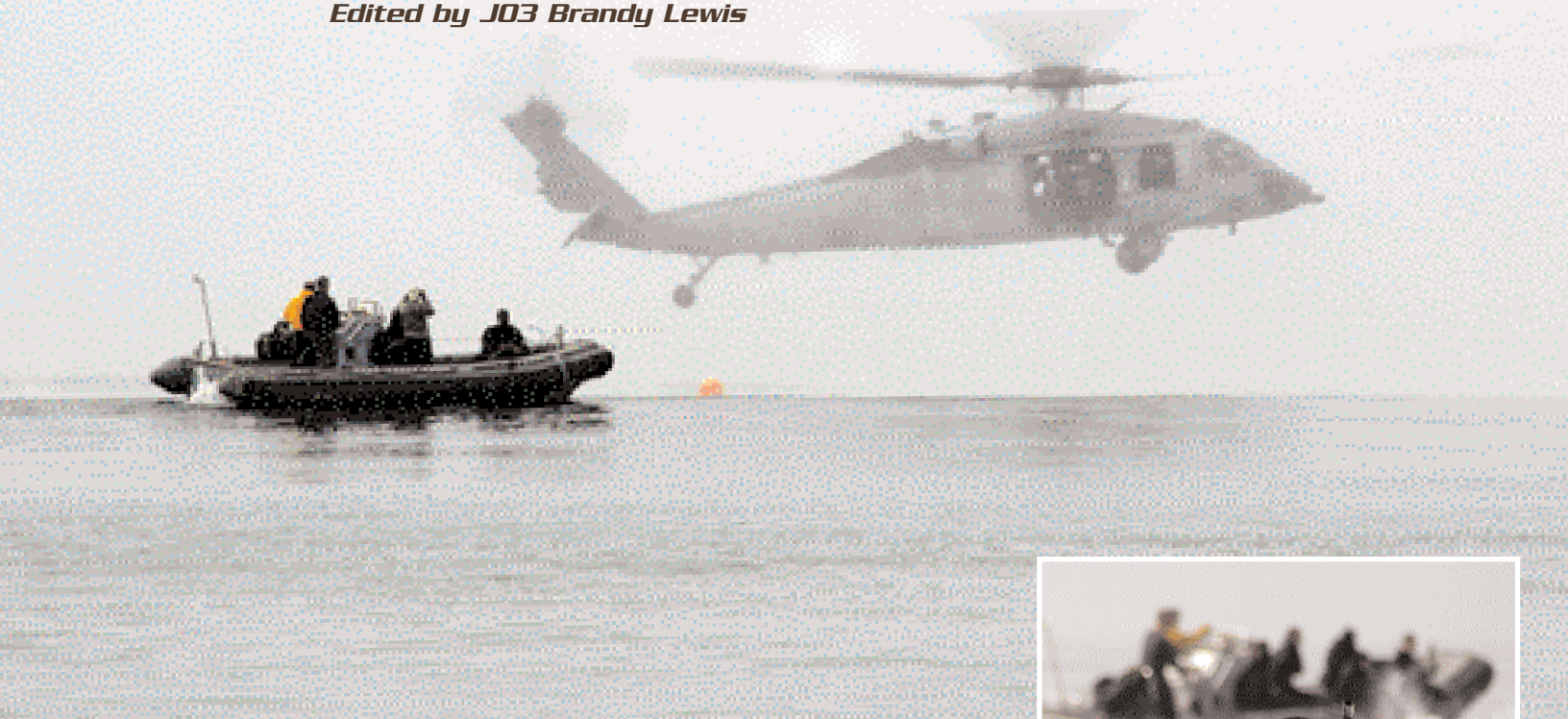


PEOPLE PLANES PLACES

Edited by J03 Brandy Lewis



PH2 Charles E. Alvarado

Records

HT-18 surpassed 1 million Class A mishap-free flight hours.

HSL-45 surpassed 100,000 Class A mishap-free flight hours.

HMM-161 surpassed 40,000 Class A mishap-free flight hours.

VFA-87 surpassed four years of Class A mishap-free flight hours.

MAG-11 Col. Earl Wederbrook, right, logged 5,000 flight hours.

Awards

Admiral Ronald J. Hays received a 2005 U.S. Naval Academy Alumni **Distinguished Graduate Award**. The award recognizes graduates of the Naval Academy for lifelong achievement and service to the nation or armed forces. Adm. Hays graduated in 1950 and was winged as a Naval Aviator in 1953. He flew numerous combat

Above, an MH-60S prepares to drop a search and rescue swimmer near a rigid hull inflatable boat during the **National Helicopter Association Annual Aircrew competition** at NAS North Island, Calif. AW2 James Newbarth, right, from Helicopter Antisubmarine Squadron Light 49 completes a swim relay during the competition.



PH3 Kleynia R. McKnight



Sgt. J. L. Zimmer III

missions in Vietnam, and completed his distinguished career as Commander in Chief Pacific Fleet. Hays is the most decorated member of the class of 1950 with three Silver Stars, seven Distinguished Flying Crosses, the Bronze Star with combat "V," and 18 Air Medals.

HMM-161 was awarded the 2004 Marine Corps Aviation Association **Mike Yunck Award** for exceptional achievement by a Marine flying squadron.

HSL-41 received the **Commander Theodore G. Ellyson Aviator Production Excellence Award** as the West Coast fleet replacement squadron that demonstrated the greatest production efficiency in meeting the fleet requirement for pilots and naval flight officers.

HN1 Webster Nicholson from *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71) was selected for the Society of the U.S. Naval Flight Surgeons' **Aerospace Medical Technician of the Year** award.

VR-53 was awarded the **2004 Admiral Phil Smith Operational Excellence Award**. This award is based on outstanding resource management, detachment performance, fiscal efficiency, and overall operational excellence of a C-130 logistics squadron.

SN (SW) Brit L. J. Garrett was awarded the **Navy/Marine Corps Medal** for his heroic efforts during a helicopter crash on board *Preble* (DDG 88) on 31 August 2004.

VX-31 received the **2003 CNO Naval Aviation Safety Award** for outstanding safety achievement during aircraft operations in the Naval Air Systems Command.

VAQ-136, VAW-115, HS-14, and HSL-51 earned the 2004 COMNAVAIRPAC **Battle Efficiency "E" Award** and VAW-121 earned the COMNAVAIRLANT **Battle "E."** *Carl Vinson* (CVN 70) won the award for West Coast carriers.

Aviation Sailor of the Year (SOY) winners include:
COMNAVAIRLANT: AW1 Larry Duke (sea) and AW1 Chree Emerson (shore).

COMNAVAIRPAC: AT1 (AW/SS/NAC) Matthew James Waxenfelter (sea).

NAS Sigonella AIMD: AW1 Sharma Majaraj (senior), AD2 Jorge Granados (junior), and AEAN Timothy Boss (bluejacket).

Rescues

On 10 April, P-3 Orion aircraft from **VP-8** played a critical role in the rescue of four Philippine fishermen. The fishing vessel *Maria Emelyn II* had been adrift in the South China Sea since 21 March. The Navy offered search and rescue assistance after Republic of the Philippines assets were unable to locate the fishermen. Within three days, VP-8 located the stranded vessel 60



Fig. Andrew Siles

On 4 May, the VAW-121 Bluetails recorded the 215,000th trap aboard *Dwight D. Eisenhower* (CVN 69) since the ship's commissioning in 1977. The crew on the historic flight comprised Cdr. Jeff Bay and Lts. Ryan McCrillis, Steve Hnatt, Eric Buchanan, and John Bradford.

nautical miles off the Spratly Islands. VP-8 and a Philippine ship helped direct the fishermen to safety.

On 6 April, an **HSC-28** MH-60S helicopter rescued a man near the mouth of Virginia's York River as his boat was rapidly taking on water. The Coast Guard Group Hampton Roads forwarded the boater's distress call to all available assets in the area and HSC-28 diverted a helicopter to support the rescue. One of the squadron's rescue swimmers was deployed into the water to hook up a hoist. The boater was lifted to safety and delivered to Chambers Field at NS Norfolk.

On 25 March a civilian mariner ran his sailing vessel, *Jenny Gordon*, aground off the coast of Eritrea, Africa. NAVCENT coordinated a rescue effort with JTF-HOA, which tasked two Marine Corps **CH-53** helicopters based in Djibouti, with Air Force rescue personnel aboard, to assist with the search and rescue operation. The vessel's master, a U.S. citizen, was transported to shore by a local fisherman and then hoisted into one of the CH-53s. He was taken to the U.S. Embassy in Djibouti and reported to be in good condition.

Scan Pattern

The **Aviation Maintenance Administration (AZ) School**, NTTC Meridian, Miss., started using the integrated learning environment in January. The ILE is a web-based system that allows students to work at their own pace, but supplies facilitators and subject matter experts to help them if they have questions. Students are already finishing the school and reporting to the fleet sooner than expected.



An F/A-18F Super Hornet of the VFA-103 Jolly Rogers and a Korean War-vintage F4U Corsair fly in formation at the 2005 Air Power Over Hampton Roads air show held at Langley AFB, Va.

PH2 Daniel J. McLain

Harry S. Truman (CVN 75) sailors and embarked CVW-3 crew members had the opportunity to speak to loved ones back home through unclassified video teleconferencing (VTC) in February. The program was originally designed to allow fathers to see their newborns for the first time, but because of its success, the ship's coordinators and the family support group decided to expand the program to other crew members. Within a matter of days, sailors and Marines filled all available slots. Organizing this program when half of the party is deployed wasn't easy, but overcoming the technical obstacles allowed sailors the opportunity to see their families face-to-face.

The **VFA-211** Fighting Checkmates arrived at NAS Oceana, Va., on 1 April with their new aircraft. The squadron's F-14 Tomcats were replaced by the F/A-18F, making VFA-211 a fully deployable Super Hornet squadron.

Essex (LHD 2) crew members launched a rescue operation to save three giant sea turtles that were caught in a fishing net on 10 March. BMC Eric Randall used a boat hook to pull the turtles to the side of the ship's rigid hull inflatable boat while search and rescue swimmers YNSN Brandon Javellana and GM3 (SW) Ross Melone cut the net off of the turtles. Although one of the turtles



GM3 Austin Brittain

Search and rescue swimmer YNSN Brandon Javellana from *Essex* (LHD 2) uses a knife to free one of the three turtles trapped in a fishing net.

was seriously injured, the swimmers were able to free the turtles from the netting and save them from drowning.

Kearsarge (LHD 3) participated in the **Project Handclasp** program, delivering supplies to needy people from the Horn of Africa (HOA) region in April. Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF) HOA will transport the supplies to Sudan, Eritrea, Djibouti, Ethiopia,

FATHER AND SON SERVE TOGETHER

Story and Photo by Sgt. Juan Vara, 2nd MAW

Maj. Peter D. Charboneau is a busy man. Not only is he the communications electronic officer for MACG-28 (Reinforced); he is also responsible for keeping an eye on a Marine who isn't even part of his unit—his youngest son, Joe.

Joe and his older brother Pete, both lance corporals, followed in their father's footsteps by joining the Marine Corps. Joe serves with Headquarters and Support Battalion's Brig Company at Camp Lejeune, N.C., and Pete serves as a helicopter mechanic with HMLA-269, MCAS New River, N.C., and is in Al Asad, Iraq, on his first deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Maj. Charboneau was preparing to transfer from Cherry Point to Quantico when he heard Joe was deploying to Iraq. He immediately asked for a modification to his upcoming orders so he could be near his son. Pete, trying to be near his father and brother, volunteered to temporarily transfer to 2nd LAAD BN, the unit in charge of protecting their air base. Fortunately for Mrs. Charboneau, Pete didn't go.



LCpl. Joe B. Charboneau, left, rides a bike with his dad Maj. Peter Charboneau in Al Asad, Iraq. Father and son are serving together in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

She put up a sign that said, "Having a Marine son go to Iraq: Heartbreaking. Having a Marine husband go with him: Awesome. Having another Marine son stay back with me: Priceless."

Maj. Charboneau is proud of his Marine sons, but says there is one small disadvantage of serving with one of them in Iraq. "It's the same thing as back home. I have to tell him to do his laundry, clean his room, and brush his teeth."

Somalia, and Kenya. The 175-pound pallets of medical supplies and personal hygiene items will help make the local citizens' lives easier and let them know that the United States and its Navy are interested in helping them. Founded in 1962, Project Handclasp solicits product donations from American corporations to provide basic subsistence items to disadvantaged people overseas.

Norfolk-based HC-6 and ships of the *Saipan* Expeditionary Strike Group, including *Saipan* (LHA 2), *Oak Hill* (LSD 51), and *Trenton* (LPD 14), supported **New Horizons**, an annual humanitarian assistance exercise in Haiti. Members of the 22nd construction regiment boarded *Saipan* with supplies and provided medical support to the victims of Hurricane Jeanne. The strike group also conducted maritime interdiction operations, counterdrug training, and multinational exercises with marines from Honduras and Columbia. The exercise provided opportunities for the



***Saipan* (LHA 2), above, returns to NS Norfolk, Va., after supporting New Horizons, an annual humanitarian assistance exercise in Haiti.**

United States to partner with its neighbors in bringing relief to hurricane-ravaged Haiti, while also providing a maritime presence in the Caribbean.

PH2 Gregory A. Roberts

HELICOPTER SEA COMBAT WING, U.S. PACIFIC FLEET ESTABLISHED

Story and Photos by JO2(SW) Ahron Arendes

Helicopter Sea Combat Wing, U.S. Pacific Fleet (HSCWP) was officially established on 1 April. A ceremony at NAS North Island, Calif., on 15 April celebrated the new command, formed from the merger of the former Helicopter Antisubmarine Wing, U.S. Pacific Fleet (HSWINGPAC) and Helicopter Tactical Wing, U.S. Pacific Fleet (HELTACWINGPAC), as the Navy moves toward a reduction in aircraft types.

“The merger took place as one in a series of steps to consolidate and reorganize naval helicopter aviation,” said Capt. Lou Cortellini, HSCWP commander. “This will continue within eight or so years to enhance the way we’re organized and how we fight. It will streamline the chain of command to make it more efficient, and give us helicopters with more warfighting and rescue capability available in more places.”

To better handle HSCWP’s multifunction mission, all of its squadrons will eventually transition to the MH-60S Seahawk. Currently the helicopter sea combat (HSC) squadrons (formerly HC squadrons) fly the MH-60S, while the helicopter antisubmarine squadrons (HS) fly the SH-60F and the HH-60H. The HS squadrons will transition over the next decade and be redesignated HSCs.



According to Cortellini, HSCWP squadrons will continue to deploy with all carrier strike groups and expeditionary strike groups, carrying out the traditional helicopter fleet support missions, including search and rescue, vertical replenishment, and logistical support. With the MH-60S, they add combat search and rescue in support of strike warfare, naval special warfare, antisurface ship warfare, and organic airborne mine countermeasures capabilities.

Commander Naval Air Forces VAdm. James Zortman added, “The MH-60S will, for the first time, bring a mission set and mission capability that we’ll have our carrier strike groups and expeditionary strike groups rely on, as the primary aviation asset for antisurface and antisubmarine warfare. Also, at the same time it will further develop new mission areas.”



Above, Commander Naval Air Forces VAdm. Jim Zortman presents Capt. Mitchell Swecker the Legion of Merit for his service as Commander, HELTACWINGPAC. Left, Capt. Louis Cortellini remarks on the Navy’s move toward a reduction in aircraft types during the HSCWINGPAC establishment ceremony.

BLACKHAWKS SHINE IN OPERATION UNIFIED ASSISTANCE

By Ltjg. Jim Schwarze

Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron (HM) 15, homeported at NAS Corpus Christi, Texas, maintains an expeditionary detachment forward deployed in Bahrain to support Fifth Fleet operations. On 8 January 2005 a Joint Chief of Staff order tasked the detachment to deploy four MH-53E Sea Dragon helicopters to the Indian Ocean in support of Operation Unified Assistance (OUA) to deliver humanitarian aid and disaster relief (HA/DR) to areas affected by the 26 December 2004 tsunami. The detachment deployed its helicopters with the required personnel and support equipment to Northern Indonesia on board *Essex* (LHD 2) to assist with the HA/DR effort. This was the first time the squadron's forward deployed unit tested its ability to rapidly redeploy.

Within 48 hours of notification, HM-15 Det 2 initiated the deployment of its four aircraft, personnel, mission systems, and support equipment. Squadron personnel worked around the clock to stage more than 300,000 pounds of support equipment and prepare 93 personnel for immediate deployment.

On the evening of 18 January 2005, after a six-day transit from Bahrain, *Essex* arrived off the western coast of northern Indonesia, and the detachment was poised to conduct HA/DR missions the following morning. Pilots, aircrew members, and maintenance personnel "hit the ground running," and on the first day of tasking delivered over 85,000 pounds of supplies, flew over 1,500 miles, and transported 177 passengers to remote landing zones along a 300 mile stretch of significantly battered coastline. Pilots and aircrew members excelled in this dynamic and unfamiliar environment, landing in multiple landing zones of varying dimensions and terrain with little to no initial intelligence support.

During the first 15 days of the operation, Det 2 flew a schedule that operated from sunrise to sunset. Supply

staging, loading, and delivery to preselected landing zones along the western coast was executed by a combination of Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps personnel at Indonesia's Sabang Airport. Transporting the onload working party to and from the airport became part of the detachment's daily tasking. In addition to the role of delivering supplies to the Indonesians, the Sea Dragon's long range capabilities were utilized to transport aid workers from the northern tip of Indonesia to towns located over a hundred miles to the south.

In addition to daily HA/DR tasking, HM-15 Det 2 was utilized in a wide assortment of roles ranging from vertical replenishment to Marine troop transport. On 22 January, the detachment was tasked with facilitating the onload of the OUA command and control team and the Marines from the Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force.

The maintenance department set its own milestone with 74 maintainers working endless hours to ensure the availability of all four aircraft at a moment's notice. The maintainers of HM-15 Det 2 achieved a mission capable rate of 76 percent and recorded over 5,500 maintenance hours in the month of January alone.

Operational tempo dramatically decreased during the last week of the operation and tasking consisted mainly of logistic support and VIP transport. The detachment was focused on meeting current flight requirements and preparing for a four aircraft flyoff scheduled for 26 February. On 10 February, the ship departed Indonesia and transited to Singapore for a port call prior to its return to the Fifth Fleet AOR.

Prior to departing the theater, HM-15 Det 2 provided backup logistic support for the visit of former presidents George Bush and Bill Clinton, who were in the region assessing the damage created by the tsunami.

The sailors of HM-15 Det 2 can be proud of their accomplishments during Operation Unified Assistance. The detachment flew 97 mishap-free sorties, and moved 1,892 troops and nearly 800,000 pounds of cargo while flying over 15,700 miles in an expeditionary shipboard environment.



An MH-53E Sea Dragon of HM-15 delivers supplies in northern Indonesia.



An HH-65A Dolphin from CGAS San Francisco, Calif., hovers above rescue swimmer AST2 Kelly McCarthy and a “victim” during a search and rescue exercise in Ocean Beach, Calif.

CHANGE OF COMMAND

CVW-1: Capt. Greg Nosal relieved Capt. Mark Mills, 1 Mar.

Essex (LHD 2): Capt. Martin J. Keaney relieved Capt. J. M. van Tol, 27 Feb.

FACSFAC VACAPES: Capt. William L. Kervahn relieved Capt. Steven C. Schlientz, 10 Feb.

HC-85: Cdr. Peter M. Van Stee relieved Cdr. Douglas C. Beyer, 16 Apr.

HSL-40: Cdr. Joseph A. Bauknecht relieved Capt. Richard R. Synder, 14 Apr.

HSL-41: Cdr. D. H. Fillion relieved Capt. M. J. McCloskey, 26 May.

HSL-44: Cdr. Douglas Cochrane relieved Cdr. Paul Essig, 1 Apr.

HSL-51: Cdr. Kevin M. Coyne relieved Cdr. Eric A. Patten, 18 May.

HT-18: Cdr. Gerald Briggs relieved Lt. Col. Ronald Colyer,

USMC, 17 Mar.

STRKFIGHTWINGLANT:

Capt. John McCandlish relieved Capt. Eamon Storrs, 24 Feb.

USNTPS: Lt. Col. Steven W. Kihara, USA, relieved Cdr. Paul A. Sohl, 13 Jan.

VAW-125: Cdr. Kevin R. Johnson relieved Cdr. Eric W. Gardner, 10 Mar.

VFA-27: Cdr. Kevin Mannix relieved Cdr. Jay Bynum, 3 Mar.

VFA-37: Cdr. Wesley S. Huey relieved Cdr. Michael R. Saunders, 28 Mar.

VFA-87: Cdr. David Silkey relieved Cdr. Gregory Fenton, 29 Apr.

VFA-97: Cdr. Paul S. Mackley relieved Cdr. Robert C. Earl, 2 Sep

04.

VFA-122: Cdr. Patrick R. Cleary relieved Capt. David B. Emich, 12 May.

VP-9: Cdr. Perry D. Yaw relieved Cdr. Rodney M. Urbano, 13 May.

VP-26: Cdr. Thomas G. Kollie, Jr. relieved Cdr. Francis W. Doris, 18 Mar.

VR-1: Cdr. Thomas Luscher relieved Cdr. Kenneth Skaggs, 27 May.

VS-24: Cdr. Daniel Grieco relieved Cdr. Thomas J. Fasanello, 22 Apr.

VS-30: Cdr. William H. Suggs relieved Cdr. James R. Shoaf, 7 Jun.

VT-2: Cdr. David G. Manero relieved Cdr. James J. Hirst III, 7 Apr.

VTC-21: Cdr. Edward G. Schiefer relieved Cdr. Gregory P. Curth, 8 Apr.