

PEOPLE PLANES PLACES

EDITED BY JO2 DAN BALL

Awards

Naval Aviation News won First Place in the **2002 CHINFO Merit Awards** in the category “Internal Publications for a Specific Audience”—earning its second consecutive First Place honor. The award recognizes exemplary achievements in the internal media products of Navy commands and individuals. First Place winners go on to compete in the interservice Thomas Jefferson Awards, sponsored by the Department of Defense.

Winners of the **2002 Grampaw Pettibone Awards** were: individual, LCdr. Kenneth E. Durbin, HSL-51; unit, VFA-87; and special, Commander Electronic Attack Wing, U.S. Pacific Fleet. The awards are presented to individuals or organizations that contribute the most toward aviation safety awareness through publications.

The winner of the **2002 Captain Michael J. Estocin Award** for meritorious achievement by a strike fighter squadron was VFA-131. The annual award is presented to the Navy’s best overall F/A-18 squadron.

Winners of the **2002 Noel Davis Trophy**, signifying battle efficiency in a reserve squadron, were: HCS-5, NAWC Point Mugu, Calif.; VFA-201, NAS JRB Fort Worth, Texas; VFC-13, NAS Fallon, Nev.; VP-92, NAS Brunswick, Maine; VR-53, NAF Washington, D.C.; VR-56, NAS Oceana, Va.; and VR-61, NAS Whidbey Island, Wash.

VFA-15 received the **2002 Commander Strike Fighter Wing Atlantic (CSFWL) Maintenance**

Award, and VFA-15’s Ltjg. Mitch Allen was selected as the **2002 CSFWL Ground Officer of the Year**.

Lt. Benjamin Domoto of HSL-44 was the recipient of the **2002 Navy League Stephen Decatur Award** for superior operational competence.

Commanding General Fourth MAW won the **2002 CNO Readiness Through Safety Award**

Installation Excellence. The award recognizes an installation whose command has made the best use of available resources to accomplish its mission.

HSL-49 received the **Lockheed Martin Superior Maintenance Award** in recognition of its hard work and dedication to sustained exceptional performance in rotary-wing maintenance.

Scan Pattern

The **Naval Education and Training Command (NETC)** was established in mid-March

at Pensacola, Fla., concurrent with disestablishment of the Chief of Naval Education and Training. NETC is designed to focus specifically on strategy, policy and resource issues and reports directly to the Chief of Naval Operations. The NETC claimancy is responsible for the individual education and training of all Navy and many joint personnel, both officer and enlisted. NETC oversees a network of programs extending from coast to coast to overseas facilities and ships at sea. NETC activities are staffed by approximately 22,000 military and civilian personnel at more than 190 facilities worldwide. Each day, an average of nearly 40,000 officer, enlisted and civilian government personnel train in more than 3,600 different courses offered through NETC. For more information, visit www.cnet.navy.mil.

Task Force Uniform (TFU) met in Washington, D.C., in March to begin laying the groundwork for an



An F/A-18 Hornet from VFA-131 carries the new GBU-32 Joint Direct Attack Munition. Photo by Capt. William E. Gortney.

and the **Daedalians’ Admiral James S. Russell Flight Safety Award**. The annual awards recognize the command that contributes the most toward readiness and economy of operations through safety.

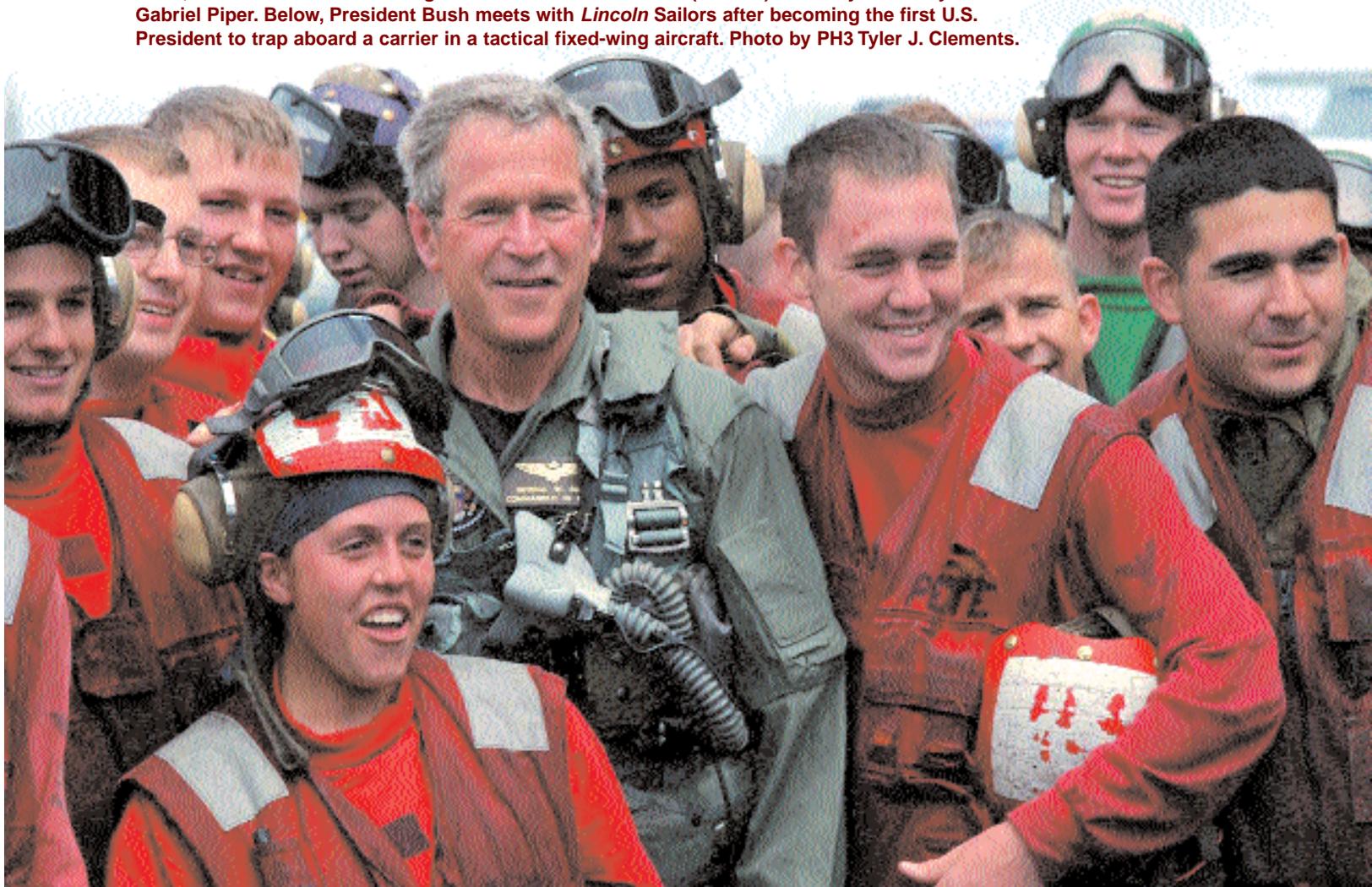
HT-18 received the **2002 CNATRA Training Excellence Award** for effectively and efficiently training future Naval Aviators.

NAS Pensacola, Fla., earned the Department of the Navy’s **2003 Commander in Chief’s Award for**



PRESIDENT TRAPS ABOARD LINCOLN

Above, a Sea Control Squadron 35 S-3B Viking, designated "Navy 1" and carrying President George W. Bush, makes an arrested landing on board *Abraham Lincoln* (CVN 72) on 1 May. Photo by PHAN Gabriel Piper. Below, President Bush meets with *Lincoln* Sailors after becoming the first U.S. President to trap aboard a carrier in a tactical fixed-wing aircraft. Photo by PH3 Tyler J. Clements.



assessment of Navy uniforms and to discuss options for implementing a more professional, sensible, cost-effective set of uniforms for the fleet. After fleet Sailors expressed concerns about the current status of Navy uniforms, CNO Adm. Vern Clark determined there should be an evaluation of the requirements. He tasked MCPON(SS/AW) Terry Scott to review the Navy's seabag to help meet the needs of tomorrow's Sailors. For the next several months, representatives from various Navy communities, including surface forces, naval air forces, submarines and Seabees, will address those concerns, as well as other issues regarding the current status of the seabag and uniform regulations. The assessment is expected to end 30 September with a report to be presented to the CNO in October.



A VMFA-115 F/A-18 Hornet from *Harry S. Truman* (CVN 75) releases a Joint Direct Attack Munition over Iraq.

The TFU's goal is to evaluate the usefulness of each item against specific factors with an eye towards minimizing the number of uniform items required. Some of the issues

that will be addressed include developing a working uniform that can be used at sea or ashore and across all communities; establishing a service uniform for E-1 through

VF-32 HONORS COLUMBIA'S CREW

By Lt. Jesse Carpenter, VF-32 PAO

Painting nose art on military aircraft dates back to WW I, reaching its height in WW II. From the toothy, sinister grins of the P-51s to the B-17s and their famous Vargas pin-up girls, nose art on combat aircraft has exemplified a squadron's unique spirit. In keeping with tradition, the *Swordsmen* of Fighter Squadron (VF) 32 have revived the time-honored practice. All of the squadron's freshly painted F-14B Tomcats now proudly sport a new look: a victorious knight on the field of battle holding the American flag in one hand and in the other, a sword held to the throat of a vanquished foe. Above the image the squadron motto is displayed in Latin, "*Deus Et Patria*," meaning "God and Country."

One of the squadron's Tomcats has a further addition. As the only squadron aboard *Harry S. Truman* (CVN 75) with an aircraft bearing the number 107, VF-32 deemed it fitting to paint a memorial on this fighter to honor the memory of the crew of the space shuttle Columbia, which broke apart upon reentry on 1 February. The *Swordsmen* added the letters "STS" before

the 107 on the right side of the aircraft's nose. In addition, a silhouette of the space shuttle with the names of all STS 107 crew members is painted on both sides of the nose.

When asked how they came up with the idea, VF-32 maintenance control officer Ltjg. Jeff Tidd stated, "It was really a collaborative effort to honor and remember the crew of Columbia. It also had special meaning for the skipper as he was professionally associated with astronaut Cdr. William McCool. Each time anyone looks at 107, they can remember with pride the crew of Columbia, honoring their service to our country and space exploration. From the initial concept to the finished product, it represents the squadron's heartfelt tribute to those individuals."



THE EAGLES FLY IN OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

By Lt. Robert Kihm, VFA-115 PAO

It was truly a storybook cruise for the *Eagles* of VFA-115 aboard *Abraham Lincoln* (CVN 72). Flying the F/A-18E Super Hornet on its inaugural deployment, they participated in three major military operations.

The first combat missions were flown over Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Next, they entered the Arabian Gulf to participate in Operation Southern Watch. After record-breaking performances in those operations, the *Eagles* began heading home. But with talk of war dominating the headlines and rumors of going back to Iraq spreading, the decision was made to keep *Lincoln* forward deployed. Following a detachment to Pearce RAAF, Perth, Australia, and almost three months of waiting and uncertainty, CVW-14 began flight operations on 19 March in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF).

As the war began, the *Eagles* were quick to showcase the capabilities of their new aircraft. Among the Super Hornet's many improvements are increased bringback, two extra wing stations and a larger internal fuel capacity. The squadron operated its F/A-18Es in a single-centerline configuration which freed up wing stations for more ordnance. Taking advantage of these attributes, two VFA-115 Super Hornets delivered their first-ever quantity-four JDAM release in support of the "Shock and Awe" campaign. The capability for a single aircraft to deliver 8,000 pounds of ordnance to four targets allows a section of Super Hornets to perform what in the past would take two divisions of aircraft to accomplish. In addition, the extra fuel the Super Hornet carries allowed for single-cycle close air support missions deep into Iraq while maintaining an impressive and flexible 4,000-pound



An F/A-18E Super Hornet from VFA-115 launches from *Abraham Lincoln* (CVN 72) in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

loadout of recoverable ordnance. In addition, the Super Hornet's new IDECM suite, including the latest radar warning receiver, extra chaff and flares, towed missile decoys and radar jammers, gave the pilots enhanced confidence to operate deep into the heart of Iraq's air defense systems.

The *Eagles* expended more than 350,000 pounds of ordnance during OIF, with a success rate of 98 percent. VFA-115's outstanding maintenance department sustained an impressive combat sortie completion rate while averaging over 55 flight hours per day throughout the campaign.

An improved strike capability wasn't the only way VFA-115 was able to contribute to the war effort. Along with VS-35, the squadron provided organic tanking for the air wing. Along with strike sorties, they began flying 18 to 20 tanking sorties a day since one *Eagles* Super Hornet tanker could provide fuel to two strike aircraft. Throughout the conflict, VFA-115 passed over 2.3 million pounds of fuel, generating more than 430 extra combat sorties.

After a 10-month cruise, CVW-14 and *Lincoln* finally headed home. Flying over 5,400 hours and expending 460,000 pounds of ordnance with a sortie completion rate of 97.5 percent shows that the *Eagles* have successfully integrated the Super Hornet into fleet operations. Participating in three operations in two theaters, the *Eagles* have proven themselves to be one of the finest strike-fighter squadrons in the Navy.

E-6 that can be worn year-round; streamlining the Navy Uniform Regulations to make them more user friendly; and designing or redesigning uniforms to accommodate various body shapes and sizes. Although several changes may be made upon the completion of the assessment, the more than 200-year history of the U.S. Navy

will not be affected. Tradition, historical acceptance and longevity are factors TFU will consider before making a final decision about any uniform. Sailors should not expect a drastic makeover in Navy fashion anytime soon, but they can expect a change that will be more convenient to them whether they are ashore or at sea.

Records

HT-8 surpassed 900,000 Class A mishap-free hours.

HC-3 surpassed 182,500 Class A mishap-free hours.

HSL-44B surpassed 125,000 Class A mishap-free hours.

TRAWING-1 surpassed 100,000 Class A mishap-free hours.

HSL-51 surpassed 75,000 Class A mishap-free hours.

Rescues

On 7 March members of **HSL-37** embarked aboard *Crommelin* (FFG 37) rescued several fishermen from the fishing vessel *Don Teo* in the eastern Pacific, 250 nautical miles from land. The boat was noticed by aircrew members while on patrol. *Crommelin* headed for the site to provide assistance and upon arrival learned the vessel had been adrift for three days without a radio. The *Don Teo* crewmen were in a general state of dehydration and sun exposure, and one had suffered a deep cut that needed medical attention. A *Crommelin* engineer determined the boat's fuel pump had gone bad. Since there was no spare, the frigate rigged the vessel for towing and "delivered" *Don Teo* and crew to Manta, Ecuador.

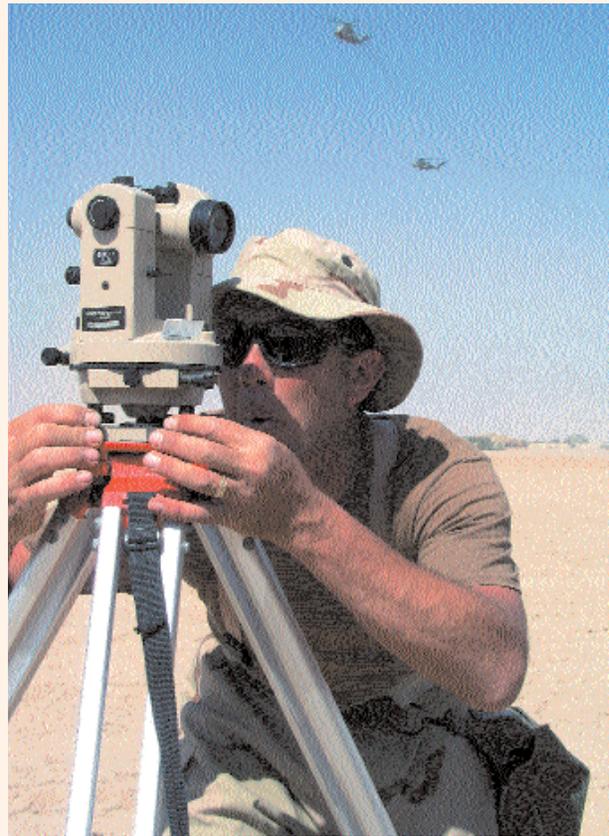
Search and rescue teams from **HS-3** on board *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71) and **HS-7** aboard *Harry*



During a stormy night in 1948, a junior pilot from VS-24 drew a chalk figure of a lightning-struck cat on the ready room briefing board. The figure stayed there through the night while the squadron flew successful multiple sorties through the bad weather. Today, the "Duty Cat" is incorporated into a flag and patches, and has become the squadron's symbol of safety.

NAS KEY WEST SEABEES GO TO IRAQ

EA1 Larry S. Lautar, from Construction Battalion Unit 402, NAS Key West, Fla., surveys the Iraqi desert to shoot the center line for the construction of Fleet Hospital Three (FH-3), the Navy's first Expeditionary Medical Facility in a war zone. The establishment of FH-3 added to the lifesaving capabilities of Navy medicine in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.



JOC Al Bloom

S. Truman (CVN 75) rescued two civilian helo pilots from USNS *Spica* (T-AFS 9). The pilots went down at night in the eastern Mediterranean during a replenishment at sea with *Truman*. The HS-3 crew was first on the scene and located the survivors. One pilot was wearing a strobe light so the HS-3 crew hoisted the one who was not, for fear of losing him in the darkness. The HS-7 crew then pulled up the other pilot. Both victims were returned to *Spica* and were found to be in good condition.

A CGAS Cape Cod, Mass., aircrew rescued the crew from the tug *Seawind* after its barge collided with it in heavy seas as the tug headed for the entrance to a river. Despite severe weather conditions and the close

proximity of the barge's crane, the aircrew hoisted the crew members aboard their HH-60J Jayhawk seconds before the barge was dashed onto the beach. For their efforts, the aircrew members received the Red Cross Sea Rescue Award.

An HH-65 Dolphin from CGAS Humboldt Bay, Calif., rescued an injured surfer caught on the rocks just south of Trinidad, Calif., on 11 April. The helo was performing an environmental survey when the call came in. Since a flight surgeon was on board as an observer, the helo immediately headed toward the scene. Once there, the flight mechanic deployed a rescue basket down to the victim, who was being tended by rescue workers. The victim was hoisted aboard and flown to a local hospital for treatment.

"GATORS" MANAGE SKIES DURING OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

By JOC William Polson, *Tarawa* (LHA 1) PAO

Northern Australians will tell you that river crocodiles may not be known for flying, but they'll surprise you by how far they can jump from the water into the air if they want something badly enough. After Operation Iraqi Freedom, RAdm. W. Clyde Marsh, Commander Task Force 51, could say the same about his "Gators." The amphibious forces under his command jumped into fleet air defense identification in some new ways to unseat Saddam Hussein's regime. And somewhat like the Australian "jumping crocs," this group of Arabian Gulf Gators had some problems to overcome.

"Operating in the Gulf was complex because of the sheer magnitude of the forces," said Marsh, who led all coalition amphibious forces during Operation Iraqi Freedom. "We had over 130 ships, with three aircraft carriers in the northern Arabian Gulf and two in the Mediterranean. That required close coordination, especially with the aircraft."

The numbers of military aircraft in the gulf airspace caused overcrowding in an area the size of New Mexico. Amphibious ships under Task Force 51 brought more than 200 aircraft and the United Kingdom added approximately 75 more. In addition to the planes from the three aircraft carrier wings, there were a number of Air Force flights from nearby U.S. bases and from the United States, as well as commercial flights from the surrounding countries. "And when missiles were launched many of them came through this area," added Marsh. "so everything had to be controlled precisely."

To manage this congestion, three entities were established, named Red Crown, Green Crown and Blue Crown. Red Crown controlled the maritime air space in the northern Arabian Gulf for the carriers' fixed-wing aircraft. Green Crown provided a similar function from the guided missile cruiser *Bunker Hill* (CG 52). Blue Crown established an area that covered the United Kingdom coalition amphibious forces operating close to the beach. It provided air coverage

so that anything flying in the area could be identified, classified and processed.

The "crown" assignments marked a first for amphibious forces at a task-force level. Traditionally, Aegis-class cruisers provided fleet air defense identification for large Navy surface groups. However, during this operation, *Bunker Hill* and other cruisers were heavily tasked with strike missions, escort duties and maritime interdiction operations. To allow the

cruisers to perform these duties, Navy leaders found an alternative in the Gator Navy.

For approximately two months starting in mid-March, the Blue and Green Crown assignments rotated between *Tarawa* (LHA 1), *Boxer* (LHA 4) and *Saipan* (LHA 2). During the peak of air operations against Iraq, personnel associated with fleet air defense identification on these amphibious assault ships took on expanded



A *Bunker Hill* (CG 52) maritime interdiction operations team member fires a few rounds from a rigid hull inflatable boat. Photo by PH2 Richard Moore.

responsibilities. The tactical air control squadrons, combat information centers and helicopter direction centers pooled their capabilities to defend approximately 30 U.S. and coalition amphibious ships in the northern Arabian Gulf.

"We saw from 500 to 600 sorties a day within the amphibious airspace for which Green Crown was responsible," said LCdr. Kailin Wilson, air defense coordinator for Tactical Air Control Squadron 12 embarked on *Tarawa*.

Green and Blue Crown covered a 1,600-mile area from the southern border of Kuwait across the northern Arabian Gulf to Iran and everything north of that. This umbrella of air defense identification extended into Iraq, and supported Marine AV-8B Harrier II jets and helicopters, which in turn supported Marines battling toward Baghdad along the Tigris River valley.

For the Green and Blue Crown operations, a measure of success came in a color-coded term: zero "blue-on-blue" engagements.

"There were no incidents in which any coalition ships in the Arabian Gulf shot down or killed a friendly aircraft," said Wilson. "We're proud to say that the measures we put in place allowed us to identify

TOP GUN AIR INTERCEPT CONTROLLERS LIVE ON THE EDGE

By JO1 Janet M. Davis, *Kitty Hawk* (CV 63) Public Affairs



Ens. Fred Brummer, one of *Kitty Hawk's* (CV 63) three Top Gun air intercept controllers, performs duties as tactical action officer in the ship's Combat Direction Center. Photo by PH3 Lindsay Minturn.

There are times on a ship when things can feel commonplace. But when you walk into a ship's Combat Direction Center, you are immediately aware that you're in the thick of things.

Lit only by the bluish lights of equipment being used, the center is filled with computer screens which give a trained viewer a picture of the ship's entire area of operations. Here, a team of air intercept controllers (AICs), consisting mostly of enlisted operations specialists, search virtual skies to identify any enemy threat to the ship.

These Sailors are led by one of many officers qualified to be a tactical action officer (TAO). One such TAO rose to this position from the enlisted ranks through excellence as the best of the best.

Ens. Fred Brummer is one of three Top Gun air intercept controllers stationed aboard *Kitty Hawk* (CV 63). After proving himself for seven years in the enlisted ranks as an exceptional AIC, achieving 500 air intercepts and becoming a first class petty officer, Brummer was nominated for the prestigious Top Gun program at the Navy Fighter Weapons School in Miramar, Calif. After his Top Gun training, Brummer went on to work on Carrier Air Wing 5's staff as a

subject-matter expert on air defense operations. While there, he submitted a package and was selected to become a limited duty officer. "The great thing about going through the Top Gun program is that a lot of people end up getting commissioned," he said. "I believe it's helped me get promoted and given me opportunities to work in joint exercises."

Brummer, who has had 3,300 live intercepts in his 12 years as a Top Gun AIC, knows he's got his work cut out for him, but he says he likes it that way. "I like the fast pace of it," he said. "Specifically in air defense operations, it all happens very fast as opposed to the defense operations of ships or subs. And as a TAO, I have

the authority to direct the use of weapon systems or to order fighters to shoot in defense of *Kitty Hawk*."

Other Top Gun AICs take to the real skies to seek out and attack enemy aircraft. Lt. Chris Hulitt of Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron 115 recently completed the Top Gun program, now located at NAS Fallon, Nev., and is in the midst of his first operation. He enjoys essentially the same job as Brummer in an offensive role as mission commander from an E-2C Hawkeye. "The thing I love most about my job is having situational awareness in what's going on everywhere—being able to be the crucial link to helping our fighters get the job done," said Hulitt. "It's our job to give them the right information when they want it and how they need it."

Many know about the school from the movie starring Tom Cruise. Both Hulitt and Brummer agree, however, that the Top Gun school is nothing like the movie. "Top Gun was the best experience I have ever had in a Navy school," said Brummer. "But there's no competition. Nobody's trying to get a Top Gun trophy. It's all built on teamwork, and we're all there to help each other."

FUEL TECHS KEEP TRUMAN ON THE GO

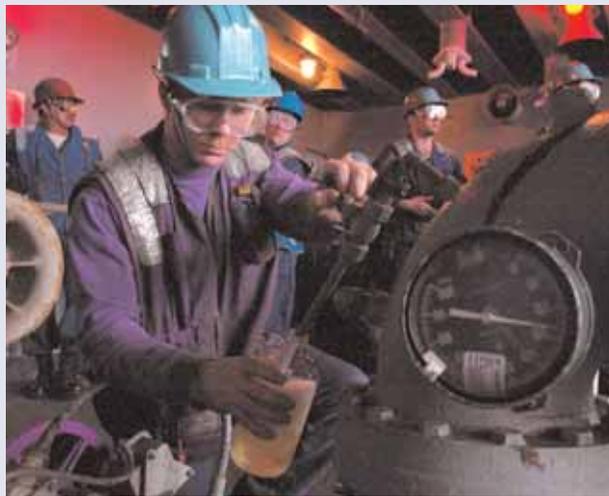
By JOSN Dale Eng, *Harry S. Truman* (CVN 75)
Public Affairs

A coffee mug sits on the desk of Senior Chief Aviation Boatswain's Mate-Fuels (AW) John Coontz on board *Harry S. Truman* (CVN 75). From the look of it, you can tell it has been used more than once. On the side of the mug it reads, "I love the smell of jet fuel in the morning." According to Coontz, the air department's V-4 divisional leading chief petty officer, the phrase is an attitude and lifestyle for fuel technicians.

Just as coffee can fuel the personnel aboard, jet fuel powers many functions essential to the carrier's mission. When the ship participates in air strikes, critical attention is placed on getting fuel to the aircraft to support their missions.

"We're the lifeblood of the ship," said Coontz. "Planes don't go anywhere without fuel." He knows his team plays a key role when it comes to readiness. "Our primary mission is to receive, store and issue jet propulsion fuel to embarked air wing and transiting aircraft."

But it's not just aircraft for which they provide fuel.



PH2 Andrea Decanini

An aviation boatswain's mate retrieves fuel samples for testing on *Harry S. Truman* (CVN 75).

Other uses include explosive ordnance disposal, ground support equipment and sea-air-land team functions, as well as damage control equipment like pumps and emergency generators.

Besides long hours, being a fuel technician can be a hard, dirty job but the Sailors take pride in what they do. The fuel has to meet certain standards. If those standards aren't met, the engine of an airplane could flame out or the fuel meters could get clogged, possibly making a pilot think there is more fuel available than there really is. The techs help ensure the quality of the fuel that keeps *Truman* on the go.

For related news, visit www.news.navy.mil/

C H A N G E O F C O M M A N D

CVW-7: Capt. Kenneth E. Floyd relieved Capt. William E. Gortney, 20 Feb.

HMM-266: Lt. Col. Joel R. Powers relieved Lt. Col. Richard B. Preble, 25 Mar.

HSL-42: Cdr. Glen C. Doyle relieved Cdr. Joseph A. Bauknecht, 10 Apr.

HSL-43: Cdr. James T. Cox relieved Cdr. S. Jeff Tappan, 16 May.

HSL-48: Cdr. Steven H. Blaisdell relieved Cdr. James F. Hunter, 17 Apr.

NAVAIR Lakehurst, N.J.: Capt. Mark L. Bathrick relieved Capt. Dwight L. Cousins, 24 Feb.

NAVAIR North Island, Calif.: Capt. James Woolway relieved Capt. Peter Laszcz, 16 Apr.

SeaControlWingLant: Capt. Theodore P. Algire relieved Capt. Steven E. Luce, 3 Apr.

VAQ-128: Cdr. Charles F. Drummond relieved Cdr. David J. Fuhrman, 20 Feb.

VAQ-131: Cdr. John M. Geragotelis relieved Cdr. John L. Lockler, 28 Feb.

VAQ-141: Cdr. Peter Pellegrino relieved Cdr. Matthew Faletti, 1 Mar.

VF-103: Cdr. David Landess relieved Cdr. Gary Williams, 14 Mar.

VP-1: Cdr. Steven Vahsen relieved Cdr. Kenneth Seliga, 14 Feb.

VP-47: Cdr. Joseph W. Lisenby, Jr., relieved Cdr. Gerral K. David, 23 May.

VR-46: Cdr. James Winkler relieved Cdr. Robert Spratt, 31 Jan.

VS-41: Cdr. Ross A. Myers relieved Capt. Edmund L. Turner, 15 May.

VT-4: Cdr. Peter P. Hunt relieved Cdr. Rick L. Sadsad, 20 Mar.

VX-1: Capt. Thomas R. Mehringer relieved Capt. Glen R. Ives, 4 Apr.