





PEOPLE PLANES PLACES

Edited by MC1 Johnie Hickmon

Awards

On 28 October 2006 the **Marine Corps Aviation Association Robert Guy Robinson Award** was presented to Capt. Jacob L. Purdon, left, of Marine All-Weather Fighter Attack Squadron 242, Marine Aircraft Group 16 (Rein), 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward) in Al Asad, Iraq. As a weapon systems officer, Capt. Purdon was recognized for his leadership and technical skills for the creation of his squadron's efficient and combat ready mission planning procedures, and changing the way fighter attack squadrons operate in Iraq.

The Federal Aviation Administration presented its 2006 **Excellence in Aviation Award** to the Navy's Terrain Awareness Warning System (TAWS) team during a ceremony at NAS Patuxent River, Md., on 21 December 2006.

Milestones

On 7 October 2006 **VAW-125** commemorated 38 years of Class A mishap-free flying with a cake cutting ceremony on board *Dwight D. Eisenhower* (CVN 69).



Above, left to right, Secretary of the Navy Donald C. Winter, Vice President Dick Cheney, Susan Ford Bales, Jack Ford, Mike Ford, Steve Ford, Sen. John Warner, Sen. Carl Levin, and CNO Adm. Mike Mullen salute as a model of *Gerald R. Ford* (CVN 78) is unveiled in Washington, D.C., on 16 January. The ship, which should enter service in 2015, will be named in honor of the 38th president of the United States who passed away on 26 December 2006 at age 93. It will be the first of the Navy's newest class of carriers. Photo by MCC Shawn P. Eklund.

In November 2006 HSL-45 achieved 17 years and more than 108,000 flight hours without a major mishap.

In November 2006 HS-11 CO Cdr. J. R. Nettleton surpassed the 4,000 flight hour mark while deployed on board *Enterprise* (CVN 65).

Cdr. Jack Omohundro of VR-51, right, surpassed 3,000 flight hours piloting a C-20G Gulfstream IV.



Scan Pattern

On 6 November 2006 CVW-7—VAW-125, VFA-103, VFA-131, VFA-143, VFA-83, VAQ-140, and HS-5, embarked on *Dwight D. Eisenhower* (CVN 69)—began conducting missions in support of ground troops in

Afghanistan. (See “At Sea With *Ike*,” p. 16).

On 9 November 2006 the U.S. Navy and the Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force began ANNUALEX, a bilateral exercise designed to improve both forces’ capabilities in the defense of Japan. About 90 JMSDF ships and 130 aircraft, as well as 8,500 U.S. sailors from *Kitty Hawk* (CV 63), *Cowpens* (CG 63), *Shiloh* (CG 67), *Curtis W. Wilbur* (DDG 54), *John S. McCain* (DDG 56), *Fitzgerald* (DDG 62), *Stethem* (DDG 63), *Lassen* (DDG 82), *Mustin* (DDG 89), *Halsey* (DDG 97), *Swift* (HSV 2), *Seawolf* (SSN 21), and *Asheville* (SSN 758), participated in the exercise.

From 12–16 November 2006 the *John C. Stennis* (CVN 74) and *Ronald Reagan* (CVN 76) Carrier Strike

NAVY MEDICINE TAKES FIRST STEP WITH LASIK FOR AVIATORS

By Naval Medical Center San Diego
Public Affairs

On 8 November 2006 the vision correction surgery Laser In Situ Keratomileusis (LASIK) was performed on a Naval Aviator. Though LASIK has been around for many years, concerns about the harsh aviation environment have prevented its use. Aeromedical professionals have been cautious of employing the procedure on patients who frequently encounter environmental extremes such as high altitude, dry air, wind blast, and G forces. However, a new Bureau of Naval Medicine project is underway after years of intense clinical trials on nonaviation personnel. The first candidate was Marine Capt. Michael Oginsky, an F/A-18/D weapon systems officer with VMFAT-101, MCAS Miramar, Calif. Capt. Steve Schallhorn, Navy Program Manager for Refractive Surgery, completed the 20 minute procedure at the National Naval Medical Center, San Diego, Calif. "I was definitely seeing better right away, and within four hours my vision was 20/20," said Oginsky. "At the 24-hour mark, my vision was better than 20/20." He hopes to enter pilot training within the next few years.

Right, Capt. Steve Schallhorn, director of the Navy Refractive Surgery Center, performs LASIK surgery on Capt. Michael Oginsky. Below, the surgery team with their patient following the operation, left to right, Chris Baldonado, Capt. Oginsky, Butch Tinga, Capt. Schallhorn, and Wendy Rossi. Photos by LCdr. Tyson Brunstedder.



Groups conducted a Joint Task Force Exercise off southern California. The ships combined to form Carrier Task Force (CTF) 150, which conducted a variety of maritime security operations during the week-long exercise. *Stennis'* CVW-9 and *Reagan's* CVW-14 provided the task force's strike warfare element.

VFA-213 was officially declared "Safe for Flight" on 27 October 2006, marking the transition from the F-14D Tomcat to the F/A-18F Super Hornet, right.

On 3 December 2006 a deactivation ceremony was held for HCS-5 on board NAS North Island, Calif.

On 5 November 2006 the *Boxer* (LHD 4) Expeditionary Strike Group and the Indian navy's Western Fleet completed Exercise Malabar 2006 off Southwest India to strengthen ties between American,



Canadian, and Indian forces. Thirteen ships participated in the exercise, which included the 15th MEU (SOC) and Indian soldiers assigned to the 9th Battalion of the Sikh Light Infantry.

On the Move

On 27 October 2006 **HSL-49 Det 2** returned to NAS North Island, Calif., after a six month deployment on board *Curts* (FFG 38).

On 8 November 2006 the **Boxer (LHD 4) Expeditionary Strike Group**—*Boxer*, *Dubuque* (LPD 8), *Comstock* (LSD 45), *Benfold* (DDG 65), *Howard* (DDG 83), and *Bunker Hill* (CG 52), as well as PHIBRON-5, the 15th MEU (SOC), *Midgett* (WHEC 726), and HMCS *Ottawa* (FFH 341)—entered the U.S. 5th Fleet's AOR during a deployment in support of maritime security operations.

On 8 November 2006 the ***Iwo Jima* (LHD 7) Expeditionary Strike**

Group—*Iwo Jima*, *Whidbey Island* (LSD 41), *Bulkeley* (DDG 84), *Nashville* (LPD 13), *Philippine Sea* (CG 58), *Cole* (DDG 67), and *Albuquerque* (SSN 706), along with the 24th MEU (SOC), elements from Assault Craft Unit 4, Beachmaster Unit 2, and HSC-26—concluded maritime operations in the U.S. 5th Fleet's AOR. *Iwo Jima* returned to NS Norfolk, Va., on 6 December 2006.

***Enterprise* (CVN 65)** and elements of **CVW-1** returned to their homeports after completing a six month deployment to the U.S. 5th, 6th, and 7th Fleets' AORs. *Enterprise* and HSC-28 returned to NS Norfolk, Va., on 18 November 2006 and 3 November 2006, respectively, while VFA-211 and VFA-136 returned to NAS Oceana, Va., and VAW-123 and VRC-40 Det 2 returned to NS Norfolk, Va., between 16–17 November 2006, and VAQ-137 returned to NAS Whidbey Island, Wash., on 17 November 2006.



On 1 December 2006 *Essex* (LHD 2) returned to Sasebo, Japan, after more than two months of an annual fall patrol.

On 4 December 2006 *VP-46* returned to NAS Whidbey Island, Wash., after a six month deployment to the U.S. 5th and 7th Fleet AORs.

On 10 December 2006 the *Kitty Hawk* (CV 63) Carrier Strike Group—*Kitty Hawk*, CVW-5, *Shiloh* (CG 67), *Cowpens* (CG 63), and DESRON 15—returned to Yokosuka, Japan, after a two month deployment.

On 11 December 2006 the *Dwight D. Eisenhower* (CVN 69) Carrier Strike Group—*Dwight D. Eisenhower*, *Anzio* (CG 68), *Ramage* (DDG 61), *Mason* (DDG 87), and *Newport News* (SSN 750), with CVW-7 and embarked DESRON-28—entered the Arabian Gulf in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and maritime security operations.

On 15 December 2006 *HSL-43 Det 4* returned to San Diego, Calif., after six months of counternarcotics operations in the eastern Pacific Ocean and Caribbean Sea while deployed on board *Thach* (FFG 43).

On 16 January *John C. Stennis* (CVN 74) departed NB Kitsap Bremerton, Wash., for San



An aircraft flight deck director guides a VAW-112 Hawkeye toward the catapult aboard *John C. Stennis* (CVN 74) while operating off the California Coast on 22 January. Photo by MC3 Jon Hyde.



Sailors prepare a VFA-113 F/A-18C Hornet for launch as an F/A-18E Super Hornet from VFA-22 performs a touch and go aboard *Ronald Reagan* (CVN 76) while underway in the western Pacific Ocean on 28 January. Photo by MC2 Aaron Burden.

Diego, Calif., to onload CVW-9. The carrier, along with *Antietam* (CG 54) and *Preble* (DDG 88), deployed from San Diego on 20 January. *O’Kane* (DDG 77) and *Paul Hamilton* (DDG 60) departed Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, to join the other ships and complete the *John C. Stennis* Carrier Strike Group.

Rescues

On 13 November 2006 Coast Guard crews from **CGAS Elizabeth City, N.C.**, and Station Cape Charles rescued an injured boater from a disabled and drifting boat in the area of the Cherrystone Inlet. Station Cape Charles personnel launched a lifeboat and located the vessel. Rough seas and heavy winds prevented the lifeboat from transferring the boater, so an HH-60 Jayhawk rescue helicopter hoisted the injured boater to safety.

On 30 November 2006 Coast Guard crews from **CGAS Houston, Texas**, launched two rescue missions when a massive storm front slammed into the Texas and Gulf coasts, bringing temperatures down to 31 degrees and winds up to 57 mph. Passengers on board the 31-foot sailboat *Paradise* called the Coast Guard when their boat was damaged due to the severe weather and started drifting because of the strong winds. After the Coast Guard dispatched an HH-65C Dolphin helicopter, rescue swimmer AME2 Raul Aguilar was lowered into the water, swam to the disabled vessel, and instructed the men to jump into the water and into the rescue basket so they could be hoisted up to the helicopter. The next day, a helicopter crew was sent to rescue a man who was stuck in the cold weather for 26 hours after his boat ran aground near Tiki Island, Texas. When the helicopter crew located the 70-year-old man, AME2 Aguilar helped him into the helo and treated him for hypothermia. He was taken to a local hospital for treatment.



A crane removes the main mast from *George Washington* (CVN 73) during the carrier's shipyard availability at Norfolk Naval Shipyard in Portsmouth, Va., on 10 November 2006. Photo by MCSN Jennifer Aspey.

Outreach

Sailors from *Dwight D. Eisenhower* (CVN 69) cleaned the Limassol Tourist Beach and painted an area school during a port visit to Limassol, Cyprus, 25–28 October 2006.

During a port visit to Patan village in Lovavala, India, 1–2 November 2006, sailors from the *Boxer* (LHD 4) Expeditionary Strike Group teamed with 2,000 volunteers from around the world to participate in the Habitat for Humanity's Jimmy Carter Work Project (JCWP). Working with the volunteers and the soon-to-be homeowners, sailors painted, laid bricks, and mixed

cement. An annual event led by former President Jimmy Carter and his wife, JCWP's goal was to build 100 homes in one week for low income families from the village.

Sailors from *Kitty Hawk* (CV 63) and embarked CVW-5 participated in community service projects during a port visit to Sasebo, Japan, 6–9 November 2006. Sailors participated in three groundskeeping and cleaning projects at the Kibou no Ie and San Home Egami elderly homes and the Sakura no Ie home for the mentally disabled.

While in Hong Kong for a port visit, sailors from the *Kitty Hawk* (CV 63) Carrier Strike Group participated

CHANGE OF COMMAND

CVW-8: Capt. Daniel N. Dixon relieved Capt. William G. Sizemore II, 16 Nov 06.

HSL-40: Cdr. Douglas A. Malin relieved Capt. (sel) Joseph A. Bauknecht, 2 Nov 06.

HSL-42: Cdr. Richard A. Skiff relieved Cdr. Douglas J. Ten Hoopen, 14 Dec 06.

HSL-48: Cdr. John E. Gumbleton relieved Cdr. Jeff W. Hughes, 15 Dec 06.

MATSG-22: Lt. Col. Donald G. Sterling relieved Col. Richard S. Pomarico, 5 Jan.

SFWSL: Cdr. David Woodbury relieved Cdr. Matthew Baker, 17

Nov 06.

TACGRU-1 (RC): Capt. William R. Shivell relieved Capt. James B. Philpitt, 7 Jan.

TACRON-11: Cdr. Henry J. Hendrix relieved Cdr. Scott C. Fish, 7 Dec 06.

TACRON-1294: Cdr. Jack P. Miller relieved Cdr. Laird W. Hepburn, 7 Jan.

TRAWING-1 (RC): Cdr. Andrew J. Mueller relieved Capt. Thomas L. Egbert, 5 Dec 06.

VAQ-133: Cdr. John Springett relieved Cdr. William C. Minter, 7 Dec 06.

VAW-121: Cdr. Steven J.

Wieman relieved Cdr. Russell T. McLachlan, 27 Oct 06.

VAW-126: Cdr. Richard K. Wood II relieved Cdr. John Malfitano, 15 Dec 06

VFC-12: Cdr. Grant Mager relieved Cdr. Joe Breedlove, 18 Nov 06.

VS-22: Cdr. Paul J. Foster relieved Cdr. Douglas E. Heady, 18 Jan.

VT-21 (RC): Cdr. Richard A. Foley relieved Cdr. William S. Johnson, 3 Nov 06.

VT-22: Cdr. Bradley Kidwell relieved Marine Lt. Col. Gregg Deeb, 17 Nov 06.

in five community service projects, 24–25 November 2006. Projects included cleaning, landscaping, picking up trash, and repairing buildings at the St. Barnabas' Society and Home for the Homeless, the Fu Hong Society, and the Hong Kong Dog Rescue Shelter.

Reunions

Ranger (CVA/CV 61), 15–19 August, Clackamas, Ore. POC: George Meoli, 203-453-4279, gmeoli@erols.com.

VP-44/VPB-204/VP-204/VPMS-4, 1–3 September, Indianapolis, Ind. POC: Gene Toffolo, 317-897-4745, genejanjay@aol.com



Sailors stationed at NAS Whidbey Island, Wash., built a sandbag wall along the Skagit River on 7 November 2006 to prevent flood waters from reaching a water treatment plant in Anacortes, Wash. Photo by MC1 Bruce McVicar.



OSSN Stacie A. Hutchinson, left, talks with students from San Felipe Elementary School East in Zambales, Philippines. She and other crew members from Essex (LHD 2) visited with students, performed maintenance, and delivered school supplies during the ship's port visit to Subic Bay on 2 November 2006. Photo by MCSN Andrew D. Brantley.

Lake Champlain (CV/CVA/CVS 39), 6–9 September, St. Louis, MO. POC Eugene Carroll, 607-532-4735, gcarroll@rochester.rr.com

Boxer (CV/CVA/CVS 21/LPH/LHD 4), 3–6 October, San Diego, Calif. POC Tom Lawrence, 717-428-9404, www.ussexboxer.com.

Philippine Sea (CV/CVA/CVS-47), 3–8 October, Washington, D.C. POC: Chuck Davis, 941-743-5460, philsea@earthlink.net.



BLUE ANGELS 2007 SHOW SCHEDULE

MARCH

10 NAF El Centro, CA
17-18 Davis Monthan AFB, AZ
24 Tyndall AFB, FL
31 MacDill AFB, FL

APRIL

01 MacDill AFB, FL
14-15 NAS Corpus Christi, TX
21-22 MCAS Beaufort, SC
28-29 Vidalia, GA

MAY

05-06 Offutt AFB, NE
12 Seymour Johnson AFB, NC
19-20 La Crosse, WI
23 U.S. Naval Academy, MD
26-27 Millville, NJ

JUNE

02-03 Rockford, IL
09-10 Tinker AFB, OK
16-17 Fargo, ND
23-24 North Kingstown, RI
30 Battle Creek, MI

JULY

01 Battle Creek, MI
07-08 Ypsilanti, MI
14-15 McConnell AFB, KS
21 Pensacola Beach, FL
28-29 Bozeman, MT

AUGUST

04-05 Seattle, WA
11-12 Hillsboro, OR
25-26 Indianapolis, IN

SEPTEMBER

01-03 St. Louis, MO
08-09 NAS Oceana, VA
15-16 NAS Brunswick, ME
22-23 Millington, TN
29-30 Salinas, CA

OCTOBER

06-07 San Francisco, CA
13-14 MCAS Kaneohe Bay, HI
20-21 Fort Worth, TX
27-28 Muskogee, OK

NOVEMBER

03-04 Jacksonville Beach, FL
09-10 NAS Pensacola, FL