THE DASHPOT

Issue 77 Newsletter of the Association of Minemen Spring 2012

38TH ANNUAL AOM REUNION
PANAMA CITY, FL
OCT 22-24 OCTOBER 2012

Boardwalk Beach Resort Hotel and Convention Center

The Boardwalk Beach Resort and Conference Center has been chosen as the venue for this year's Reunion Dinner and business meeting.

The Boardwalk is located directly on the Gulf of Mexico. Because October is one of Panama City beach's busiest months, the weekends in October were booked solid. November seemed to be a less-than-desirable month due to the elections and September was more expensive, so for the first time, we are going to have our reunion during the week - Monday, October 22, 2012 to Wednesday, October 24, 2012. The Boardwalk will extend their prices before and after the reunion period for any member who desires to come early or stay late (or both). These dates are being offered at the same room rates as our 2006 reunion!

Monday 22 October 'EARLY BIRD' will be held at the AMVETS Club (The Fleet Reserve is the back-up) and will feature a Low-Country Shrimp Boil.

The Picnic will be held on the Navy Base on Wednesday 23 October with a back-up location to be determined.

The reunion workers and contributors this year are (so far) Ron Swart, Bob Bainbridge, Leo Smith, Ken Waringa, Ollie Collins, Brian Kopp, Nick Snyder, Ed Nixon, John Monn, Dale Garwood and Terrance Houghton. We hope to have a great turnout as this is one of the most beautiful times of the year in the Florida Panhandle. Naval Surface Warfare Center, Panama City Division is the engineering and technical home of Mine Warfare, both MCM and mining. There is a lot going on in both programs to talk about. We are looking forward to hosting all y'all.

Reunion continued on page 3.

ON THE INSIDE

THE ASSOCIATION OF MINEMEN

DEDICATED TO SERVING THE U.S. NAVY MINE FORCE

The Dashpot, published quarterly, is the newsletter of the Association of Minemen, a 501-C non profit, non political organization incorporated in the state of South Carolina with the mission of perpetuating knowledge of undersea mine warfare and championing its necessity as one of America's first lines of defense.

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AOM HOMEPAGE
www.minemen.org

Reunion continued from page 1.

Arrive	Depart	Room Description	# Rooms	Rate
10/22/2012	10/24/2012	Boardwalk 2BR/2BA, Sleeps 6	1	$145.00
10/22/2012	10/24/2012	Boardwalk1BR/1BA,Bunks Sleeps 6	3	$125.00
10/22/2012	10/24/2012	Boardwalk Effieiency Sleeps 2	5	$95.00
10/22/2012	10/24/2012	Hotel 2 dbl beds Gulfview	15	$85.00
10/22/2012	10/24/2012	Hotel 2dbl beds Poolview	15	$75.00

*Room Assignment Requests: Every effort will be made to honor specific requests; however, these requests are unable to be GUARANTEED.
*Condominium rates are subject to a $6.95 per unit, per day Resort Fee and a $15.00 one-time registration fee per unit due at check-in.
*Condominium rates are subject to a one-time cleaning fee ranging from $55 to $135 depending on the unit type.
*Hotel rates are subject to a $2.95 per room, per day Unlimited Telephone Usage (UTA) fee due at check in.

Reservations Made By: **1-800-224-4853, press 1 for Reservations**. Please mention that you are making a group reservation for **Association of Mineman Book ID #: 6240**

Reservations received after Friday, August 24, 2012, will be provided on a space available basis and are subject to the prevailing room rates.

ROOM RESERVATION PROCEDURE AND PAYMENT METHODS:

Individual Call-ins:
Individual members of the group will be responsible for the cost of their guest room, tax and other charges that may be applied, except to the extent the group has agreed in writing that partial charges are to be master billed to the group. Individual members of the group should contact Royal American Reservations to reserve rooms and personally guarantee payment and/or any required deposit requirements with a credit card or other form of payment. Reservations can be made by calling 1-800-224-4853. Please mention the booking ID# 6240. Royal American will honor reservations received by Friday, August 24, 2012. Reservations received after this date are subject to space availability and at the prevailing room rates. Failure to cancel a guaranteed condominium reservation seven (7) days prior or a guaranteed hotel reservation three (3) days prior to arrival or occupy the room will result in the forfeiture of one night's room and tax and will be applied to the individual's credit card. A $45.00 cancellation fee applies to all condo reservations cancelled more than seven (7) days prior to arrival.

SUMMER DASHPOT ARTICLE DEADLINE IS 1 JUNE 2012

SCHOLARSHIP HAPPENINGS

By Ron Glassen

Spring IS almost here and it looks like winter IS on it's way out, (I HOPE). All In all, winter has been on the mild side, and it was long overdue. Now that spring time IS upon us the time has come for scholarship applications to be coming in. This means that it's time for your scholarship committee to start doing its job and begin to approve and award scholarships. Of course, Our job depends on your support with your generous donations. So please, keep up your good work and all your financial support and let's see how many scholarships we can award this year.

BOUNCED E-MAIL

The following names are bounced addresses from my list. If you have any new addresses for them, please relay to me. DerickH@charter.net

"Louis G. Godeaux" <lgodeaux@grandecom.net>
"Richard Roderick" <rroderick6@comcast.net>
"Ted Elhajj" <ted_elhajj@verizon.net>
"Clay Coe" <wcoe@comcast.net>
"Norman M. Sivertsen Jr." usnmnfra@hvc.rr.com
"Richard Spofford" <rspofford@hotmail.com>
"Bob Reed" <cwo4connie@csonline.net>
"Chris P. Siangco" <siangcoohana@home.com>

Thanks,
Derick S. Hartshorn

THE MAIL BAG

Ed Szczutkowski

Please publish a great thank you to all for the prayers on my surgery. Surgery went well and having good recuperating results.

Edmund R. Szczutkowski (Ed) MN1 US Navy retired

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26 January 2012

Bill, greetings;

Thanks for another great dashpot.

After pages 7, 8, and 9, I had to relax and recognize myself.

I too, knew Ken well and it encouraged him in his younger days to persevere. When Chief Nicklan (NICK) was in a town some years ago he stopped by the house and we revisited over years past and when he did not show up at the 2010 reunion nor did he call I was concerned.

As to Ray Becker, I represented the USN and our country in my blues as he was a World War II vet and close to many of us from (then) NMEF. I made certain the flag was there and I and one from the funeral home neatly and properly folded the flag and I presented it to his daughter in military fashion.

Master Chief Walker was one of my Chiefs and John Loonam and I (me in blues again) made certain that the Navy detail conducted almost perfectly the ceremony and I then presented the flag and due military fashion to Nellie. I reminded the two hash mark PO2 his squad members need to be reminded to salute an officer when passing by. Picture on third page 13 Andoya, Norway.

Bob Pricer lives here in Williamsburg and gets to monthly luncheons occasionally. Cmdr. Bill White also lives here.

Oh yes, I remember my first sea bag, all too well. Nice piece on page 12. I still have a blue flat hat, original BJM and watch cap, a blue working jacket too. Of course you young whippersnappers missed out on some of these.

Chief Sikorsky was also one of my Chiefs. I just passed the five-year mark so I know well his situation. Arnett served with me too.

In closing, thanks for a great job.

Warmest regards,
Ed

Cecil and Kozuko Martin celebrated their Golden Anniversary on 9 March 2012.

CONGRATULATIONS!

50 years is a long time to do anything...even if you like it.

FROM THE WEBMASTER

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

12/15/11 - Mark D Floor MNC (SW); mark.d.floor@gmail.com; mark.floor@navy.mil
12/15/11 - Eric S. Cothran MN2; eric.cothran@hotmail.com

E-mail – Reservist

E-mail – Retired

01/16/12 - CW04 John Sandoval; jsando57@aol.com
01/04/12 - Joe Baker MNC; possumjoesc@gmail.com
12/31/11 - CDR Ronald E. Swart; swartre1@comcast.net

E-mail – Former-Minemen

02/22/12 - John Johnson MN2; john.johnson@sdsheriff.org
02/21/12 - John E Potts MN2; jackpot@centurylink.net
02/20/12 - Chris Ridley MN3; cridley605@yahoo.com
02/16/12 - Richard Smith, MN2; bohical1976@yahoo.com
02/08/12 - Sharon (Schneider) Mulloy, MN3; sharm316@gmail.com
02/08/12 - Kerry R. Dinsmore; smore6@hotmail.com
01/27/12 - Herb Tidrick MN3; unclebobtidrick@yahoo.com
01/14/12 - Kim (Deak) Radics MN3; radicskim@yahoo.com
12/31/11 - Brian Partridge MN3; b.partridge@yahoo.com
12/15/11 - Jason Tate MN2; tate.jason@dol.gov

I have posted pictures of the 2011 reunion and need help indentifying some of the individuals in the photos. I would appreciate any help you can give.
You can go to: http://minemen.org/Reunion2011.htm. Click on the links located on the left side of the page. The page is still being assembled. If you have any information please e-mail me at the above address.

Hello Phil,

(1) I have added a lot of material to the Mine Warfare Hall of Valor at: http://www.davidbruhn.com/images/MINE_WARFARE_HALL_OF_VALOR.pdf and believe that it now contains about ninety percent of the information that should be there, regarding personal awards of valor and unit awards. Please ask your members to scrutinize it and provide omitted information.

(2) The Navy has now posted records of unit and personal awards to the website:https://awards.navy.mil/awards/webbas01.nsf/%28vwWebPage%29/home.htm?OpenDocument. A mineman would undoubtedly know what searches to do to glean the most information, such as MOMAG perhaps, but since the data was given different titles, one must try a lot of combinations to pull it all from the database. Additionally, if you access a command that had more that a page of awards associated with it, there doesn't appear to be any way to scroll down to access the information.

Sincerely, David Bruhn

TAPS

CWO4 Robert "Bob" Pricer, USN (Ret.)

With sadness, I report the passing of Bob Pricer who retired in the Tidewater area.

Robert "Bob" Pricer, Jr., 68, of Williamsburg, died on February 10, 2012. He was born in Pittsburgh, PA, March 30, 1943, to the late Robert Pricer, Sr. and Frances Pricer.

Bob joined the U.S. Navy at age 17, proudly serving as a mine ordnance specialist. He retired after 29 years of service at the rank of CWO 4. Bob considered himself quite the computer geek who greatly enjoyed technology. He loved birds and wildlife and enjoyed woodworking and building things. He was also an avid hunter. Bob loved spending time with his family.

He is survived by his wife of 38 years, Margie Pricer; children, Mark Allen Pricer (Jeane), Robert Doyal Pricer (Angela), and Sheline Lampart (Carl); grandchildren, Connie, Sean, Kayla, Kateland, Haley, Remee, Chealsey, Amanda and Troy Jacob; and six great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his son, Troy Shawn Pricer.

Interment will take place at Arlington National Cemetery at a later date. Memorial contributions may be made in Bob's memory to the Disabled American Veterans, P.O. Box 14301, Cincinnati, OH 45250-0301, Attn: Gift Processing or www.dav.org. Online condolences may be expressed at www.nelsencares.com.

[reported by John Loonam]

CWO2 James L. Stultz, USN (Ret.)

James L. Stultz , 80, of Indianapolis passed away February 9, 2010. He was born September 17, 1931 in Monroe County, Indiana to the late William W. and Lois L. Arnett Stultz.

Jim served his country in the U.S. Navy retiring as Chief Warrant Officer. He married Martha Jewell “Julie” Stultz who preceded him in death. After retiring, Jim was employed at Sears Roebuck & Co. as the Men’s Store Manager.
He was a member of The Association of Minemen, an avid golfer, and loved spending time with his family.

Funeral services were held Monday February 13, 2012.

Jim is survived by his Children Richard (Susie) Stultz and Nanci (Bob)Miller; 10 grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren; and siblings, Don Stultz and Judy Burgess. Jim’s son, William, preceded him in death.

Memorial contributions may be made to the American Cancer Society

OTHERS WE HAVE LOVED AND LOST

Hank Nelson

With sadness, I report the passing of Hank Nelson who retired in the Panama City area.

Hilding "Hank" Nelson, 69, of Panama City, passed away February 29, 2012 in his home, after a brief battle with stomach cancer. Hank was born on a farm near Greeley, Colorado in 1943 and was always working from a young age. In his senior year, he served as the class president, won a prestigious science award from the National Science Foundation, participated in athlet-

ics and graduated Valedictorian from Ault, CO in 1962. He then went to Colorado State University, and graduated, with highest Honor, in Physics. After graduation in 1965, he moved to Panama City, FL and started his 38-year career at the Navy Mine Defense Laboratory, where he became an expert in acoustic detection of underwater mines and mine counter measures. Throughout his career, Hank represented the Panama City Navy Lab and the U.S. on both national and international panels, often to Brussels, Belgium for talks with NATO. He had a passion for sailing, with adventures to Port Charlotte, the Keys, and the BVI. He also loved Disney World, Belgian chocolate, classical music, Broadway musicals, NFL football, and conservative politics.

Hank is survived by his wife of 42 years, Susan Nelson of Panama City; his two children, William and wife Jenny of Columbia, SC, Ingrid of San Francisco, CA; grandchildren, Claire and Henry; sister, Adele Ramstetter and husband Joe of Greeley, CO and large extended loving family. He is preceded in death by his parents, Delbert and Lillie Nelson. A celebration of life service will be held Tuesday, March 6, 2012 at 11:00 AM in the Holy Nativity Episcopal Church with Father Steve Bates officiating. He will be interred March 22 in Greeley, Colorado. Those who wish may make a donation to Covenant Hospice, 107 West 19th Street, Panama City, Florida 32405, in Hank Nelson's memory. He was a man of a few words, quiet and caring. He will be remembered for his strong work ethic, beautiful blue eyes, kind heart, and quick wit. Hank and his family thank all for their love and support.

[Notified by Don Jones]

EDITOR'S NOTES

Having had carpal tunnel surgery two months ago, this issue of The Dashpot stretched the limits of my dedication. By the time this hits the street, I should already be scheduled to get the other hand attended to. If that surgery goes as well as this one did, I should be good for a few more years. That, however, doesn't mean I would turn down the offer of a relief. The job is fun and comes with all the software needed to do it. The learning curve is not particularly steep and even less if you have a working knowledge of other Adobe software. The job also comes with personal telephone assistance on demand. The job requires about 40 hours per quarter.

BRONZE STAR WINNER

Master Chief Mineman Glenn Niemitalo

East Greenbush sailor earns Bronze Star Medal in Afghanistan.

By TERRY BROWN Special to the Times Union
Published 12:01 a.m., Saturday, June 18, 2011

Navy Master Chief Mineman Glenn Niemitalo of East Greenbush has received a Bronze Star Medal for meritorious service in the Afghanistan war. Niemitalo also received a Navy Combat Action Ribbon, an Army Combat Action Badge and a NATO International Security Assistance Force Medal. He earned the awards while serving as a quality control engineer with reconstruction teams in Paktika and Khost provinces. His Provincial Reconstruction Team Khost Afghanistan unit was comprised of Army, Navy, and Air Force personnel. He earned recognition while overseeing the construction of projects by Afghanistan contractors and training Afghanistan engineers. After he returned to the United States, he received the awards during a ceremony at the Naval Operational Support Center in Glenville. As a reservist he is assigned the center.

The 1974 graduate of Columbia High School, earned an engineering degree from Union College in 1989. He enlisted in the active Navy in 1975 and joined the Navy Reserve in 1979. He also has earned a Meritorious Service Medal, a Navy-Marine Corps Commendation Medal, and a Navy-Marine Corps Achievement Medal. As a civilian, he is a project manager with Honeywell International in Albany. He and his wife, Kathleen have four children, Lee, Sharon, Danielle, and Trisha.

SUBIC BAY SEPTEMBER 2011

Barracks, turned into a resort, but looks empty

Main NAVMAG Office

Mine Assembly

Component Test/Supply

Main Office

Thanks to Phil Beckwith for these images. More to come in next issue.

THE WORLD'S MAIN MINE SYSTEMS

Naval and Merchant Ships, November 2005, Pgs. 52-55
By Fu Jinzhu
Translation by Mr. Gabe Collins, Research FellowU.S. Naval War College

American Mine Development and its Present State

Although the US suffered serious losses from mines in WW2, it engaged in several post-WW2 offensive mine campaigns. These included one which started in May 1972, in which American strike aircraft dropped 11,000 mines in North Vietnamese harbors over an 8-month period, effectively blockading more than 20 freighters and warships in their harbors for the campaign's duration. In January 1991, on the second day of hostilities, 4 carrier borne A-6 strike aircraft laid mines in the Iraqi Navy's base.

The current US mine stockpile is limited, but older mine designs are already being retired. Although the MK60 mobile mine was targeted toward Soviet submarines during the Cold War, it was retired from the mine stockpile in 2002. Because the Soviet submarine threat ceased to exist, the MK-46Mod4/6 light homing torpedoes that formed the mines' warhead lost its usefulness even though the torpedoes' technology is still in use in the 2010 advanced generation mobile mine program. Another eye-catching system, the MK67 submarine launched mobile mine (with the MK37Mod.2 torpedo with an enhanced proximity fuse and range extended to 15 km) is also being cut back in favor of using the refitted MK48 torpedo as a long range mobile mine.

The American mine stockpile's main component is currently the "Quickstrike Mine," also known as the aerial bomb mine. It has an appearance similar to that of the MK80 series low drag GP bomb, making it apparent that it is an air dropped mine. Current air dropped mines in the US inventory include the MK62 (227kg), MK63 (454kg), and MK64 (907kg), but these are being replaced by the 1004kg thin shelled MK65 mine, which uses the MK 57 magnetic fuse and the MK 58 sonic fuse. The US is replacing the magnetically and seismically fused MK40 (227kg) and MK41 (454kg) "Destructor" air dropped bottom mines it used in Vietnam and Gulf War I, but its allies still use these mines. Future offensive air dropped mines will incorporate the new MK71 fuse, which can be programmed for many sensors and firing mechanisms, and can be used against quiet subs, high speed patrol craft, and hovercraft. The mine is code-named MK65 Mod.3.

The MK56 anti-submarine mine continues to serve as the US navy's 1960s era air dropped, non-contact fused moored mine. It uses a magnetic fuse and contains 163 kg of explosive, giving it a limited kill radius. For this reason, in 2002 the USN began drawing down the stockpile and plans to have the mine completely retired by 2010.

In 2000, following an R&D conceptual demonstration, the USN canceled its littoral mine program and in 2004, entered the planning stage of a new program, called "Sea Mine 2010", in which $1.8 billion will be spent to replace the MK56 anti submarine mine that will be fully retired by 2010. There are currently three tentative plans for the system. The first and simplest is to revamp the MK56 moored anti submarine mine, the second is to create a rising mine, the third entails creating a mine that uses a torpedo as its warhead.

In reality, if one judges from the pattern of mine America is working on in its "Sea Mine 2010" program, it is still working on a littoral mine, as it is adding remote control capability to the traditionally independent sea mine. It is estimated that by early 2006, analysis will be complete, practical testing will occur in 2008, and that deployment will begin in 2009

Sea Mine 2010's core technology is a compact, low maintenance sensor with partitioned data and signals and with reliable underwater communications technology. Another important achievement is that below 50 m depth it can launch vertically, using its MK54 lightweight homing torpedo warhead, and placing the ship's course within a 5 degree cone, while being remotely controlled from up to 12 nautical miles away. Even after 2010, having minefields with mines that have two way communications and long range remote control will still be considered a real breakthrough. To sum things up, Sea Mine 2010's technological performance is clearly far superior to the MK56 anti-submarine mine.

Other Countries Primary Mine Types

Everyone knows that rocket rising mines come from Russia and that Russia has more types of mobile mines than the USA. Italy and Sweden have developed concealed mines, and many other countries are pursuing intelligent mines.

Mobile Mines

Sowing mines in enemy harbors and bases, or stealthily launching mines into enemy controlled waters is obviously an attractive ability. In addition to the US MK67 mobile mine, Russia's SMDM series also belongs in this category. Among the SMDM's, the SMDM-1 mine consists of the 53-65KE oxygen powered torpedo's propulsion unit and a two or three channel survey installation. Its speed is 42 knots with a range of 17km. The SMDM-2 mobile mine is made from a 650mm heavyweight torpedo and is 11 meters long with a maximum range of 50 km. The newest type is the SMDM-3 mobile mine, which is made from the TT-1 thermally powered torpedo, is 533mm in diameter, and carries 425kg of explosive.

In addition, Sweden has its indigenous Type 42 mobile mine, which is built on the framework of a Type 27 torpedo. Atop this, Swedish companies have made a "torpedo mine" weapons system whose modular transducer/sensor allows it to act as a mobile mine, torpedo, or be employed as a long range sensor system. When used as a mobile mine, it carries two payloads (or warheads) that it can drop in different places, increasing its stealth and mine laying effectiveness.

Rising Mines

Rising mines--especially rocket rising mines--should be considered Russia's invention. Although Japan produced its Type 75 in the 1980s and our Taiwan produced the WSM-310 rocket rising mine in 2002, in terms of quality and numbers these simply cannot compare with Russian models. Compared to rocket rising mines, mobile mines are not inferior. In anti-submarine operations, mobile mine's sensors must spy out and differentiate the target's sound and release the torpedo under sub optimal conditions, after which it must hotly pursue the target. Rocket mines on the other hand are fired as underwater unguided missiles, reach the target rapidly, and leave little time for evasive action.

The original rocket rising mine is the KRM, which the USSR developed in 1957. Spin offs include the RM-1, RM-2, PRM and PRM-2E (and the PMK-1 export variant). The PMR-2E rocket rising mine is 533mm in diameter, 7.8 meters long, and weighs a total of 1850kg, with 300kg of explosive detonated by a timer, contact, or proximity fuse. It ascends at the rate of 80 meters/second and can be used in water 200-1000 meters deep (the export variant can be used in 200-400 meters of water).

Furthermore, the Russian made PMK-2 (export variant PMT-1) mobile mines is the counterpart to the American MK60. The air dropped version is 5.8 meters long, the submarine laid version 5.6m, and the export version 7.9m, with a total weight of 1400-1850kg. It carries the MTP-1M lightweight anti-submarine homing torpedo, and can be used at depths of 100-1000m. It can be carried by the SU-33 Sea Flanker. Additionally, Russia has already developed the latest type of continental shelf rocket rising mine.

Moored Contact Mines

Moored contact mines are among the simplest and oldest of mine types and were already being manufactured in the early 20th century. Yet many countries still use these traditional moored mines. It is not just Third World countries that are interested in these mines, for the former USSR used them during the Cold War to protect its submarine bases. In April 1988, the American guided missile frigate USS Samuel Roberts was badly damaged by a "yamu" small moored floating mine and in February 1991 the USS Tripoli amphibious attack ship had a big hole blown in it by an Iraqi moored contact mine. During 1987, moored contact mines in the Persian Gulf damaged all types of commercial shipping, including tankers.

Russia has the most types of moored contact mines and makes/made most available for export. As a result, many are reverse engineered and copied. Indeed, the 1950s era KPM moored mine is still in production. It has an automatic mechanism that enables it to resist storms and tidal flows and pro-

tects the mine body from exposure to seawater. The KPM weighs a total of 365kg, with 48kg of explosive and can be set in 5-20m of water. Prior to WW2, the Soviets developed moored mines including the YaRM shallow water moored mine (3kg explosive), MYaM (20 kg explosive),MKB (150kg explosive) etc. The MYaM moored mine is/was produced by both Iran and Iraq and both sides widely used it during the Iran-Iraq War. North Korea also sent moored contact mines to Iran during the war.

In addition, Iraq produced many different types of moored contact mine; typically small types contained 35-45kg of explosive, while large ones carried 145-185kg charges--in the same class as the Russian MKB moored mine. Although these mines reliability was low, their low manufacturing cost allowed many to be sown.

Hidden Mines

Hidden mines are a different breed of mine, and have two objectives. First, they do not use the spherical or cylindrical shape that is readily seen by sonar, making them hard for mine hunters to locate and distinguish; second, soon after being laid, they are covered by silt, which helps them resist detection. Swedish and Italian “hidden mines” are famous, with three types in active service.

The Swedish Saab-Bofors Underwater Equipment Company’s BGM-100 Lakken mine uses a rarely seen wedge shaped edge that allows it to slide a distance equivalent to up to twice the water depth in which it is laid, causing mines to disperse over a wide area. The flat mines hug the bottom and are very difficult for sonar and cameras to detect. Thus the mines have a certain ability to remain hidden. The BGM-100 weights a total of 190kg, with a 105kg explosive charge.

At the end of the 1980s, Bofors developed another type of hidden mine which was called the Type 601 “bang ni” and is hung on the side of a submarine. Once released, it is rapidly covered by silt, making it very difficult to detect with sonar and cameras. Its total weight is 800kg, with 80kg of explosive.

A widely known type of hidden mine is the Italian MN-103 “Manta.” It can be laid from surface ships, helicopters, and with a parachute from transport aircraft. The mine has a cone shaped body specially made for shallow water use and can resist currents, tidal flows, and waves. It is designed to be covered by silt and soon after being laid, is typically largely buried. The Manta weight 220kg and carries a 130kg charge, which is detonated by a combined acoustic-magnetic fuse. The sound portion recognizes the target and the magnetic part actually detonates the explosive. Owing to the fact that the mine is designed for shallow and extremely shallow water use (it can be used in as little as 2.5m of water) it cannot use a pressure fuse because the widely varying water pressures and proximity to land water contact. (trans.-- It is also difficult to use an acoustically detonated mine in a turbulent shallow water environment). For these reasons, the mine can be remotely detonated with a 2km long electric cable.

Combined Detonator Bottom Mines

Combined detonator bottom mines are the most common modern mines, by virtue of using many modern sensors and sound detection equipment. The Russian Water Motion Metrics research institute has developed many different sizes of bottom mine. Among them are the MDM series of bottom mines, which go from MDM-1 to MDM-6. Out of these, the MDM-1 Mod1 is 533mm in diameter, with a total weight of 960kg and can be delivered by surface ship, aircraft, or submarine. The MDM-3 Mod1 uses 1990s era equipment and can be delivered by ships and air. The ship laid version weighs 835kg, with a diameter of 450mm, with an 800mm diameter mine sheath and a 300kg explosive charge. The air dropped version weighs 525kg and must be used in at least 15m of water. The ship laid version needs at least 8m of water and can be used in up to 35m of water. The MDM-5 Mod 1 mine uses advanced counter-sweeping equipment, giving it significant counter sweeping ability. The MDM-6 is also a 1990s era weapon and has replaced the MDM-1 Mod 1. Each has similar parameters, but the MDM-6 uses a new sound detection system and has better counter sweeping characteristics. Finally, the former Soviet (and highly exported) UDM and AMD series of non-contact bottom mines is also found in many countries’ stockpiles.

The British “Stonefish” mine is a modern bottom mine that was developed in the 1980s and has been exported to many European and Latin American countries. The most modern variant, “Stonefish 3” is

533mm in diameter, weighs 1000kg, and hits with a 600kg charge. It uses a magnetic and water pressure combined fuse, with a microchip controlled logic circuit and modern signal technology, but uses pre-set mine parameters. This widely used mine can be delivered by aircraft, surface combatants, and submarines. The Finnish fused intelligent Stonefish and Anglo-Australian developed Stonefish 3 mines show how each country has worked indigenously to create programmable bottom mines. Among them, the intelligent Stonefish seems to have an inferior target detection system.

Italy has created a substantial number of bottom mines, such as the MR-80, MP-80, and MRP, which are programmable, combination fused, and have entered the arsenals of many NATO and Non-NATO countries. The newest is the MN-102 “sea eel”, which builds upon the previously mentioned technologies and can be laid by ships, subs, and with a parachute, from aircraft. It is made to attack subs and surface ships. It detects targets acoustically and has a magnetic/water pressure fuse, which gives its users significant flexibility. It differentiates its target and pinpoints its, allowing the mine to effectively fight both ships and subs. Additionally, in complex sound environments and areas with depth and tide challenges, it retains the ability to effectively work under all conditions and has a high probability of inflicting casualties upon the enemy.

The MN-102 is 533mm in diameter, 2096mm long, has a mass of 780kg and carries a 600kg explosive charge of HBX-3. It can work in 6-300m of water, remains active for up to 1 year, and withstands water temperatures of -2.5 to 35C. Its stockpile life is 20 years and it can endure stockpile temperatures from -34 to +55C. This mine is currently replacing the Italian Navy’s older bottom mines. It uses a combination acoustic, magnetic, and water pressure fuse. With its combination set up, it is ready to operate and effectively attack its targets in a range of battle environments. Everything is controlled by a microchip, giving the mine a degree of intelligence that is a step ahead

Sea mines are an appropriate weapon for constricting the enemy’s freedom of movement in littoral zones. It is relatively simple to outfit ships, subs, and aircraft with sea mines. It also possible to use mines to set up defensive fronts beforehand, and to use them offensively to create barriers. Navies must understand mine warfare in order to effectively work in the battle space, restrict the enemy’s movements, and force him into other areas. Dependable long distance remote control and programmable mines that can take out specific targets are a forceful combination that makes mine warfare a great aid to a naval operation.

ANTI PERSONNEL AND LANDING CRAFT MINE TEST

This test was conducted on the beach just north of the Damneck, VA Gunnery School fence line. At that time it was mostly sand and dunes from there to the city limits of Virginia Beach. The mines contained 45 pounds of HBX-1 and several were planted in the surf. Landing craft from Little Creek were used to see how effective they were. Apparently, they were very effective. Jackie Smoot might remember this event.

Note the first-class, beachfront accommodations which would be incredibly expensive today.

Planting surf mines is a wet and arduous job, however, I think that it is better than driving a landing craft over them to see if they worked.

SUBMARINE MINELAYING

Ren Daonan, Modern Ships (February 1998), pp. 26.

Mines are a traditional form of naval warfare, that possess and also join offensive and defensive elements, conceal surprise and can offer protracted support, are difficult to sweep, have great destructive power, and strong deterrence characteristics, can enable sea control, are easy to produce, are simple and convenient to use, and have proven themselves in battle numerous times. During the First World War, the various combatant states deployed more than 310,000 mines. During the course of the Second World War, about 8 million mines were planted, especially by submarines, which sank thousands of warships, as well as millions of tons of merchant shipping. In order to cope with the menace of sea mines, no navy can avoid frequent minesweeping, mine management activities, involving a large expenditure of sailors' efforts and technological prowess, and consuming a large portion of resources for warfare.

After WWII, in pace with military technological progress, especially as the realm of high-technology naval weaponry has flourished, traditional mine technology development is also full of vitality, since submarine-laid mines have become a special combat method, receiving the attention of all the world's navies. Entering the 21st century, mines and submarines remain every nation's method for seizing and controlling the command of the sea; this is the essential choice of all states seeking to defend their political, economic, foreign, military, cultural, and maritime interests and rights.

I. The True Combat Significance of Submarine Mine-Laying

During both world wars, all countries' submarine forces undertook submarine mine-laying -- the effectiveness appears to have been outstanding. For example, during the First World War, the German submarine force alone laid 11,000 sea mines, deterring and attacking the navies of the triple entente. German submarines even dared to lay 58 mines along the Atlantic coastal littoral of the United States, sinking or damaging six American ships, thus achieving the utmost result. During 1945, in order to impel the Japanese military to surrender and more rapidly end WWII, the US Navy executed in the Pacific a large-scale offensive mine warfare campaign. In the course of Operation Starvation, the US Army (Air Force) relied on B-29 bombers, to plant 12,135 mines into Japanese waters, effectively limiting Japan's ship production, cutting off Japan's wartime sea lines of communication, severing the economic lifelines of Japan's military to execute the war, and speeding the process of concluding the second world war.

Because submarines offer great stealth, comparatively good self-sufficiency, high cruising range and combat radius, and potent surprise potential, therefore employing submarines to sow mines, often enables the achievement of tremendous combat feats, that could not be accomplished by any other military means. In using submarines to lay mines, the most obvious advantage is the extremely high combat efficiency. According to statistics from the US Navy mine campaign in Japanese waters, using surface vessels to sow mines, roughly 257 mines were required per vessel sunk or damaged; relying on aircraft to sow mines yielded an average of 27 mines per vessels sunk or damaged; but employing submarines to lay mines achieved an average of just 12 mines per vessel sunk or damaged. The most outstanding example of this in combat consists of the USN in 1942 sowing a large amount of contact and magnetic type mines, that greatly hindered the activities of Japan's fleets. Among these, magnetic mines planted in the sea area adjacent to Bangkok, Haiphong and in the Hainan Strait proved particularly effective, achieving an average of just 8 mines per ship sunk or damaged; British submarines in 1943 planted 6 American-made mines in the area of Haiphong Harbor, of which three exploded and sank enemy warships, and the remainder caused Japanese forces for the remainder of the war not to enter that port. It is easily apparent that combat efficiency of submarine laid sea mines exceeds that of most other military forces and systems.

The special characteristic of submarine minelaying is the ability to create an effective blockade, shutting down any activity by the enemy's ships by taking control of the enemy's ports. By dispersing and depleting the enemy's minesweeping forces and weapons, the enemy's intentions can be foiled, enabling victory in combat. For example, in 1942 German navy submarines lay mines along the American coast, forcing the closure of 6 American ports for between 6-8 days. With German Navy submarines frequently entering into the waters on America's Atlantic coast, this forced the the USN in

the Atlantic to frequently undertake minesweeping activities, which at the height of one such operation reached a level of 125 minesweeping craft. During the course of WWII, the USN maintained a force of 800 minesweeping vessels and crews, a factor that was an enormous burden on the USN's fighting forces. Moreover, Germany's MIW activities in England's waters also compelled England to deploy and man a gigantic MCM force of more than one thousand vessels and crews, effectively damaging the Allies' combat efforts.

It is quite possible that as modern naval high technology development and submarine mine-laying methods change, advanced mines and advanced submarines will make progress toward organic integration, becoming a trump card assassin's mace" of the future naval battlefield. A large and complex, limited function, hugely powerful new function mines will spread through actual combat, meaning that future MCM operations will become much more arduous and complex, dramatically changing therefore patterns of naval warfare.

2. Fundamental Tendencies and Requirements of Submarine Minelaying

Submarine mine-laying has the following special characteristics: there is the impressive concealment capability of submarines and the relatively large combat radius, operating distant from bases in enemy sea areas, and in sea areas and bastions controlled by the enemy, lay offensive mines, creating a surprise attack for enemy shipping and a threat of long duration. During a war, submarines can conduct their own reconnaissance, ascertaining the enemy's sea routes, choke points, training areas, force concentrations in the maritime space, etc., and then selecting the most favorable mining opportunities, planting them where they will be most dangerous to the enemy, favorably influencing the conduct of the war at sea, and thus comprising a truly flexible operational capability and mighty fighting force.

The requirements of submarine mine-laying are: concealment, security, precision, and ensuring that the planted mines are difficult to sweep for the enemy.

Stealth is vital, because the submarine must enter the mine-laying target zone undetected, must plant the mines while remaining concealed, causing enemy shipping to suffer maximum damage as a result of the mines before the submarine's presence is ever detected. Security is required because at the time that the submarine is mine-laying to counter surface ships, the laying area is likely to be relatively shallow, and a submarine operating in shallow areas must take certain precautions, to avoid the enemy's ASW forces and obstacles, thus ensuring the ultimate importance of security. Precision refers to the importance of the submarine commander in accurately executing the mine-laying plan. The importance of increasing sweep difficulties refers to the fact that there are a variety of methods for laying mines, with respect to sea mine timings, and in sequencing there are also differences that can strengthen their resistance to sweeping efforts, making it difficult to undertake MCM operations.

3. The basic patterns of submarine sea minelaying

The world over, powers that engage in submarine sea mine laying rely on two basic methods: the first is "linear" type minelaying, another is "cluster" minelaying.

A. Linear Minelaying

Submarine minelaying in a linear fashion means to place them at discreet intervals, to form either a straight or broken line. This method is used in either of two circumstances: one is if the enemy ships must cross that line, and the second is that if a ship does cross this line, it is likely to trigger a mine blast. In order to deal with these circumstances, a submarine conducting minelaying must conduct intelligence, mastering the enemy's navigation patterns, determining that ships are entering the shipping channel, laying mines at the crucial point in the maritime space. In addition, laid mines must have a certain density, preventing ships from slipping between the mine lines.

The linear method of minelaying is most often used to blockade ports, channels, and sea routes, destroying or damaging entering and exiting enemy ships, and blocking enemy shipping from transiting. From the point of view of maritime warfare, this method is also frequently used for amphibious and anti-amphipious operations. With respect to amphibious operations, one can use submarines to close enemy naval bases, ports and wharves to incoming and exiting shipping, effecting a blockade with

mines; to resist an amphibious attack, one could use the submarine's stealth to resist, to lay mines in and around ports where invasion forces were forming, around other ports and in narrow waterways to block or impede the enemy's activities.

B. Cluster minelaying

When a submarine lays in a cluster fashion, it is usually so that the large number of mines form a cluster, so that the sea-mine cluster can form a belt. The distance between the mines, as well as the density, is usually dependent on the goal of the minelaying operation, the area where the mines are to be planted, and on the submarine and its capacity for carrying mines. Since this method of minelaying has no intrinsic guiding principle, so once they are laid, the enemy has great difficulty sweeping them, so historically in naval warfare, both sides have resorted to the cluster method of minelaying.

The requirements for cluster minelaying are that the distance between the mines be less than the possible mine avoidance radius, but the cluster should not have too many mines, for example mines may have particular settings and sequences for blast, forcing enemy ships to confront a new dangerous area, thus creating a wide sea area, and one where it is difficult to ascertain the extent of the mine-restricted zone, creating an intense strain for MCM forces and thus delaying enemy naval activities.

What is worth adding is that using submarines to lay mines, whether laying lines or clusters, both configurations are dependent on the requirements of the war-fighting goal. In the midst of combat, in order to baffle the enemy, and thus achieve exceptional combat results, in sea areas in which enemy shipping is operating, sometimes the laying of mines in irregular patters of lines and clusters, can be effective in controlling relatively large sea areas. Under certain special conditions, submarines can also deploy mobile mines, that can independently penetrate an enemy port, raising the mine's attack effectiveness and combat results.

Translation by Lyle Goldstein.

NMC COMOMAG SAN DIEGO, CA

MN1(SW) Sean Hindley

It's been a great start to 2012 for NMC COMOMAG Division in San Diego, CA. Our continued service to the fleet was expanded this quarter as we supported Reserve MOMAU units, travel in support of various Mine Warfare exercises, and testing and evaluation of a new satellite tracking system for use on moored mines during exercises. Aside from exercise and training evolutions, NMC COMOMAG N31 personnel have been busy preparing for three upcoming Mine Readiness Certification Inspections (MRCI) for our counterparts in NMC East Asia Division.

MK 49 Exercise Moored Mine shape with XEOS Transmitter attached to cover plate.

NMC COMOMAG OSO/ Reserve Affairs Coordinator, Mr. Rodney Biggs, coordinated with personnel from five separate NR MOMAU units this quarter for a training event in San Diego. NMC COMOMAG hosted the event which was attended by eight Mineman reservists in order to provide in-depth in-rate training in preparation for Fleet-wide advancement examinations. The training provided by MN1(SW) Flores, MN1(SW) Guerrero, and MN1(SW) Hindley included mine sweeping, mine hunting, mine neutralization, and small arms. OS1(SW/AW) Lewis from NMAWC provided detailed Maneuvering Board (MOBOARD) training to the reservists as well.

Mineman reservists from various NR MOMAUs receive training from OS1(SW/AW) Lewis (standing left) : the proper use of navigation maneuvering boards (MOBOARDS) during this quarter's onboard NMC COMOMAG division.

In between their travels MNC(SW) Sandoval and MNC(SW) Tetrault have been working feverishly to fabricate a mounting system for an IRIDIUM-based satellite tracking system from the XEOS Corporation that will be used on exercise mine shapes in various long-term exercise minefields including Southern California fields. MNCS(SW) Greer, MNC(SW) Tetrault, and MN1(SW) Hindley went underway in mid-February aboard SPAWAR vessel RSV-2 to conduct real-time in-water testing of the mounting system and XEOS transmitter functionality. Stay tuned for updates concerning this exciting new project.

The NMC COMOMAG service side of the house has been digging their own heels into the sand as they make final preparations for three back-to-back MRCIs throughout NMC East Asia Division. The MRCI inspection team, consisting of CWO3 Black, MNCM(SW) Alt, MNC(SW) Angle, MNC(SW/EXW) McQuiddy, and our N31 Department Head Mr. David Epton, will be visiting NMC EAD Unit Guam, NMC EAD Unit Misawa, and NMC EAD Unit Okinawa this spring in order to inspect and ensure the personnel at these units are all up rounds on mine building.

On a much different note, NMC COMOMAG must face the bittersweet reality of the inevitable PCS transfer as we send our Supply Officer, LT Ronald Thompson, back to the fleet. LT Thompson has been with NMC COMOMAG since November 2009 and played a key role in multiple standard-setting inspections, coordinated countless travel events in support of the mine warfare mission, and was an integral piece of the puzzle that allowed for the seamless transition of NMC COMOMAG from Corpus Christi, TX to sunny San Diego, CA in 2010. His guidance, leadership, and always-positive attitude will be sincerely missed among the entire staff here at Commanding Officer, Mobile Mine Assembly Group. Best of luck with your next tour SUPPO!

Additionally, we say goodbye to our own YN1(AW) Wilson who is transferring to the Fleet Reserve after 20 years of dedicated service to both her country and the Navy. She is currently conducting house-hunting and job-hunting and will return to us for a short period before beginning that coveted "terminal leave" period. Fair Winds and Following Seas Shipmate!

As always, those of us here at NMC COMOMAG wish you a safe and happy Springtime. See you next quarter!

SEAL BEACH, CA

by YN2(AW) Dayna Watson

Greetings from Naval Munitions Command Underwater Weapons Department in sunny Seal Beach, California! With the weather staying in the mid to low 70's for most of the winter, Underwater Weapons kept strong with operational commitments, fleet obligations and community involvement.

-KEY EVENTS-

Look for a group of our Sailors on an upcoming episode of "America's Got Talent!" They enjoyed themselves in Hollywood for a day and watched those who have 'talent.'

-MISSION UPDATE-

In February, the mine shop conducted the bi-monthly upgrade training which included 45 personnel and over 70 shapes to maintain mission readiness. A two person team traveled to Point Loma, CA for BOLD ALLIGATOR mission, in which, UWD provided 18 assets. Six personnel enjoyed a trip to San Diego, CA for Mine Countermeasure Exercises and provided nine assets.

-FAIR WINDS AND FOLLOWING SEAS-

Underwater Weapons Department said goodbye to GM1(SW) Matthews and GMC(SW) Mathis. We wish GM1 well at his next command and we wish GMC best of luck in his post-naval career!

Mrs. and GMC(SW) Mathis

-WELCOME!-

MNCS(SW) Caver, IT2(SW/AW) Adams, GM2(SW) Gonzalez and GM2(SW) Layman checked into UWD, we know that they will enjoy their time here in Seal Beach.

-REENLISTMENTS-

Congratulations to GMC(SW) Norford, GM2 Anderson and MN2 Torres on their decisions to stay Navy.

-ADVANCEMENT-

We congratulate GM1(SW) McMurtrey in advancing!

-INDIVIDUAL AUGMENTEES-

MN3 Leroy returned safely from his IA in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba on 14 January 2012.

-AWARDS-

Awards quarters were held on 26 January and the following were awarded: MNSN Foos (Navy and Marine Corp Achievement Medal), MN3(SW) Jirauruiz (Good Conduct Medal) and MNSN Dawkins (Letter of Commendation). On February 24th, we held an All Hands Call with our Director and the following awards were presented: MN2(SW) Andrews MN2(SW) Carter, MN2 Crans, MNSN Allen, MNSN Dawkins, MNSN Delgado, MNSN Perkins, MNSN Robinson, and MNSN Synder were all presented Letters of Appreciation. A big congratulations to MN1(SW) Geary, MN2 Roden and MNSA Foster for becoming our Senior Sailor, Junior Sailor and Blue Jacket of the Quarter!

GOOSE CREEK, SC

by MNCS(SW) Mike Szostkiewicz and MN1(SW) Jon Reeves

TEAM CHARLESTON WARRIORS: "We work hard… so others don't have to!"

Hello and Greetings from Navy Munitions Command Charleston, SC!

We were honored to host a very special visit from the Charleston Chamber of Commerce members in late December. During their visit, our own Mineman and NMC Leadership were able to share their knowledge and professionalism in a tour about our main facilities. In addition, the Chamber of Commerce was shown an impressive static display in which our Mineman experts were able to explain and interact with our honorary guests.

This quarter we welcome another shipmate to our family. MN3(SW) Jason Moore joins us from MCM Crew Constant out of San Diego, CA.

The cool weather made life a little easier here in the Low Country but the workload ceases to falter. Our Exercise and Training division has been extremely busy and continues to support Fleet Exercises across the globe. This quarter they have supported over seven Fleet exercises ranging in location from Louisiana and Virginia to Florida and as far as the Middle East.

As we entered the New Year, we continued to reach out to the community. Four Sailors participated in over 40 hours at Francis Willis SPCA in Summerville, SC. MN2(SW) Jonathan Pitts, our Volunteer Coordinator, also has a few upcoming events such as "The Cooper River Bridge Run" in March and "USMC Ultimate Challenge Mud Run" in April.

World renowned teamwork here at NMC Unit Charleston! We recently concluded another successful Naval Reserve MOMAU Upgrade!! We plugged our Reserve counterparts into our quarterly upgrade for a very successful week of training. We were joined by Commanding Officers and crew from Naval Reserve MOMAUs 5, 6, 9, 10, and 11. NMC along with our Reserve counterparts had the opportunity to be addressed by CAPT Charles Marks, Commanding Officer, NMC CONUS East Division. He expressed his gratitude for a job well done and provided insight into the future of the Mineman rating as well as many other current events.

We piped ashore 4 shipmates this quarter. MN1(SW) William Holbrook leaves us to join MCM Crew Reaper out of San Diego, CA. ITSN Dominique Armstrong heads to PC Crew Mike out of Norfolk, VA. MN2(SW) Christopher Beck and MN3(SW) Christopher Evans depart the Navy for the Civilian sector. Good luck to you all!

On the morale side of the house, our MWR committee organized and executed an unbelievably wonderful Christmas party for our NMC friends and family. The food and entertainment was more than exceptional! We had a white elephant gift exchanging, a DJ, dance floor, and the most impressive and generous Christmas raffles that we have ever organized! There was a quality prize to be had for everybody in attendance this year! Thank you NMC MWR committee for bringing friends and family together for the holidays! We look forward to next year's Christmas party! Additionally, our MWR committee is currently organizing yet another paintball tournament! Shooting your friends and co-workers with paintballs sounds like a great way to spend a day! Keep up the great work MWR!

This quarter we recognized those among us who stand out; who go the extra mile and set the example for the rest:

Sailors of the Quarter (1st Quarter FY12):

Senior: MN1(SW) Ryan Bish
Junior: MN2(SW) Devin Jaegle
Bluejacket: MNSN Teanny Yuen

Navy Achievement Medals:

MN1(SW) Henry Glenn
MN1(SW) Carlos Espinosa
MN2(SW) Devin Jaegle
MN2(SW) Sergio Rojas
MN2(SW) Christopher Beck
LS2(AW) Dennis Novesteras
MN2(SW) Matt Gerrish
MN3(SW) Jacob Spradlin
MN3 Alina Boatright

MN1(SW) Henry Glenn

MN2(SW) Devin Jaegle

MN2(SW) Sergio Rojas

MN2(SW) Christopher Beck

LS2(AW) Dennis Novesteras

MN3 Alina Boatright

Letter of Commendation:

MNSN Carla White

MNSN Carla White

Special Congratulations!

As previously announced, our own MN1(SW) Michael Lynch was named the NMC Sailor of the year! He then went on to compete in Virginia for U.S. Fleet Forces Shore Sailor of the Year, a feat that has not been reached by any other Mineman in the past! Unfortunately, he missed being selected as Fleet Forces Sailor of the Year by a tiny margin and was named runner up. Bravo Zulu to MN1(SW) Michael Lynch for achieving this amazing milestone in your career!

Next we would like to congratulate our XO, LT(j.g.) Chris Weddell for his promotion to Lieutenant! His railroad tracks were pinned on by his lovely wife Stephanie and our Commanding Officer, CDR Marquis Patton.

LT Chris Weddell with wife Stephanie and CDR Patton doing pinning honors.

Finally, (at the time of this writing) we are preparing for our change of command. Thursday, 12 April marks the time honored ceremony in which CDR Marquis Patton will turn over the helm to CDR Charles Phillip, currently dual-hatted as XO of Naval Support Activity (NSA) Charleston / Deputy Commander, 628th Mission Support Group (MSG). CDR Patton will then transfer a few miles down the street, and assume CDR Phillip's duties as XO NSA / Deputy, 628th MSG.

MASSING OF THE COLORS, THE CITADEL

Our ties to the community continue to remain strong, as NMC Unit Charleston's Color Guard [MN2(SW) Matt Gerrish, MN3 Ashlee Knight and MNSN Chris Nickell] was asked to participate in the 14th annual Massing of the Colors ceremony at the Summerall Chapel on The Citadel campus on Sunday 4 March 2012. The event was sponsored by The General Westmoreland/Charleston Chapter of the Military Order of the World Wars

(MOWW) in which the principal speaker was Rear Admiral Robert E. Besal, USN (Ret.).

RADM Besal had a distinguished 30 year career as a Naval Aviator, including Flag Rank assignments as Commander Operational Test and Evaluation Force, and Commander Naval Safety Center. Afloat commands included USS America (CVA 66), and USS Savannah (AOR 4). He commanded carrier-based Attack Squadron 15 while embarked in USS John F. Kennedy for Desert Storm/Desert Shield combat operations.

MOWW Companion RADM Besal is a regular member of the Military Order of the World Wars. He is currently Senior Vice President for Program Development at the Lodestar Group. A 1972 graduate of Auburn University, he also graduated from the National Defense University.

Last year, 27 color guards accepted the invitation to participate and about 200 persons attended this inspiring patriotic and religious service honoring the Flag of the United States of America and the Colors of participating units. The ceremony is dedicated to the memory of Military Service members who have given their lives to preserve liberty in this Country. It also honors those who have served, and those who are serving to ensure continued freedom and to preserve military heritage.

The General Westmoreland MOWW Chapter has invited participation by the Color Guards of all area ROTC and JROTC units, as well as active military commands and units, public safety units, groups of retired and former military personnel, civic organizations and youth groups including the Navy League Sea Cadets, Boy and Girl Scouts of the Low country. Special invitations have been extended to civic and military leaders.

Maritime Prepositioning Force:

Our civilian counterparts on the MPF and Rail team remain involved in the shipping and receipt of nearly 5,000 tons of ammunition and supplies from USNS SISLER (T-ARK-31), USNS PFC EUGENE A. OBREGON (T-AK-3006), USNS WATSON (T-AKR 310, , USNS FISHER (T-AKR 301). and USNS SGT MATEJ KOCAK (T-AK 3005. We continue to ensure that all worldwide ordnance movements will go smoothly and efficiently.

IRAN ADDS 2 SUBMARINES TO NAVAL FLEET AMID TENSIONS OVER STRAIT OF HORMUZ

(ASSOCIATED PRESS 09 FEB 12)

TEHRAN, Iran — Iran's official news agency reported Thursday that the navy has added two more domestically built light submarines to its fleet.

The move is seen as part of Iran's effort to upgrade its defense capabilities amid escalating tension with the West over its nuclear program. Tehran has threatened to close the strategic Strait of Hormuz, a major oil shipping route, over new U.S. sanctions targeting its critical oil industry.

The report by IRNA quoted Iran's navy chief Adm. Habibollah Sayyari as saying the Ghadir class submarines meet the needs of navy.

In November, Iran said it added three more Ghadir class submarines to its naval fleet. This class of submarine can fire missiles and torpedoes and operate in the Gulf's shallow waters.

Iran is believed to have about 12 light and three Russian-made submarines in its fleet, but it does not disclose the total numbers.

KEEPING HORMUZ STRAIT OPEN TO GET TOUGHER

Bloomberg.com, 17 January 2012… by Tony Capaccio

The U.S. and its allies would be able to reverse any Iranian attempt to block oil traffic through the Strait of Hormuz within weeks, according to the authors of a report on Persian Gulf strategy. Reopening the shipping lanes may prove harder in future years, they found.

“Iran has some capabilities today, in terms of anti-ship cruise missiles, in terms of mines and swarming boats, that can create a significant problem for us,” said Mark Gunzinger, co-author of the report issued yesterday by the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments in Washington. “Can we counter that challenge today? Yes. No question about it.”

Iran’s Vice President Mohammad Reza Rahimi said on Dec. 27 that his nation may close the Strait, the passageway for about a fifth of globally traded oil, if the U.S. and its allies impose stricter economic sanctions in an effort to halt his country’s nuclear research. Reopening the narrow channels would take as long as a month if Iran laid thousands of mines and fired at U.S. vessels with shore-based anti-ship cruise missiles and small boats, Gunzinger and colleagues said in a briefing.

The report focused on Iran’s future capabilities, finding that reopening the Strait will be much more difficult by 2021 if Iran continues to improve the quantity and precision of weapons designed to confront U.S. forces.

“We’ve got some pretty good capabilities today, but the trend line is worrisome, and we are really going to need to focus on the kinds of capabilities they are going to acquire,” said Gunzinger, a retired Air Force colonel and a former deputy assistant secretary of defense for force transformation and resources.

European Union foreign ministers are scheduled to decide Jan. 23 whether to impose a ban on importing Iranian oil.

France wants the EU embargo delayed by no more than three months while members seek alternative supplies, a French government official, who declined to be identified citing state rules, said on Jan. 16. A six-month delay favored by more EU nations remains the most likely compromise, according to a second person, an EU diplomat who also spoke on condition of anonymity because the talks are confidential.

Oil rose for the first time in four days yesterday as France pushed for faster enforcement of sanctions and as German investor confidence jumped the most on record. Crude for February delivery rose $2.01, or 2 percent, to settle at $100.71 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange.

Iran cautioned Saudi Arabia yesterday after that nation’s oil minister told CNN the kingdom can make up for any loss of crude production under sanctions on Iran.

“If this comment is the official stance of Saudi Arabia we advise Saudi officials to be more wise and responsible in their approach,” Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Salehi said, according to the state-run Fars news agency.

General Martin Dempsey, chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, said in a television interview that aired Jan. 8 that Iran has the ability to block the Strait “for a period of time,” and the U.S. would take action to reopen it.

“We’ve invested in capabilities to ensure that if that happens, we can defeat that,” Dempsey said.

The U.S. has four Avenger-class mine-sweeping ships in the Gulf -- the USS Ardent, USS Dextrous, USS Gladiator and USS Scout. The U.K.’s Royal Navy has another four vessels -- the HMS Pembroke, HMS Middleton, HMS Quorn and HMS Ramsey, according to the U.S. 5th Fleet in Bahrain.

The U.S. and its allies are concerned about the collective effect of Iran’s so-called asymmetric war-

fare tactics, combining midget submarines, mines and small fast-attack vessels, according to a European military official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss internal deliberations.

Iran's routine presence in the Persian Gulf and Arabian Sea also creates difficulty in discerning whether a particular move constitutes hostile intent, heightening the risk, the official said.

Iran has sought to demonstrate its capabilities with small surface craft in previous exercises, demonstrating the technique of swarming an enemy's ship.

The Pentagon's first public assessment of Iran's military power in April 2010 listed four midget subs, 80 patrol craft and 18 guided missile patrol boats under control of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps navy.

The Guard navy since the 1990s has purchased speedboats from Italian manufacturer Fabio Buzzi Design and has been making them domestically, according a 2009 report by the U.S. Office of Naval Intelligence. It also has Chinese-built C-14 missile boats and North Korean-made "semi-submersible" vessels that can carry two torpedoes.

The Strait "could be mined effectively in a relatively short period of time," the intelligence office's report found.

Not every mine would have to be found and cleared before shipping could resume, Chris Dougherty, an analyst with the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, told reporters yesterday.

"Tankers are remarkably robust ships," he said. "It's very difficult to sink them, even with a direct mine strike. They are designed to take a hit and keep on going. Would insurance rates spike for a little bit? Probably."

Mines in the Strait could prompt insurance companies to raise rates on tankers utilizing the waterway, which in turn could lead at least temporarily to higher oil prices.

U.S. officials who follow Iran for the U.S. Central Command estimated in 2008 that Iran possessed as many as 5,000 mines. That compares with 1,000 mines in the 1980s during its conflict with Iran and the "tanker war" with the West when it attempted to block vessels.

These include moored mines such as a variant that damaged a frigate, the USS Samuel Roberts, in April 1988 during the Operation Earnest Will escort of Kuwaiti and Saudi tankers.

The inventory also includes as many as 600 advanced mines bought from Russia, such as the MDM-3, which can be dropped from an aircraft. These "influence mines" can be programmed to detonate based on a ship's acoustic signature.

Iran was assessed in 2008 to possess a substantial inventory of mines that could be laid by the three Russian-built Kilo-class diesel subs it bought in the 1990s, officials said.

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