy writing PCS orders for the upcoming move to Seal Beach, California.

The "Khakis" have kept busy this quarter overseeing the departments while preparing the command for our move.

Finally, our sailors have had some big career and personal achievements, let's take a look at those. First congratulations to MN2(SW) Lampman, MN2(SW) Lile, MNSN Shimonek, and MNSN Diaz on their advancements! We are all so proud of each of you! With regret we had to say farewell to a few of our amazing sailors this quarter. We thank you for your amazing leadership and dedication not only on the mission but to our sailors. MNCS(SW) Nixon retired May 29th after 24 dedicated years of service. We wish you the best on this new adventure. The Navy has also lost another valuable asset this quarter; MN1 Dominguez ended his service of 14 amazing years. We thank you for your knowledge and skill as a Mineman. Lastly, MN3 Leyva transferred to complete schooling before embarking on a new chapter of his career in Japan. We will miss you all!



**HAPPY 4TH
OF
JULY**

***Celebrate and remember to guard
your freedom.***



LITTORAL COMBAT SHIP (LCS) MINE COUNTER-MEASURES MISSION PACKAGE DETACHMENT Leading the way in Mine Warfare!

When the first few sailors arrived to the Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) CLASSRON building located in sunny San Diego, California, not much was known of the present or the future of the Mine Countermeasures (MCM) Mission Package Detachment. In early 2006 a handful of Mine Warfare's finest arrived not knowing what to expect or what was expected of them. However, after a few short months of building a common structure and learning the basics of the program, they were on their way to becoming experts. They attended Remote Mine-hunting System (RMS) familiarization training in Syracuse, NY and Remote Multi-Mission Vehicle (RMMV) Operation and Maintenance training in West Palm Beach and Panama City, FL. This training eventually led to underway time. With the USS BAINBRIDGE (DDG-96) being equipped as an experimental platform for the RMS, our Sailors were soon deployed onboard to operate and maintain the vehicle along with the AN/AQS-20A towed sonar system.

Like all new commands, additional Sailors began to check-in. In addition to more Sailors, more equipment was being added to the LCS MCM concept. Along with the RMS, some of the new systems added were the Unmanned Surface Sweep Vehicle (USSV) equipped with the Unmanned Surface Sweep System (US3), Airborne Laser Mine Detection System (ALMDS), the Battlespace Preparation Autonomous Underwater Vehicle (BPAUV), and the Organic Airborne and Surface Mine Influence Sweep (OASIS). The RMS consists of the RMMV, the AN/AQS-20A, and the hardware, programs, data systems, and support equipment used with the two systems. The USSV is an unmanned, remote-controlled, twin-screw, twin diesel-powered boat with a MK 104 magnetic acoustic sweep system (US3) and a payload capable of 22,500 lbs. It can attain speeds up to 25+ knots and withstand a maximum sea state of three. The MIW USSV is capable of a maximum endurance of six hours total mission time at 25 knots with the sweep deployed. The AN/AES-1 (ALMDS) is a helicopter-deployed system and uses a Light Detection and Ranging (LIDAR) blue-green laser capable of detecting, classifying, and localizing drifting, floating, near-surface, moored mine threats or Mine-Like Objects (MLO). Developed and built by Bluefin Robotics (Cambridge, Massachusetts), BPAUV is a small, fast underwater robot that maps the ocean bottom near the shore, detects changes in inshore conditions, and hunts mines. The OASIS system is a towed Minesweeping System that is intended to be deployed from specially configured MH-60S helicopters or surface craft and was designed to provide organic, high speed magnetic/acoustic influence minesweeping capability where mine-hunting is not feasible, mines are undetectable, and avoidance of the area is not an option.

With all this new 21st Century Technology came a lot of responsibility. Sailors were sent TAD all over the country to get training from different vendors, researchers, and developers on how to maintain and operate all the equipment. Along with getting the training came the responsibility to train Sailors in the areas in which they will be Subject Matter Experts (SME). The USS FREEDOM (LCS-1) and USS INDEPENDENCE (LCS-2) are both manned at 40 personnel with additional specialists associated with the different Mission Packages. This concept embodies a fresh approach to the Navy's idea of using less Sailors, with better technology, to do the same job as the rest of the Navy. With the LCS class ship being twice the size of an MCM class ship and manning with only 40 Sailors, manning and training presents another challenge for the program. Due to the reduced crew size, each individual member of the crew and Mission Packages will be filling an essential billet. The loss of even a few crew members could significantly degrade ship operational capabilities. Therefore, each Sailor in the Mission Package is required to have knowledge in every piece of gear we operate so that in the event of an emergency or loss of manpower we are still able to operate.

Currently the MCM Detachments are engaged in a very broad range of endeavors including Maintenance and Operation training on the RMMV and the USSV in Panama City, FL, visits to the USS FREEDOM (LCS-1) and USS INDEPENDENCE (LCS-2) for Crew Familiarization training and so

much more. We are also testing an additional concept of operation. The idea is to place a walk-in container (MILVAN), also known as the Mission Package Portable Control Station (MPPCS), somewhere along the coast line and operate our equipment independent of the LCS Sea frame.

With LCS being called up to defend foreign assets, our own assets, and against piracy; the MCM Detachments will be manning up two Vessel, Boarding, Search, and Seizure (VBSS) teams to deploy with the ships if called upon. So that makes physical readiness another responsibility of the MCM Detachment.

The MCM Mission Package sailors have done very well professionally from the day the Detachment was established. The advancement percentage for the command is unprecedented. 100% of all Sailors advanced from Seaman to 3rd Class, 100% of all 3rd Classes have advanced to 2nd Class, 83 % of 2nd Classes advanced to 1st Class and 46% of eligible 1st Classes have been advanced to Chief Petty Officer. With that being said, Congratulations to MN1(SW) Cormier, MN1(SW) Mc-Fall, MN1(SW) Hill, MN1(SW) Lacson, and MN1(SW) Sweet for their recent advancement to Petty Officer First Class.

Congratulations to MN1(SW) Tallchief, EN1(SW) Butts, MN1(SW) Gentry, MN1(SW) Contreras and MN1(SW) Sweet for being awarded the Navy Achievement Medal. Congratulations are in order to MN1(SW) Hill, MN1(SW) Hidalgo, and MN2(SW) Lacy for receiving a Letter of Commendation from the Executive Director.

We'd also like to Welcome Aboard AG1(AW) Harris coming to us from Weather Center, Pearl Harbor, HI, AG2(AW) Washington coming to us from NTTU Keesler Air Force Base in Biloxi, Mississippi, and MN2 Rivera coming to

us from MOMAU 11 in Charleston, South Carolina and their Families. Farewell to MN1(SW) Treece who recently received GSA orders to Iraq, MN1(SW) Tallchief who recently received orders to MCM Crew Conflict in Sasebo, Japan, and MN1(SW) Golden who was recently selected for the STA-21 Program and will be attending San Diego State University for the next three years to become an Ensign. Congratulations and "Fair Winds and Following Seas."

The LCS is not only a key factor in the future of Mine Warfare, but the future of the Navy and MCM Mission Package is laying the foundation. The Secretary of Defense, Robert Gates, while doing an article for Aviation Week, called LCS "a key capability for presence, stability and counterinsurgency operations in coastal regions." Secretary Gates also recommended that the program grow from two to three ships in fiscal year 2010. Secretary Gates' statement highlights the importance of this program. LCS allows us to go farther, faster, and to travel to places MCMs cannot go. It gives us the opportunity to work with cutting edge technology and learn something new all while staying within our rate. To be a Mineman in this program gives us a foothold on the most technologically advanced equipment within our rate. The demand for Mineman still exists and will remain a requirement in the future. We are the front line of that demand.

MNC(SW) Chris Bender adds this PS: If you know anyone who is interested in coming here or wants more information, please direct them to me. We are still recruiting personnel as replacement Sailors. It is all voluntary for this program.

MNC(SW) Chris Bender
Littoral Combat Ship
Mine Countermeasures Detachment ONE
LCPO
619-817-1827 Cell, 619-556-2085/5840 Office







MN1(SW) Sweet and MN1(SW) Torres prepare the BPAUV for launch



MN2(SW) Hill Meeting the SECNAV in Alexandria, VA



Mission Module Inside LCS 1



Remote Multi Mission Vehicle (RMMV) in Alexandria Va.



The BPAUV being launched during a Tampa Bay, FL experiment

**ASSOCIATION OF MINEMEN 35th ANNUAL REUNION
 SAN DIEGO, CA
 AT THE HANDLERY HOTEL AND RESORT
 16-18 OCTOBER 2009**

Association of Minemen, PO Box 69, Eutawville, SC 29048-0069

Please return the reservation form as soon as possible to the address above to expedite your registration for reunion events. Your tickets will be made available at the Early Bird, General Business Meeting., Dinner and Picnic.

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Room rates are \$99.00 plus 12.5% tax, single or double; \$109.00 triple and \$119.00 PROMO CODE "Minemen", Cut off date is 18 September 2009. Check-in time is 3:00 PM and checkout time is 12:00 NOON. Hotel Parking is \$6.00 per night with complimentary in and out privileges.

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