

ALL HANDS

Celebrating One Hundred Years

MAGAZINE OF THE U.S. NAVY

MAY 2022



A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR AND STAFF

Every month, we focus on the Navy's mission-focused people and technologies. As we survey how our naval forces continue to train, fight and equip the world's toughest Sailors, we look at our advantage at sea and the capabilities of Sailors deployed around the world.

It is our mission to reach Sailors, so please share this issue, scan the QR codes, and follow our social media channels for the latest information for Sailors by Sailors.



ALL HANDS MAGAZINE

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NAVY CONDUCTS HISTORIC TEST OF NEW LASER WEAPON SYSTEM

From Warren Duffie Jr., Office of Naval Research



The ground-based laser system homed in on the red drone flying by, shooting a high-energy beam invisible to the naked eye. Suddenly, a fiery orange glow flared on the drone, smoke poured from its engine and a parachute opened as the craft tumbled downward, disabled by the laser beam.

The February demonstration marked the first time the U.S. Navy used an all-electric, high-energy laser weapon to defeat a target representing a subsonic cruise missile in flight.

Known as the Layered Laser Defense (LLD), the weapon was designed and built by Lockheed Martin to serve as a multi-domain, multi-platform demonstration system. It can counter unmanned aerial systems and fast-attack boats with a high-power laser—and also use its high-resolution telescope to track in-bound air threats, support combat identification and conduct battle damage assessment of engaged targets.

The drone shoot-down by the LLD was part of a recent test sponsored by the Office of Naval Research (ONR) at the U.S. Army's High Energy Laser Systems Test Facility at White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico. The demonstration was a partnership between ONR, the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Research and Engineering) and Lockheed Martin.

"Innovative laser systems like the LLD have the potential to redefine the future of naval combat operations," said Chief of Naval Research Rear Adm. Lorin C. Selby. "They present transformational capabilities to the fleet, address diverse threats, and provide precision engagements with a deep magazine to complement existing defensive systems and enhance sustained lethality in high-intensity conflict."

The LLD testing supports a broader effort by the naval research and development community, partnered closely with the fleet, to mature technologies and field a family of laser weapons that can address multiple threats using a range of escalating options. These capabilities range from non-lethal measures, such as optical "dazzling" and disabling of sensors, to destruction of a target.

Laser weapons provide new precision and speed of engagement for naval warfighters. They also offer simplified logistics that are safer for ships and their crews, as lasers are not dependent on the traditional propellants or gunpowder-based ordnance found on ships.

Instead, modern high-power lasers run on electricity, making them inherently safer and able to provide weapon capability as long as a ship has power. This also means the cost per engagement for a laser weapon can be very low, since the only consumable item expended is fuel to run the system.

For years, the Department of Defense (DoD) and all the Services have recognized the promise of directed-energy weapons such as lasers, and continue to prioritize research. Recently, the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering, the Hon. Heidi Shyu, re-affirmed that directed energy is one of the DoD's critical technology areas.

ONR plays an important role in developing technologies for laser weapons and has fielded demonstration systems for operational



experimentation. Notably, in 2014 ONR saw the Laser Weapon System tested successfully aboard the USS Ponce in the Persian Gulf. More recently, ONR fielded the Laser Weapon System Demonstrator aboard the USS Portland in 2021.

Although there's no plan to field the LLD, it offers a glimpse into the future of laser weapons. It is compact and powerful, yet more efficient than previous systems. It has specialized optics to observe a target and focus laser beams to maximum effect, while also incorporating artificial intelligence to improve tracking and targeting.

"LLD is an example of what a very advanced laser system can do to defeat significant threats to naval forces," said David Kiel, a former Navy captain who is a program officer in ONR's Aviation, Force Projection and Integrated Defense Department, which managed the testing. "And we have ongoing efforts, both at ONR and in other Navy programs, to keep building on these results in the near future."

During the recent test at White Sands, the LLD tracked or shot down an array of targets—including unmanned fixed-wing aerial vehicles, quadcopters and high-speed drones representative of subsonic cruise missiles.

"We're proud to say that the Layered Laser Defense system defeated a surrogate cruise missile threat in partnership with the Navy, White Sands Missile Range and Army High Energy Laser Systems Test Facility

teams. Lockheed Martin drew best-in-class laser weapon subsystems from across the corporation, including key industry partner Rolls Royce, to support the entire threat engagement timeline from target detection to defeat," said Rick Cordaro, vice president, Lockheed Martin Advanced Product Solutions. "We leveraged more than 40 years of directed energy experience to create new capabilities that support the 21st century warfighter."

Dr. Frank Peterkin, ONR's directed energy portfolio manager, said, "The Navy performed similar tests during the 1980s but with chemical-based laser technologies that presented significant logistics barriers for fielding in an operational environment. And, ultimately, those types of lasers did not transition to the fleet or any other Service."

"Today, ONR coordinates closely with the Navy's resourcing and acquisition communities to make sure we develop laser weapon technologies that make sense for the Navy's requirements to defend the fleet and for operations in the rough maritime environment at sea," Peterkin continued. "It's a challenging problem, but Navy leadership at all levels see potential for laser weapons to really make a difference. The next few years are going to be very exciting as we work with the Navy and joint partners to make the capability we just saw demonstrated by the LLD a reality for the naval warfighter."



TRI SERVICE INTERDICT LARGE TRANS-OCEANIC COCAINE SHIPMENT

From U.S. Africa Command Public Affairs



U.S. Sailors, Coast Guardsmen and Marines embarked aboard U.S. Navy Expeditionary Sea Base USS Hershel "Woody" Williams (ESB 4), with support from the Environmental Security Programme of the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), assisted Cabo Verde authorities with the interdiction of a vessel smuggling approximately 6,000 kilograms of suspected cocaine, April 1.

As part of the African Maritime Law Enforcement Partnership (AMLEP), the joint and combined U.S. and Cabo Verdean team worked in coordination with the Maritime Analysis and Operations Centre - Narcotics (MAOC-N) and Cabo Verde's national Maritime Operations Center (COSMAR) to conduct a compliant boarding of a Brazilian-flagged fishing vessel operating in the international waters of the Atlantic Ocean near the west coast of Africa.

"The United States has a longstanding commitment supporting African states to address their security challenges in the maritime domain," said U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Gregory Anderson, director of operations, U.S. Africa Command. "Our long-term partnerships with African states, including Cabo Verde, are vital for addressing threats such as terrorism, illicit trafficking, and piracy, and building capacity in the region to ensure long-term security and stability."

Under the jurisdiction of Cabo Verde, U.S. and Cabo Verde law enforcement authorities boarded and inspected the vessel, seizing approximately 6,000 kilograms of suspected cocaine with an estimated street value at more than \$350 million. Seven individuals were taken into custody by Cabo Verde law enforcement during the counter-drug operation.

The U.S. Navy and U.S. Coast Guard have a strong relationship with Cabo Verde, along with a bilateral law enforcement agreement, enabling support to counter illicit maritime activity in waters surrounding the archipelago.

"This operation is an excellent example of strong and mutually beneficial partnership between the governments of the United States and Cabo Verde," said Vice Admiral Steven Poulin, commander, U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area. "Bilateral agreements such as this allow the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Navy, and other agencies to work alongside partner nations

in addressing their unique and shared challenges through a collaborative effort."

Over the last decade, the United States has steadily increased maritime security cooperation with partners on Africa's Atlantic coast to improve maritime domain awareness in order to help them protect their sovereign waters.

The U.S. Tri-maritime services routinely work with African partners to enhance their capabilities to counter sea-based illicit activity. Last month, Cabo Verde participated in the U.S.-led exercise Obangame Express 22, which is the largest multinational maritime exercise designed to improve regional cooperation, maritime domain awareness (MDA), information-sharing practices, and tactical interdiction expertise in West Africa.

"West African nations face serious challenges at sea, including illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, as well as narcotics trafficking," said Rear Adm. Anthony Carullo, director of operations, U.S. Naval Forces Africa. "Illicit activity in the maritime undermines the economic development of the entire African continent. This successful interdiction sends a clear message that the countries of West Africa are poised to enhance their national and regional prosperity by intercepting and prosecuting illegal activity."

Hershel "Woody" Williams is the first warship permanently assigned to the U.S. Africa Command area of responsibility. The U.S. shares a common interest with African partner nations in ensuring security, safety, and freedom of navigation on the waters surrounding the continent, because these waters are critical for Africa's prosperity and access to global markets.

For more than 70 years, U.S. Sixth Fleet forces have forged strategic relationships with our allies and partners and solidified a foundation of shared values, experiences, and vision aimed at preserving security and stability.

The ESB ship class is a highly flexible platform that may be used across a broad range of military operations. Acting as a mobile sea base, they are part of the critical access infrastructure that supports the deployment of forces and supplies to support missions assigned.

YOU GET TO EXPERIENCE A
MOMENT
IN SAILORS' LIVES.
ALL HANDS
HAS BEEN THE MOST INCREDIBLE
EXPERIENCE
OF MY LIFE IN THE NAVY.

-TODD FRANTOM

FORMER ALL HANDS MAGAZINE PHOTOGRAPHER & EDITOR



ALL HANDS IS MORE THAN A MAGAZINE.
IT'S A COMMUNITY.

TIME TO 'THROTTLE' BACK AND REINFORCE FUNDAMENTALS

From Leslie Tomaino, Naval Safety Command Safety Promotions



May is Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month and Secretary of the Navy, The Honorable Carlos Del Toro, reaffirmed motorcycle safety remains the Department of the Navy’s (DON) priority in a recent ALNAV message.

So far in fiscal year 2022, the DON has lost 10 (five Navy, five Marine Corps) Sailors and Marines due to motorcycle mishaps. Del Toro stresses reinforced leadership involvement to ensure Navy and Marine Corps riders have the training, programs and support to operate safely on our nation’s roads.

“Losing one Sailor or Marine to a motorcycle fatality brings a significant loss to family, friends, and shipmates, but what is most tragic is that the majority of causal factors can be mitigated,” said Del Toro. “As we prepare to ramp up for spring and summer, we need to aggressively address motorcycle safety and protect our Sailors and Marines.”

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) states that in 2020, motorcycle-related deaths accounted for 14% of total highway fatalities. Other disturbing statistics note, motorcyclists were 28 times more likely than vehicle occupants to die in a motor vehicle accident and four times more likely to be injured. These figures show just how vital motorcycle safety is.

“Basic riding fundamentals, sound decision-making and individual responsibility are important for our riders to mitigate unnecessary risks every time they think about getting on a motorcycle,” said Del Toro. “While May is observed as Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month, I encourage all levels of the chain of command to get involved with their riders to ensure they are taking every precaution to ride safely.”

One resource available is a motor vehicle safety-focused public awareness campaign from the Department of Transportation (DOT) that includes four areas of focus: Motorist Awareness of Motorcycles, Ride Sober or Get Pulled Over, Rider Safety and Share the Road. The first focuses on helping motorists understand driving behaviors and learn how to drive safely around motorcycles on our roadways. The second focuses on impaired riding prevention. The third focuses on ways that motorcyclists can increase their riding safety, and the fourth promotes motorcyclist awareness and safety for both motorcycle riders and motor vehicle drivers.

For more information about the four major campaigns, click [here](#) .

MOTORCYCLE SAFETY

1. TAKE BASIC RIDER'S SAFETY BRS WILL TEACH YOU THE RULES OF THE ROAD FOR MOTORCYCLES. YOU WILL ALSO LEARN THE ACTIONS TO TAKE IN UNPREDICTABLE RIDING SITUATIONS THAT CAN ARISE.

2. CHECK THE WEATHER RAIN, ICE AND SNOW CAN COMPROMISE YOUR RIDE. DRIVING IN THESE ELEMENTS IS HAZARDOUS.

3. WEAR YOUR PPE A DOT-APPROVED HELMET, EYE PROTECTION, LONG SLEEVED SHIRT OR JACKET, LONG TROUSERS, OVER THE ANKLE BOOTS AND FULL-FINGERED GLOVES. REFLECTIVE GEAR IS REQUIRED AFTER SUNSET.

4. INSPECT T-CLOCS TIRES AND WHEELS, CONTROLS, LIGHTS AND ELECTRICS, OILS AND OTHER FLUIDS, CHASSIS, AND STANDS

5. BE VISIBLE AVOID OTHER DRIVERS' BLIND SPOTS, DRIVE WITH YOUR HEADLIGHTS ON, EVEN DURING THE DAY. WEAR REFLECTIVE OR BRIGHT CLOTHING, AND ALWAYS USE YOUR TURN SIGNALS AND HAND SIGNALS.

6. BE OBSERVANT DRIVING DEFENSIVELY ALLOWS YOU TO ANTICIPATE TRAFFIC PROBLEMS AND ROAD HAZARDS. SAND, OIL AND GRAVEL CAN MAKE YOU LOSE TRACTION

7. FOLLOW AT A SAFE DISTANCE IT IS RECOMMENDED TO STAY AT LEAST FOUR SECONDS AWAY FROM THE VEHICLE IN FRONT OF YOU. THIS WILL ALLOW YOU TO STOP IN AN EMERGENCY SITUATION.

8. CARRY A FIRST-AID KIT KEEPING A BASIC FIRST-AID KIT WITH YOUR MOTORCYCLE IS A GOOD IDEA IN CASE OF INJURY. IT SHOULD INCLUDE: DISINFECTING WIPES, BANDAGES, HAND SANITIZER, GAUZE, ADHESIVE TAPE AND BAND-AIDS.

9. TAKE AN ADVANCED COURSE PRACTICE AND INCREASE YOUR SKILLS BY TAKING AN ADVANCED RIDING COURSE. YOU WILL LEARN COLLISION AVOIDANCE MANEUVERS, ADVANCED TURNING, CONTROL TIPS AND BRAKING TECHNIQUES.



NAVY LEAGUE HOSTS SEA-AIR-SPACE EXPO 2022

From Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Brent Pyfrom/All Hands Magazine



The Navy League of the United States hosted the 2022 Sea-Air-Space Exposition (SAS) to bring together defense industrial base, private-sector U.S. companies, and key military decision-makers for an innovative, educational and professional maritime-based event at the Gaylord National Convention Center, National Harbor, Maryland, last month.

The day before the SAS officially began, the Navy League held a day-long STEM Expo where different exhibits demonstrated ideas and mechanics in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

"This STEM Expo is designed to attract young men and women in our underserved communities," said Mike Stevens, retired master chief petty officer of the Navy and current CEO of the Navy League of the United States. "We want to introduce them to STEM in a maritime space. We'd love to one day see these young men and women become the shipbuilders of America, the aircraft designers of America that support the sea services."

Day one of the SAS Expo started with a Chiefs Leadership Panel where Adm. Mike Gilday, chief of naval operations (CNO), spoke alongside Gen. David Berger, commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps, and Adm. Karl Schultz, commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard. The panel discussed what maritime forces were doing to deal with growing threats of all types, evolving changes, and challenges faced in the post-pandemic world.

"What it boils down to is fielding and investing in a combat creditable force that can deter," said Gilday. "If you look at the investments we're making in the force that we're fielding this decade, whether it's [in the] light amphibious warships or unmanned [technology], the transitions are really what we're hoping come alive in the 2030s. This is an evolutionary process, and I think the budget reflects that."

The CNO spoke on technologies equipped on Navy vessels and how the budget gives life to key innovations. He addressed the warfighting front but didn't leave out the elements that aren't vessels.

"In the human weapon systems, the investments we're making in Ready Relevant Learning and live virtual constructive training are significant, in fact, groundbreaking," said Gilday. "In the space and cyber domain, we're making investments in afloat targeting cells that are groundbreaking in terms of what they deliver to the fleet commander in terms of being able to create effects downrange."

The panel of Navy Autonomy and Advanced Autonomous Technologies expanded on the production and development of unmanned surface and undersea vehicles. Rear Adm. Casey Moton, Program Executive Office, Unmanned and Small Combatants, moderated the panel and discussed the mission and functions of the new autonomy directive, how autonomy is integrated, and the implementation path ahead of the technologies.

"Some amazing things are going on around us in terms of technology," said Moton. "If you think about advanced computing, artificial intelligence, advanced networks, and communications, all of these things are happening at the same time. I believe they are going to change the way we operate in the same way naval aviation changed the way we operated 100 years ago."

Moton said he believes in Gilday's vision of the Navy becoming a hybrid fleet of manned and unmanned vessels. This is a vision already being manifested. Moton said the unmanned systems that have been fielded will become more capable and extensions of the battle force.

"They're going to become the eyes and ears of the fleet," said Moton. "They're going to enable our Sailors and ships to become much more effective as a team. Sailors that work in oceanography already know we have a fleet of unmanned systems out there. Over the next 5 to 10 years, I believe you'll see the Navy transform into this hybrid fleet the CNO talks about."

Day two kicked off with a women's leadership panel where women leaders from the Navy, the Marine Corps, and Coast Guard discussed milestones and accomplishments women have made across the services within recent decades. The panel held a conversation about gender equality and how the services are strengthened by women holding high-ranking positions.

We talked about envisioning a future where women and men fit and what that might look like in each service," said Navy Capt. Emily Bassett, president of the Sea Service Leadership Association. "We talked about simple things someone can do to make that happen such as mentoring young women. Specifically, what we wanted to get out was to come to the joint women's leadership symposium where we'll do what we did today but for a full two days."

The 100 Years of Aircraft Carrier Operations panel brought together aircraft carrier commanding officers from USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69), USS George Washington (CVN 73), USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74), and USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) to discuss the heritage and evolution of carriers as well as how their presence provides warfighters options with multi-mission capabilities and the future of carrier aviation.

"Each of the speakers talked about their Sailors," said Capt. Paul Lanzilotta, commanding officer, USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78). "We talked about how important and resilient Sailors are. One speaker spoke about the WWII generation won the war for the United States and how our current generation of Sailors are no different, if not better."

Lanzilotta talked about the Sailors aboard his ship, saying he wants them to continue the emphasis on excellence. He said they can look forward to a little more technology in their lives, and his Sailors are much more knowledgeable about networks, computers, and digital control of things happening on the flight deck. Even though technology continues to build, he has something he's looking forward to in Sailors.

"My hope is the Sailors that we have working on all the gear that we have today come up with the next layers of ideas," said Lanzilotta. "The ideas that take us to that next level. We have a lot of youth, a lot of expertise, [and] I'm

eager to hear their ideas because I know that this old guy doesn't have all the answers."

During the Future of Naval Innovation panel, Rear Adm. Lorin Selby, chief of naval research, spoke about outsourcing to the private sector. The discussion addressed the need for new ways to introduce new capabilities to warfighters in both real and virtual experiments. The speakers addressed approaches to bring industry, academia, and government to the table to focus on solving both Sailor and Marine problems with speed and at scale.

Selby asked the questions and then provided his advice on the matters. Questions like how do we go faster? How do we move technology faster from an idea, from a company into the hands of the Sailor?

"It's less about the thing and more about the process of moving the technology faster," said Selby. "How do we do that? Contracting, different approaches to experimentation, and ways to bring the warfighters in earlier to play with the technology. We can look into making the technology less hardware-centric and make it more software-centric and more about the data that you get from the device."

During the discussion, Selby continued to focus on reimagining naval power. He said Sailors in the fleet are eager to adopt the technology they're seeing in their personal lives, as part of the future of the Navy.

"Whatever device you have, you have apps that you can get whenever you want; and when you've got that app, it gets updated routinely while you sleep. They want to have that kind of ability, to have that type of device in the fleet," said Selby. "I think they are hungry to adopt technology that's already adopted in the commercial sector. So, for that technology, we have to learn how to be fast followers of the industry. Instead of thinking we have to invent it ourselves, we need to adopt what they've already developed and start using it. That's a different mindset."

On day three, one of the major highlights of the expo was the Navy Shipyards of the Future panel. The panel discussed how the Navy is looking to modernize its public shipyards and update critical manufacturing infrastructure. The day concluded with the Sea-Air-Space luncheon with retired Adm. John Richardson and retired Adm. James Stavridis discussing international security issues and the impact of climate on national security.

The Sea-Air-Space Expo is the largest maritime exposition in the U.S. and a good opportunity for first-time attendees to see the capabilities and camaraderie between our military branches.

"This is my first time coming to Sea-Air-Space," said Cmdr. Rey Cabana, an operations research analyst attached to Naval Supply Systems Command. "I'm excited to see everything from all of the industrial partners we have worked with throughout the years so it's good to see what they do for us in the Navy."

2022 Sea-Air-Space Expo concluded and left those who attend looking forward to seeing the advancement in technology from the sea services and seeing what next year brings.

PERSONNEL COMMAND REFOCUSES ON MID- TERM COUNSELING

From MyNavyHR

On the heels of the release of eNavFit to the Fleet and release of the updated BUPERSINST 1610.10F, the Navy Performance Evaluation System (EVALMAN), Navy Personnel Command's Talent Management Task Force (TMTF) announced an overall refocus on mid-term counseling. The announcement, in NAVADMIN 039/22, is designed to change the way the Navy has conversations and provides feedback to Sailors about performance.

"For us to get better as a Navy, we need to have honest, real conversations with our Sailors about development and performance improvement," said Rear Adm. Alvin Holsey, Commander, Navy Personnel Command.

A brief summary of changes to Chapter 18 of the EVALMAN include mandating midterm counseling, the introduction of coachlike skills when conducting performance counseling conversations, the optional use of the Military Individual Development Plan (IDP) as a developmental tool, steps to prepare for mid-term counseling, and how to conduct performance counseling conversations.

"It's important for supervisors to provide quality mid-term counseling because providing feedback can be difficult," said Master Chief Interior Communications Electrician Frank Leone, senior enlisted leader for MyNavy Coaching. "If not done properly, it can do more damage than good. Supervisors need to be able to deliver feedback in a way that will encourage the Sailor and leave them with a sense of direction and enthusiasm to move forward."

According to Lt. Cmdr. Erica Harris, MyNavy Coaching scientific research advisor, the current process for mid-term counseling, "does not yield consistent and measurable results related to deliberate development and desired increases in individual and unit performance."

"You have pockets of excellence across the Navy providing great mid-term counseling while others aren't engaging in these conversations at all," Harris said. "How can Sailors know how they're performing without feedback from the supervisor? Only by receiving feedback about past performance can Sailors enhance their current and future performance. And this is why the IDP is so useful because it serves as a tool for Sailors to keep track of their progress towards their performance goals, providing accountability and ownership of their development."

Read the full story in [Sailor to Sailor](#).



THE WARRIOR TOUGHNESS SMARTPHONE APP: FORTIFYING TOUGHNESS

From MyNavyHR

The Navy App Locker's Warrior Toughness (WT) smartphone application is now available for download on any Android or iOS device.

It reinforces the WT training every enlisted Sailor receives at Recruit Training Command.

"This mobile application allows Sailors to access several exercises and interactive worksheets based on elite performance research," said Rear Adm. Peter Garvin, commander, Naval Education and Training Command.

The WT application includes an interactive Warrior Mindset display. Intended as a recurring exercise, the Warrior Mindset leads Sailors through the four stages of the cycle: Commitment, Preparation, Execution and Reflection. Each section includes exercises and worksheets to help Sailors master specific skills.

"The Navy already provides Sailors with Warrior Toughness training at initial accessions programs such as boot camp," said Rear Adm. Jennifer Couture, commander, Naval Service Training Command. "Now it's available to every Sailor on their smart phones so they can continue to build these skillsets."

All worksheets automatically transfer text input into an exportable PDF file. Worksheets include Energy Management, Mental Rehearsal, Goal Setting, Self-Confidence, Self-Talk and SMART Goals exercises.

"Warrior Toughness is about making each Sailor a better warfighter. And that takes time to instill this into the mind, body and soul of every Sailor so they can apply the skills and perform at their peak," said Garvin. "It's introduced to recruits at boot camp, fortified in followon training schools and in the fleet with the smartphone app, and ingrained into everything they do as Sailors."

WT is an evidence-based, holistic and individualized human performance skillset that enhances the mental, physical and spiritual toughness with a focus on the pursuit of peak performance.

It emphasizes coequal development of toughness in the mind, body and soul. It combines performance psychology skills with character development, and teaches the Warrior Mindset, whose concepts were initially developed by members of the Naval Special Warfare community.



PLANNING FOR PCS SUCCESS

From MyNavyHR

Finding your next job and getting to your next duty station successfully starts long before the packing begins.

Sailors nearing the start of their orders negotiation window should check their records and ensure all qualifications and Navy Enlisted Classifications are listed and up to date.

This simple records check will significantly impact what you are qualified to apply for and might make the difference in getting the orders you want and need for your career. Sailors with questions about the process or what is available to them should reach out to their detailer, who is one of their main advocates during the orders process.

Once a Sailor is approved for orders and knows where they are headed, that is the time when they can build a personalized timeline, get packing tips, to-do lists and checklists with the Plan My Move online tool.

A good idea is to not finalize any personal plans until orders are in hand. It is recommended, if able, to schedule move dates and begin packing once orders are in hand.

Take a full inventory of your belongings. A smartphone, tablet or computer is an easy way to keep records of everything in your home. Free home inventory software is available at [Ready.gov](#). You could also check with your insurance company to see if it has any recommendations for an inventory app.

Start early in planning what you will carry with you and what will be packed by the movers.

Knowing what to pack and what to take with you is vital. Once you arrive at your new duty station, you may have to

wait for your belongings to be delivered. This is especially true for those relocating overseas, where furniture and vehicles could take several months to arrive.

Examples of essential items that you'll need to keep with you at all times during your move include a copy of your orders, military IDs, driver's licenses, social security cards and passports for every member of the family. If anything is damaged or lost during the move, you'll need your insurance company information and your inventory on hand to file insurance claims. Don't pack your inventory and send it with the movers — it might not make your destination. Bring it with you.

Consider whether you will need other documents such as marriage, divorce, birth and naturalization certificates, as well as medical and medication information for each family member. Consider bringing electronic copies of items as a backup on your computer or smart devices.

Research the area you are going to before you leave and have your temporary lodging details worked out ahead of time.

If you haven't been assigned one, ask your new command for a sponsor. Line up a sponsor and leverage them for details and points of contact to ensure you have someone to ask as urgent questions arise.

As you get ready to leave your current house for the last time, don't forget to forward your mail and make sure your pets are prepared for the move.

Read the full story in [Sailor to Sailor](#).

THE BATTLE OF CORAL SEA

From Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Nick Boris/All Hands Magazine



The first aircraft carrier battle of the World War II took place in the Coral Sea in the south Pacific on between May 4-8 1942. The outcome was critical in stopping Japanese momentum in the region, prevented the isolation of Australia, and played a key role in the outcome of the Battle of Midway in June 1942.

The day before, Rear Adm. Frank J. Fletcher, commander of Task Force 17, then at, sea west of the main Allied base of Noumea, received intelligence reports from Commander, Southern Pacific Forces that a Japanese detachment was headed for Tulagi Harbor in the Solomon Islands.

"This was just the kind of report we had been waiting two months to receive," said Fletcher.

On the morning of May 4, Yorktown (CV-5) launched the first of three strikes by Torpedo Squadron Five, Bombing Squadron Five, and Scouting Squadron Five, the first of which consisted of a dozen Douglas (TBD) Devastator torpedo bombers and 28 Douglas (SBD) Dauntless dive bombers. Owing to the presence of Japanese Mitsubishi F1M2 floatplane fighters discovered at Tulagi, Grumman (F4F) Wildcat fighters accompanied the second and third strikes.

Over the course of the day these attacks sank destroyer Kikuzuki, minesweeper Tama Maru, and auxiliary minesweepers Wa 1 and Wa 2. While another four ships were damaged and four floatplanes destroyed, the attack

did not prevent the establishment of a seaplane base there. After recovering aircraft, TF 17 turned south for rendezvous with TF 11 and TF 44, arriving there the morning of May 5.

The attack on Tulagi, while productive, alerted Vice Adm. Takagi in the Japanese Carrier Strike Force, comprised of carriers Zuikaku and Shokaku, two cruisers, and six destroyers, to the presence of American carriers in the area. Takagi, then far to the north of Tulagi, steamed south at speed and began search efforts from a position just south of the Solomon Islands.

Fletcher, meanwhile, was informed by radio message from Pearl Harbor that the Japanese Port Moresby strike force was at sea. After combining his two carrier forces into TF 17, the Allied ships spent the rest of May 6 refueling, intending to steam west and do battle against the Port Moresby invasion force the next day.

On the morning of May 7, the U.S. side, also at 8:15 am, a scout plane spotted part of the Port Moresby force far to the northwest. Owing to a radio coding error by the scout plane's pilot, the message came through as 'two enemy carriers and four cruisers.' By 10:13 am, a strike force was on its way too. It was an ironic moment, with both sides incorrectly thinking they had found the main enemy carrier force.

At 9:15 am, the Japanese strike spotted Neosho and Sims, and then spent the next hour and a half vainly searching for Fletcher's carriers, which were further west. At 11:15 am

the fighters and torpedo bombers abandoned the search and returned to their carriers while 36 dive bombers attacked the two USN ships. The outcome was never in doubt and Sims was sunk after three bomb hits and Neosho, hit with seven bombs, was heavily damaged and later scuttled.

In turn, the U.S. strike force spotted the Japanese covering force of light carrier Shoho and four cruisers at 10:40 am. Attacking first, Lexington's air group attacked first, scoring two 1,000-pound bomb hits, and up to five torpedo hits, severely damaging the Japanese carrier.

"After the Lexington planes departed, the enemy carrier ceased maneuvering and turned into the wind," said Capt. Elliot Buckmaster, commanding officer USS Yorktown. "A perfect target."

Yorktown's Scouting Squadron Five and Bombing Squadron Five made their dives from 18,000 feet and the combined attacks by 24 SBDs scored at least 11 more bomb hits. With Shoho now listing to starboard and on fire, Torpedo Squadron Five delivered the final blows with at least two more torpedoes hits, quickly sinking the carrier at 11:35 am that morning. This marked the first Japanese carrier sunk during the war, a feat memorialized by squadron commander Robert E. Dixon's radio message "Scratch one flat top!" Later rescue efforts would only save 203 men out of the carriers 834-man crew and all 18 of its aircraft were lost.

The primary concern that afternoon was finding the main enemy, as both sides now knew opposing fleet carriers were within range. Fletcher, concluding it would be too late to attack after recovering strike aircraft that afternoon, withdrew southwest to remain under heavy cloud cover. In contrast, Takagi, having received a report of Allied ships southeast of New Guinea, launched a small strike of 27

dive bombers and torpedo planes even though he knew they would not return until after dark. Unluckily for them, the strike was picked up on radar and TF 17 vectored 11 Wildcat fighter to intercept. Taken by surprise, and without fighter protection, the American pilots shot down seven torpedo bombers and two dive bombers at a cost of three Wildcats lost.

That night both sides feverishly prepared for battle the next day, with ordnance and plane mechanics working through the night as pilots got a few hours of sleep. Unfortunately for the U.S. carriers, the warm frontal zone that had shielded them all day with low cloud cover shifted north and east, now covering Takagi's force. Early in the morning of May 8, both sides launched search aircraft and awaited the inevitable reports.

At 8:20 am, a Lexington SBD pilot, Lt.j.g. Joseph Smith, reported both Japanese carriers through a gap in the clouds. Two minutes later, a Shokaku search plane commanded by Warrant Officer Kenzo Kanno, spotted Fletcher's two carriers. The two forces were about 240 miles apart and both sides almost simultaneously raced to launch strike aircraft.

Because of lost and damaged planes from the day before, the Japanese managed to launch a combined strike of 18 fighters, 33 dive bombers, and 18 torpedo planes at 9:15 am. The U.S. carriers each launched separate strikes, which was common practice, with Yorktown's group comprising 6 fighters, 24 dive bombers, and 9 torpedo planes away at 9:15 am and Lexington's group of 9 fighters, 15 dive bombers, and 12 torpedo planes off at 9:25 am.

Arriving over the Japanese carriers at 10:32 am, Yorktown's attack group of 39 aircraft focused on carrier Shokaku, as Zuikaku was partially hidden under a rain squall. The Japanese carrier, maneuvering radically at high speed,





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proved a difficult target. The torpedo planes did not make any hits and only two dive bombers scored 1,000-pound bomb hits, the second of which was scored by Lt. j.g. John Powers, assigned to Bombing Squadron Five (VB-5). Determined to successfully drop his ordnance on Shokaku's flight deck he pressed his dive far lower than normal, releasing his bomb at only 200-feet. The resulting explosion knocked Lt.j.g Powers' aircraft into the ocean. President Roosevelt would later recognize his heroism and devotion to duty by awarding him a Medal of Honor posthumously. During this wave a total of two U.S. dive bombers and two Japanese fighters were shot down.

Lexington's air group arrived in packets around 11:30 am, scoring a third 1,000-bomb hit after two dive bombers attacked Shokaku. The torpedo bombers conducted 11 attacks as well, all of which missed. Two other dives bombers failed to score hits on Zuikaku and the rest failed to find the Japanese carriers in the heavy clouds. These strikes were protected by 9 U.S. fighters, of which three were lost. These two strikes did enough damage to Shokaku, however. With 223 crew killed and her flight deck heavily damaged the carrier retired to the northeast, leaving Zuikaku alone to continue the battle.

Meanwhile, at 10:55 am, Lexington's radar picked up the incoming Japanese strike of 69 aircraft. Nine Wildcats on combat air patrol were vectored to intercept, as were 23 patrolling SBD's, focusing on the first wave of 18 Japanese torpedo bombers. Unfortunately, most of the Wildcats were out of position as they expected the torpedo bombers at much lower altitude, and only four enemy aircraft were shot down as they approached. Lt. William Hall, flying an SBD out of Scouting Squadron Two, distinguished himself in attacking three of those Japanese aircraft and, although badly wounded, safely lands his aircraft back to his ship. Hall's bravery and skill on this day, as well as the day before when he scored a hit on Shoho, are later awarded with the Medal of Honor.

While four of the attacking planes failed to score hits on Yorktown, the other ten maneuvered to launch an anvil or pincer attack on Lexington, with some attacking from the bow and the rest from the port side. Despite dramatic maneuvering by Capt. Sherman, his carrier was struck by two Type 91 torpedoes. The first damaged aviation gasoline storage tanks, which released gasoline vapor into the surrounding compartments, and the second destroyed the port water main, shutting down the three forward fire and boiler rooms. Despite this damage, Lexington was still able to make 24 knots.

The 33 Japanese dive bombers attacked minutes later, with 19 lining up on Lexington and 14 targeting Yorktown. Each of the American carriers took damage, with Lexington suffering two bomb hits and several near misses while Yorktown took a single 550-pound semi-armor piercing bomb hit in the center of her flight deck. The bomb penetrated four decks before exploding, killing or wounding 66 sailors, and knocking out her boilers. Another 12 near misses damaged her hull below the waterline. One of the wounded sailors

was Lt. Milton E. Ricketts, in charge of an engineering repair party, whose entire team was killed in the explosion. Facing a raging fire, the mortally wounded Ricketts opened a valve on a nearby fire plug, pulled out a hose, and directed water into the compartment below before he dropped dead on the deck. For his extraordinary heroism he was awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously.

During these attacks, four Japanese torpedo planes were shot down by anti-aircraft fire and another three torpedo bombers, one dive bomber, and one fighter were lost in aerial duels. The U.S. lost three SBDs and three Wildcats in return. Later, as the strike groups flew home, they passed each other in the air, more Japanese dive bombers were shot down. During recovery operations, both sides lost more aircraft to damage or crashes, with the U.S. losing eight and the Japanese another 20 aircraft.

Fletcher, receiving reports of heavy fighter losses, with both his carriers damaged, and low on fuel – the loss of Neosho was telling – ordered TF 17 to withdraw. At the same time, Takagi, with only 36 operational aircraft left, decided he could not protect his own ships nor the invasion fleet, and ordered both groups to Rabaul, abandoning plans to invade Port Moresby.

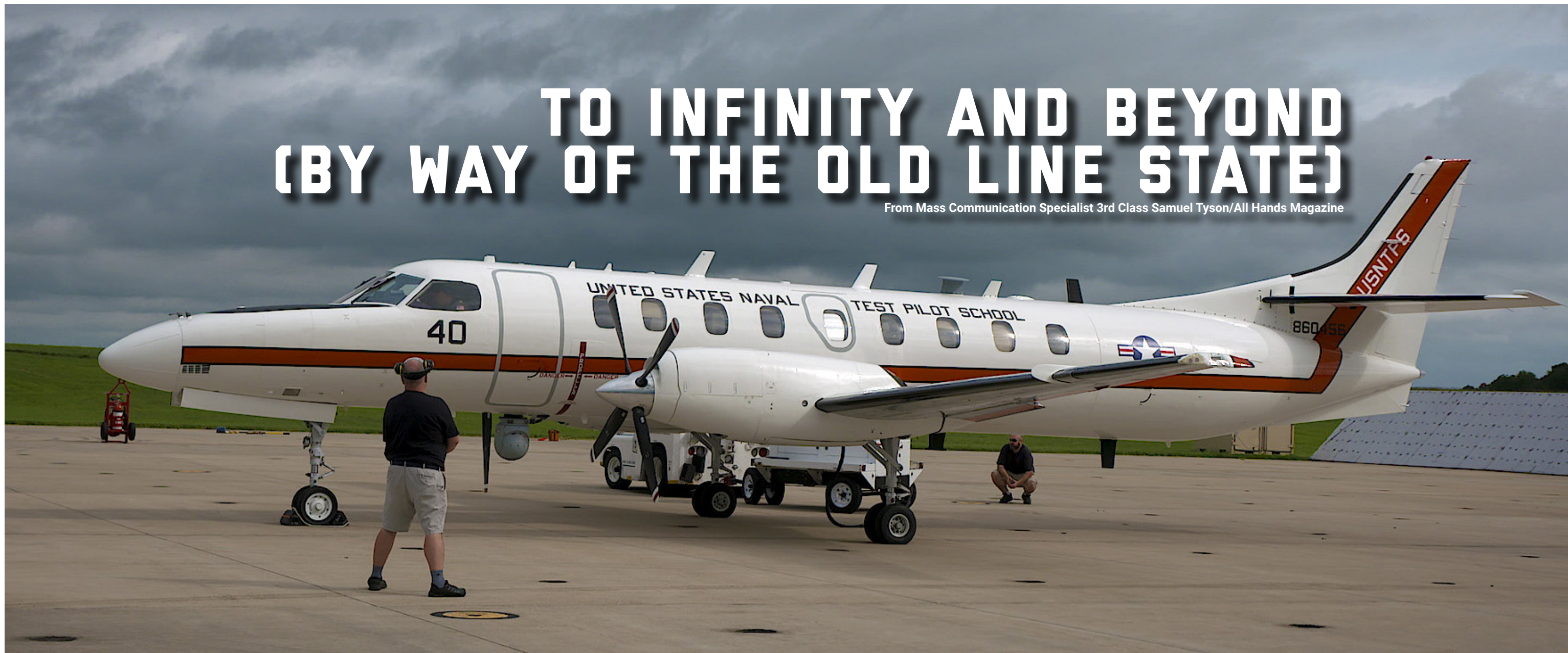
There remained one final drama to play out that day, caused by the gasoline vapor leak deep inside Lexington. Despite damage control team efforts, which had put out fires and fixed water mains, sparks from an electric motor set off a huge explosion at 12:47 pm that killed 25 men. Cmdr. Seligman, then executive officer, was blown through a scuttle hatch by the blast only moments after checking with damage control teams and suspecting everything was under control. Damage control teams fought the fires for almost three hours, but two other explosions shook the ship at 2:42 pm and 3:25 pm respectfully.

At that time, wrote Cmdr, Seligman, "The forward part of the ship was ablaze" and "Both above and below the armored deck with absolutely no means left to fight the fire." At 3:38 pm the crew reported the fires were uncontrollable. "... from this time on the ship was doomed," said Capt. Sherman, and he ordered abandon ship at 5:07 pm. Over the next two hours, USS Morris (DD417), USS Anderson (DD-411), USS Hammann (DD-412), USS Phelps (DD-360), USS Minneapolis (CA-36) and USS Dewey (DD-349) rescued 2,735 men from life rafts and the water. At 6:52 pm, Phelps was ordered to sink the burning Lexington, which it did at 7:15 pm with a salvo of five torpedoes,

The Battle of the Coral Sea is the first engagement in naval history in which opposing warships did not exchange gunfire; all damage was inflicted by naval aircraft. The outcome, though operationally a draw – each side lost one carrier – was a strategic victory for the U.S. Navy. Not only was the Japanese push southward blunted, but heavy losses to Japanese air groups as well as ship damage meant neither Zuikaku or Shokaku could participate in the upcoming Midway operation. At the same time, the Japanese erroneously believed Yorktown was also sunk and went into the Midway operation overly confident of victory.

TO INFINITY AND BEYOND (BY WAY OF THE OLD LINE STATE)

From Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Samuel Tyson/All Hands Magazine



Are you interested in earning a pilot's license? If so, the United States Naval Test Pilot School (USNTPS) in Patuxent, Maryland might not be for you—not yet, anyway.

USNTPS is a cutting-edge organization offering a demanding training course aimed at polishing the skills of highly trained United States Navy, Marine Corps, Army, Air Force, and foreign military experimental test pilots, flight test engineers, and flight test flight officers in the processes and techniques of aircraft and systems testing and evaluation.

While that may read like a mouthful, the short and sweet of it is that USNTPS is for experienced aviators only.

"Developmental testers undergo a rigorous year-long training program at USNTPS, which develops critical thinking skills and provides broadening experience in several different aircraft types," said Cdr. Jeremy DeBons, commanding officer of USNTPS. "One of the [students'] goals is to become comfortable being uncomfortable: not just surviving, but performing at a high level in an uncomfortable environment. We transition fleet aviators, who are recognized high-

performing professionals in their platforms, into the critical thinkers required to solve problems without clear solutions."

The school has existed in some form since 1945, when it was initially established under the name Test Pilot Training Division (TPT). In its 77-year history, USNTPS has evolved to consistently accommodate and enhance the most up-to-date training and educational standards in aviation. Its syllabus offers an education equivalent to a masters course in engineering. Backed by this demanding course load, many alumni have even used their sharpened skills to reach beyond the clouds into far stranger territory: outer space.

"Four of the Mercury 7 astronauts were USNTPS graduates," DeBons said. "Col. Raja Chari is a graduate and is currently on the International Space Station. Most of the astronauts fly with USNTPS memorabilia and send it back to us; we have patches that went to the moon and flags that have flown more than five million miles around the earth. The fact that they recognize our part in their success is quite humbling."

Lcdr. James Kobyra is a pilot currently under instruction at USNTPS. Kobyra has been interested in pursuing a career as a test pilot since he was a kid, and he said his journey to USNTPS is unlike those of most of his classmates.

"After graduating from Purdue University, I began a career as a thermal analyst for Sikorsky aircraft," Kobyra said. "Joining the military after having worked as a civilian engineer on military projects gives a different perspective on the acquisition process; most naval officers who attend USNTPS are accepted after their first fleet tour or shortly after beginning their first shore tour. Completing my Junior Officer (JO) tour at VFA-87, I proceeded to VFA-106 as an instructor pilot. To help further my chances at selection for USNTPS, I requested to become an Out of Control Flight (OCF) instructor pilot and OCF Standardization Officer at the Fleet Replenishment Squadron (FRS). I completed two additional fleet tours, VFA-27 as a Super JO and VFA-151 as a Department Head, prior to my selection for Class 161 at USNTPS."

Kobyra said the best part of attending USNTPS is the opportunity to glimpse into the history of Naval Aviation.

"This happens twofold," he said. "First is all the unique aircraft that we have the opportunity to fly [during the course], and the second involves the history of the school. We are reminded of it every day while walking through the halls, seeing the names of famous test pilots and astronauts on the graduation plaques, and through learning about post design changes made during test flights to produce top performing aircraft."

USNTPS has seen nearly 100 alumni move on to become astronauts with NASA. This summer, take a moment to look up at the stars and appreciate the efforts made by test pilots the world over to ensure the safety and education of astronauts and aviators alike. Who knows, you might catch a glimpse of one yourself.

Find about more about USNTPS by visiting them [here](#).

A BRIEF HISTORY OF MEMORIAL DAY

From Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Zachary Pearson/All Hands Magazine



Memorial Day is a federal holiday where the sacrifices of American service members are honored and remembered. The observance takes place on the last Monday of May, a tradition that originated just after the Civil War when veterans, their families, and the public started to hold observances honoring the many Americans that died during that bloody conflict.

Before Memorial Day was a federal holiday, it was known as Decoration Day, owing to the the tradition of decorating the graves with flowers, photographs, and keepsakes. Communities held observances on various days during the spring each year and it wasn't until May 5, 1868, that Gen. John A. Logan of the Grand Army of the Republic, an organization of former Union sailors and soldiers, rallied for a unified nationwide day of remembrance.

In his plea, Gen. Logan said, "The 30th of May 1868, is designated for the purpose of strewing with flowers, or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country during the late rebellion, and whose bodies now lie in almost every city, village and hamlet churchyard in the land."

And indeed, just over three weeks later, former Union General and Ohio Congressman James A. Garfield gave a speech at Arlington National Cemetery in front of 5,000 people, where he said, "We do not know one promise these men made, one pledge they gave, one word they spoke; but we do know they summed up and perfected, by one supreme act, the highest virtues of men and citizens. For the love of country, they accepted death, and thus resolved all doubts, and made immortal their patriotism and their virtue."

After the speech, the audience decorated over 20,000 graves of both Union and Confederate soldiers buried at Arlington. Following this first Decoration Day, many Northern states adopted the tradition making it an official state holiday. Southern states, however, continued to hold their own observances on different days for numerous years.

Decoration Day remained focused on honoring the fallen service members of the Civil War until 1918 and the end of World War I, when it evolved to honor the sacrifice of all Americans that died for their country no matter what war. Over the years, the term Decoration Day gradually transformed into Memorial Day, which is how it is known today.

In 1968, Congress passed the Uniform Monday Holiday Act, which moved the dates of some holidays to create standard three-day weekends for federal offices. Memorial Day was changed from May 30 to the last Monday in May and officially made a federal holiday.

Today, people on Memorial Day still follow the tradition of decorating graves with flowers and flags but has grown to include barbecues, weekend family trips, county fairs, and civic parades. Some of the biggest Memorial Day parades happen in Washington D.C., Chicago and New York, though many hundreds of smaller parades take place in cities and towns all across the country. The holiday has evolved in many ways over the years, but the love and respect Americans give to those who have sacrificed everything for their country remains unchanged.

Information cited from [here](#) and [here](#).



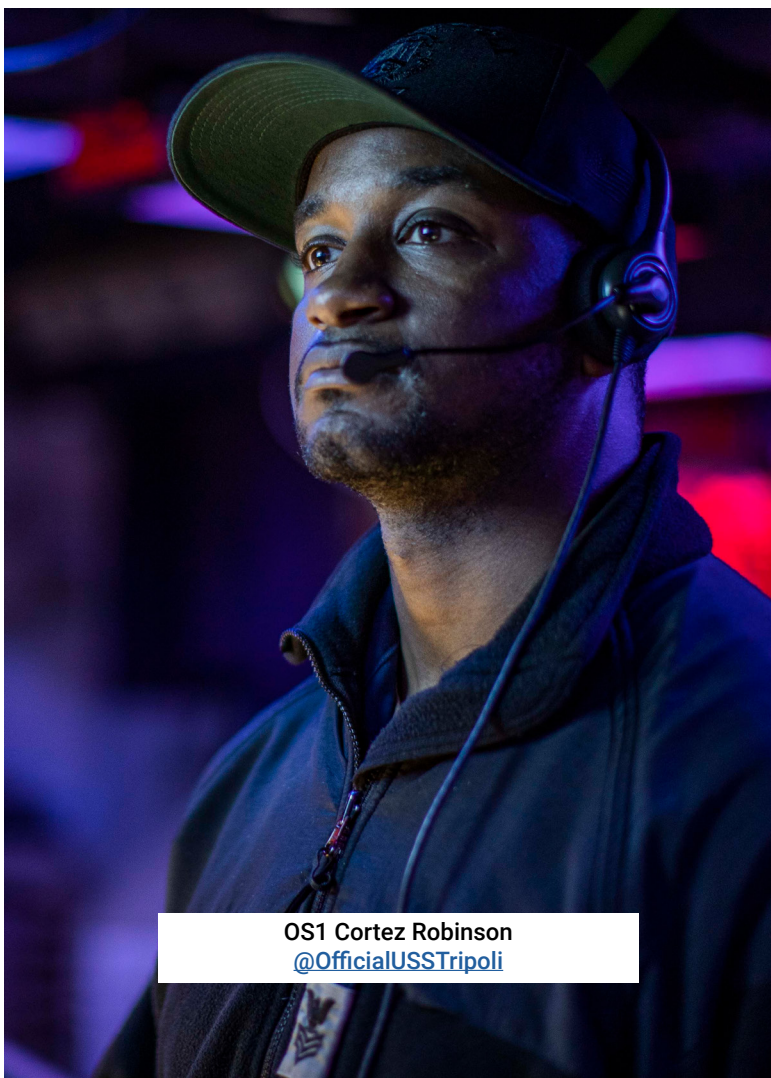


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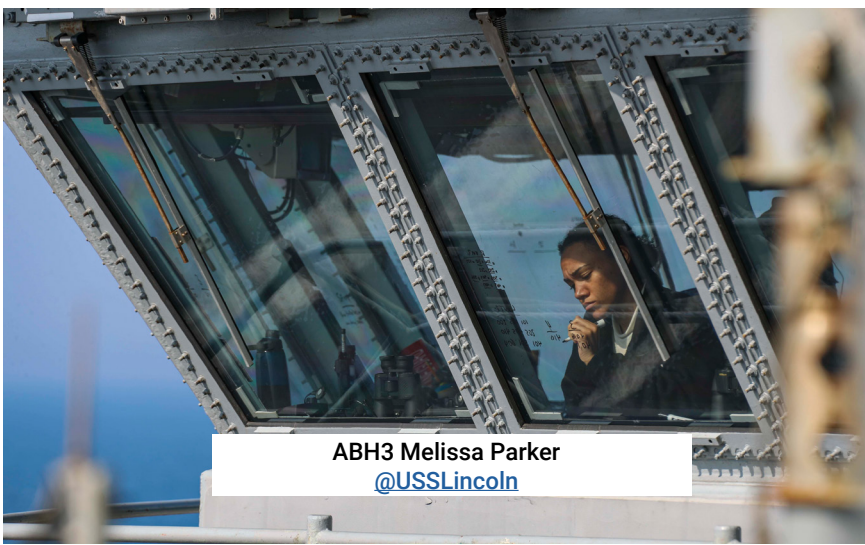
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THE LIFE OF A TEST PILOT

From Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Sonja Wickard/All Hands Magazine



A United States test pilot's job is vital to the success of the Navy's mission to maintain, train and equip combat-ready naval forces; capable of winning wars, deterring aggression and sustaining freedom of the seas.

The path a person needs to walk to become a test pilot is long and difficult. Someone who wants to be a pilot needs to be prepared to give their all regarding hard work, dedication and education.

Cpt. Elizabeth "Lizard" Somerville, current commanding officer of Air Test and Evaluation Squadron (VX) 23 Naval Air Station Patuxent River, MD and perspective commodore of Naval Test Wing Atlantic (NTWL) has had a love for flying since childhood.

"I ended up getting my pilot's license in high school, almost before I had a driver's license," Somerville said. "I did get my driver's license first, but not by much."

Somerville said a passion for aviation seems to run in the family and that she has always been fascinated with planes since she was young.

"I had a grandfather, who was a seaplane pilot. He flew PBVs (Consolidated PBV Catalina) in WWII. My other grandfather, who was a radioman also in the WWII timeframe,

owned a small airplane and growing up, I would have the opportunity to fly with him."

Learning to fly with her grandfather and Somerville's intense interest in aviation in general became the building blocks for a career where anything that had to do with airplanes was a source of immense enjoyment to her. It grew into a love for being around people who were as fascinated by aviation as she was.

The duties of a test pilot may seem simple at first glance. To become a pilot and fly various types of aircraft for testing. The reality is a bit more involved. Just ask Lt. Alexandra Mensing a Naval Flight Officer (NFO) at VX-23.

According to Mensing, while the test pilots at VX-23 don't fly as often as the fleet, they do manage to keep quite busy. In short, a typical flying day for an NFO might look something like this.

The pilots start with a briefing alongside engineers and/or whoever is flying with them to figure out what it is they're testing for that day. They also discuss whether or not they would be communicating with the engineers during the flight or bringing the data they've collected to them afterward. Then the flight. Lastly, flight data is passed along to the engineers

so they can discuss more, or if they communicated during the flight, they go over all details.

After debriefing with the engineers, the NFOs will note what was accomplished in that particular day's flights before planning for more testing or other flights.

"There's always something else on the plate," Mensing explains. "Whether it's another test plan that you're reading through and editing or working with your engineers to figure out what's left with other projects."

Mensing knew she wanted to go into naval aviation as soon as she started meeting and talking with members of the community. She said she loved the personalities and the dynamic aspect of the job; Somerville explained a reason why.

"Everybody who wants to be a test pilot initially comes from a fleet background, so they understand what their particular aircraft is, how it operates and its mission environment. That's very important to what we do here," Somerville said. "We develop stuff and get it back out to the fleet so that it operates in the way that the aircraft needs to operate."

Somerville explains after attending an 11-month course at the U.S. Naval Test Pilot School and reporting to their assigned squadrons, a test pilot or Naval Flight Officer (NFO) is assigned a project(s), namely aircraft to assess. Test pilots and NFOs work a variety of projects in addition to the ones they are already assigned.

"They work on everything from the development of the air vehicle to the subsystems that make it operate," said

Somerville. "In the developmental test, our test pilots and NFOs have the opportunity to work on and improve all our programs to advance capability and operational readiness for naval and Marine Corps aviation."

As much as Somerville loves aviation and aircraft, there is something she values over even the most costly and advanced aircraft the Navy possesses—people.

"I haven't had a place that I have not truly enjoyed working. The jobs have been great. I've loved them," Somerville said. "But I think first and foremost the things that have really made it that way have been the people that I've had the opportunity to work with, both military and civilian, who have been absolutely committed to the jobs; committed to the missions and very motivated, genuinely great people to work with day in and day out."

"She's (Somerville) an awesome leader. She genuinely cares about her people," Mensing said. "I've learned a lot from her from the short time that I've been here."

For Somerville, the support and opportunities to improve she offers people as CO is one of the most important aspects of her job. One she hopes to continue to perform and improve on in her next role as Commodore of Naval Test Wing Atlantic.

"I feel a strong level of commitment to the mission. You know, we are here flying very expensive airplanes," said Somerville. "We are here testing extremely expensive equipment. And our ultimate end goal is to deliver the most capable equipment to the fleet."





CELEBRATING JUNETEENTH

From Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Carson Davis/All Hands Magazine

June 19, also known as Juneteenth, was a date written into history. The Emancipation Proclamation was declared on January 1, 1863, by President Abraham Lincoln. However, slaves in Galveston, Texas, were not notified of the declaration until June 19, 1865. As a result, African Americans observe Juneteenth as the day the last slave was freed. Petty Officer 1st Class Dominic McNeil, an instructor and a member of the Equal Opportunity Committee at the Defense Information School (DINFOS), compares Juneteenth to our nation's Independence Day.

"We have July 4, the Independence Day in our nation, but during that day, African Americans, or Black Americans, were not 100% free. Juneteenth is a celebration."

Federal recognition of Juneteenth was signed into law just last year on June 17, 2021, furthering the commemoration of African American strides in our democracy since the implementation of Martin Luther King Day in 1983.

Seaman Heaven Brown, an admin clerk for Strike Fighter Squadron 154 (VFA-154) "The Black Knights," thinks that federal recognition of Juneteenth is a step in the right direction for the military. "I feel like it's a good thing for Blacks in the service to be able to rejoice in our culture. The history of Black Americans in this country is damaging; the recognition of our freedom is just as important as our nation's."

Knowing U.S. history and the roots of Juneteenth strengthens its impact on our military. Brown said it could benefit service members to learn more about the new federal holiday.

"Making it an actual federal holiday gives people the opportunity to educate themselves," said Brown. "What people had to go through to make this day, what my ancestors had to go through to give this opportunity to us, and to understand the severity of how things were."

To understand the gravity of Juneteenth, and what it means to be a Black American throughout history and in America today, we must look back to our past to better all our futures.

"I think it's vital for all Americans to understand the history of Black Americans because it's a big fight for us to be recognized as contributors to society," said McNeil. "The contributions they make to the advancements of our nation, and for other ethnicities to recognize Juneteenth, helps improve relations, both racially and culturally, as a country."

The recognition and pride associated with the disestablishment of power over African Americans and the historic mark of their independence, helps right the wrongs of America's past.

"We've been fighting for freedom and equality for all different races, genders, and ethnicities for years and recognizing it is in the right direction," said McNeil. "The government has decided to understand the struggles in this country and try to right some of the wrongs that were bestowed upon us. As far as the Navy goes, it's important to recognize our contributions to the Navy and the history of Black Americans in the Navy, it's a great thing."

Righting the wrongs of the past and federally recognizing equality for all Americans and service members by implementing holidays such as Juneteenth further amplifies our cohesiveness as a country.

As service members, our duty comes first, but to build and maintain an effective fighting force, we must consider everyone. We are made up of every ethnicity that the United States of America has to offer and being transparent with each other is needed to maintain an effective military.

"Have more conversations, understand the beginnings, and just step back and look at perspective," said McNeil. "Change, culture, environment, and the tensions that flare up during these conversations is key to understanding where they're coming from and that we might not always agree."

These conversations are sparked by recognizing holidays like Juneteenth and Martin Luther King Day. Having conversations centered around rights, whether civil or ethical, and recognizing all people in our country is the right thing to do.

"If you're raised in a certain way of doing things and you're used to it, that's where your morals come from, as people, we try to understand it," said Brown. "But if we cannot be open-minded with each other how are we ever going to be able to fight for each other?"

Service members overcome adversity daily, whether it's haze gray and underway or boots on the ground. The last thing they should have to worry about is the color of their skin affecting how they fight for their country. Historical changes like a federally recognized Juneteenth are significant to not only service members but to the United States of America as a whole.

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