

PEOPLE PLANES PLACES

Edited by
MC1 Johnnie Hickmon

Awards

The following aviation ships earned the **Battle E** for 2006: *Essex* (LHD 2), *Bonhomme Richard* (LHD 6), *Iwo Jima* (LHD 7), *Dwight D. Eisenhower* (CVN 69), and *Ronald Reagan* (CVN 76).

The following aviation ships were announced as the winners of the 2007 **Capt. Edward F. Ney Memorial Award**:

Large Afloat Category—*Essex* (LHD 2), First Place; *Saipan* (LHA 2), Runner Up.

Aircraft Carrier Category—*Ronald Reagan* (CVN 76), First Place; *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71), Runner Up.

Milestones

On 12 February **HMT-303** surpassed 190,000 mishap free flight hours.

Scan Pattern

On 3 January the Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office announced the remains of **Cdr. Peter Mongilardi, Jr.** were identified and returned to his family for burial. On 25 June 1965 Mongilardi, of VA-153, departed *Coral Sea* (CV 43) in an A-4C Skyhawk on an armed reconnaissance mission over North Vietnam. He was lost over Thanh Hoa Province after encountering bad weather and enemy fire.

HM-15 conducted airborne mine countermeasures training at NSA Panama City, Fla., from 27 January–10 February. The exercise allowed personnel to hone their skills on the MK-105 magnetic influence minesweeping sled and the A/N-37U, a deep water minesweeping system that is designed to clear moored mines.

On 6 February President George Bush announced the creation of **U.S. Africa Command** to consolidate U.S. government efforts in Africa and aid in the ability to



work with partner nations. Scheduled to be fully operational by the end of FY08, the command will focus mainly on humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, and crisis response missions. AFRICOM will eventually have responsibility for the entire continent of Africa, except Egypt and the surrounding islands.

On 16 February Navy salvage crews from USNS *Sioux* (T-ATF-171) from NB San Diego, Calif., recovered helicopter wreckage and the remains of HSC-23



Two VMGR-352 C-130 Hercules stagger themselves during a refueling exercise off the coast of Southern California on 5 February. Photo by LCpl. Kelly R. Chase.

crewmembers **Ltjg. Laura Mankey, Lt. Adam Dyer,** and **AW1 Cory Helman** who were killed when their MH-60S Seahawk crashed into the Pacific Ocean, approximately 16 miles northeast of San Clemente Island, Calif., during routine training operations on *Bonhomme Richard* (LHD 6) on 26 January 2006. The remains were transported to Naval Medical Center San Diego, Calif.

On 25 February **HS-75** held a deactivation ceremony

on NAS Jacksonville, Fla. The squadron officially deactivated on 1 March.

On the Move

Ships and units of the **Essex Amphibious Ready Group** arrived in Okinawa, Japan, 29 January–1 February to begin the onload of the Marines and their equipment as the precursor to scheduled workups and subsequent deployment. Comprising *Essex* (LHD 2),

continued on page 29

BOXER HOT LOADS AT SEA



An aviation ordnanceman from the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit loads a 2.75-inch rocket onto a Huey prior to its launch from *Boxer* (LHD 4) on 27 October 2006 during Exercise Malabar. Photo by MC3 James Seward.

By MC3 James Seward, 15th MEU (SOC)

As the *Boxer* (LHD 4) Expeditionary Strike Group transited to the 5th fleet area of responsibility in late 2006, aviation ordnance Marines assigned to HMM-165 (Reinforced), 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) hot loaded UH-1N Hueys and AH-1W Super Cobras during live-fire exercises.

According to CWO3 Scott Roland, USMC, the Air Combat Element ordnance officer, ESG Marines and sailors held many practice evolutions without live ordnance before the first actual hot load operation. "This is what makes us more proficient," said Roland. "It was great for our guys to get out and practice their skills."

Hot load operations at sea give the *Boxer* ESG the capability of landing, refueling, and reloading ordnance

onto aircraft in one evolution. "It's the new, much more efficient way to load aircraft with ordnance," said Roland. "It keeps flight deck traffic to a minimum during combat operations, allowing schedule flexibility and faster turnaround time."

Hot loading aircraft is a common evolution at shore-based facilities. Performing the operation at sea builds on the interoperability between sailors and Marines. "Introducing ordnance during flight operations at sea brings a new dimension of capabilities," said SSgt. Matthew Ivey, Staff NCOIC, ordnance section, HMM-165 (Rein). "Hot load operations sharpen Navy and Marine Corps air warfare."

Tortuga (LSD 46), *Juneau* (LPD 10), and embarked elements of the 31st MEU, the ARG completed workups on 17 February.

On 30 January ***Bataan* (LHD 5)** and the 26th MEU transited the Suez Canal and entered the 5th Fleet AOR to conduct maritime security operations. The *Bataan* Expeditionary Strike Group comprises *Bataan*, *Shreveport* (LPD 12), *Oak Hill* (LSD 51), *Vella Gulf* (CG 72), *Nitze* (DDG 94), *Underwood* (FFG 36), and *Scranton* (SSN 756).

On 9 February the ***Ronald Reagan* Carrier Strike Group**—*Ronald Reagan* (CVN 76), with embarked CVW-14, *Lake Champlain* (CG 57), *Russell* (DDG 59), *Paul Hamilton* (DDG 60), DESRON-7 and EOD Unit 11 Det 15—entered the 7th Fleet AOR as part of a surge deployment to promote peace and stability in the region while *Kitty Hawk* (CV 63) undergoes scheduled maintenance.

On 19 February the ***John C. Stennis* Carrier Strike Group**—*John C. Stennis* (CVN 74) with embarked CVW-9, *Antietam* (CG 54), *Preble* (DDG 88), *O’Kane* (DDG 77), *Bridge* (T-AOE 10), CVW-9, and DESRON-21—entered the 5th Fleet AOR to conduct maritime security operations and provide support for ground forces operating in Afghanistan and Iraq.



Above, CTSN Shelby Cain dons her helmet prior to an immediate ditch drill during a training flight with VP-30 on 13 February. Photo by MC2 Lynn Friant. Below, an F/A-18C Hornet from VFA-25 lands aboard *Ronald Reagan* (CVN 76) during the ship’s Western Pacific deployment on 30 January. Photo by MC2 John P. Curtis.



2006 NAVAL HELICOPTER ASSOCIATION REGION FOUR AWARDS

Aircrew Instructor of the Year—AW1

(AW/SW/NAC) Mark Klingelheber, HSC Weapons School, Atlantic

Embarked Aircrew of the Year—LCdr. Steven

Lund, Ltjg. Wesley Yancy, AW3 Kevin Marks, and AW3 Jason Lachica, HSC-26

Pilot of the Year—LCdr. Andrew Koelsch, HC-4

Shipboard Helicopter Aviation Officer of the Year—Lt. Kathleen Mullen, Assistant Air Officer, *Iwo Jima* (LHD 7)

Maintenance Chief Petty Officer of the Year—AMTCM (AW/SW) Andrew Fulton, HSC-28

Maintenance Officer of the Year—LCdr. Douglas Rosa, HC-4

Instructor Pilot of the Year—Lt. Dave Durkin, HSC-2

Aircrewman of the Year—AW1(AW/NAC) Sean Sullivan, HC-4

Nonembarked Aircrew of the Year—LCdr. Andrew Bishop, Lt. William Hawthorne, AO1(NAC) J. A. Morgan, and AW1(AW/SW/NAC) J. A. Gazarato, HSC-28

Rescue Swimmer of the Year—AW1(AW/NAC) J. Hyman, HSC-2

Rescues

On 2 February aircrewmen from **CGAS Corpus Christi, Texas**, assisted a critically ill two day old baby in Brownsville, Texas, who needed special medical care in Corpus Christi, approximately 160 miles away. When a civilian organization that provides urgent medical transportation could not take the mission as its helicopters were down for repairs, a call was made to the air station for assistance. An HU-25 Falcon preparing for a routine patrol received the call, and dropped off a crew member to make room for the baby, his mother, and medical personnel and equipment. Upon landing in Brownsville, the crew discovered they needed more room, so AT1 Paul Llamas and AMT Carlos Rodriguez quickly removed unneeded equipment and a seat. Realizing they still lacked enough space for the mother to ride along, Rodriguez offered to stay behind so the mother could travel with her son. Less than 25 minutes later, the crew was back in the air and soon arrived at Corpus Christi International Airport to transfer the infant and mother to a waiting ambulance.

Outreach

In December 2006 personnel from **VP-5** donated more than \$1,500 worth of toys and clothes for children at Shalom Children's Home in El Salvador. VP-5 has 90 personnel stationed in El Salvador to support efforts to prevent the flow of illegal drugs into the U.S. and other partner nations. While visiting the home, sailors toured the spaces and presented the gifts to 77 children. They also donated another \$600 worth of gifts to the families of the personnel who run the school.

On 10 January more than 20 sailors from **Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71)** offloaded pallets of food, separated



Cdr. Sara Joyner receives honors as she enters a change of command ceremony at NAS Oceana, Va. Cdr. Joyner became the first female commanding officer of a U.S. Navy Strike Fighter squadron when she relieved Cdr. Douglas Verissimo as the CO of VFA-105 on 2 March. Photo by SN Kevin T. Murray, Jr.

and stored canned goods, and stocked shelves at the Norfolk, Va., branch of the Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia. The next day 40 sailors raked leaves and debris from the grounds at St. Gregory's Catholic Church in Virginia Beach, Va.



A VAQ-137 Prowler approaches *Enterprise* (CVN 65) during carrier qualifications in the Atlantic Ocean on 4 March while the German frigate *Sachsen* (F 219) maintains station in the background. Photo by MC2 Milosz Reterski.

CHANGE OF COMMAND

CVW-7: Capt. Scott Stearney relieved Capt. Bud Bishop, 3 Feb.

HSC-28: Cdr. David Stracener relieved Cdr. Chris Rapp, 22 Feb.

HSL-37: Cdr. Alvin Holsey relieved Cdr. Neil Karnes, 16 Feb.

NAVAIR: VAdm. David Venlet relieved VAdm. Walter Massenburg, 16 Feb.

PATRECONWING-2: Capt. Matthew J. Carter relieved Capt.

Robert J. Adrion, 28 Feb.

VFA-81: Cdr. Dennis A. Lazar, Jr. relieved Cdr. Michael E. Boyle, 16 Feb.

VFA-105: Cdr. Sara Joyner relieved Cdr. Douglas Verissimo, 2 Mar.

VFA-137: Cdr. Stuart P. Baker relieved Cdr. Hugh M. Flanagan, 1 Dec 06.

VFA-143: Cdr. Raymond

Worthington relieved Cdr. James Nichols, 3 Feb.

VFA-195: Cdr. Victor S. Smith relieved Cdr. Samuel J. Paparo, 14 Dec 06.

VFA-213: Cdr. Paul F. Gronemeyer relieved Cdr. Daniel S. Cave, 25 Jan.

VS-32: Cdr. Douglas Walker relieved Cdr. John Breast, 16 Feb.

NANews BIDS FAREWELL TO MC2 BRANDY FISHER

In December 2006 *Naval Aviation News* bid farewell to MC2 Brandy Fisher. After serving five years in the Navy and three and a half years with *NANews*, MC2 Fisher completed her military obligation and joined her family in Pennsylvania.

As the associate editor, MC2 Fisher helped the magazine receive recognition in the CHINFO Merit Awards competition three times, an indication of her job dedication and desire to ensure the magazine was one of the best in its category.

“Brandy was a great asset to the *NANews* team,” Editor Wendy Leland explained. “I was proud to see her advance from seaman to second class petty officer during her time with *NANews*. A skilled writer and editor, she made the People-Planes-Places section truly stand out. In addition, her initiative and can-do attitude were an incredible help to me during the year and a half we functioned with half our normal staff. *NANews* won’t be the same without her.”

Naval Warfare Division Director Roy Grossnick said Fisher’s willingness to take on assignments left a positive impact on not only her coworkers, but the entire command. “She was an easy going and friendly person who was willing to not only work on the magazine but also volunteered to manage some all-inclusive Naval Historical Center events,” he said. “She took it upon herself to organize and direct one of the Center’s summer picnic events at Anacostia. Her exuberance and matter-of-fact style was her trademark and that made it a pleasure to work with her.”

“Petty Officer Fisher was a great help to me as I transitioned into my position here at *NANews* during the past year,” Managing Editor Alfred Biddlecomb



Morgan I. Wilbur

said. “Her knowledge of military matters pertaining to our magazine’s mission and her professionalism helped cement a strong bond between *NANews*’ diverse military and civilian staff.”

Art Director Morgan Wilbur added, “Brandy was a pleasure to work with because she always had a positive outlook on life and she took on challenges with a smile.”

The *NANews* staff wishes her and her family well in their future endeavors. Good luck and happy landings!



The crew of a VP-30 P-3C Orion performs startup checks at NAS Jacksonville, Fla., on 13 February. Photo by MC2 Lynn Friant.

FLIGHTBAG

Reunions

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

Salisbury Sound (AV 13), 2–7 September, Reno, NV. POC Marian Bruce, 505-293-3841, brubru@comcast.net.

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

Hornet (CV 8/CV/CVA/CVS 12), 12–16 September, Fort Mitchell, KY. POC Carl and Sandy Burket, 814-224-5063, hornetcva@aol.com.

VQ Association (VQ-1/2/5/6 and support groups), 20–23 September, Wichita, KS. POC Allan Prevette, 805-

482-1204, pierreputt@earthlink.net.

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

Philippine Sea (CV/CVA/CVS 47/CG 58), 3–8 October, Washington, DC. POC Chuck Davis, 941-743-5460, philsea@earthlink.net.

Correction

Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 265 (Rein) supported exercises in the Philippines with the *Essex* (LHD 2) Amphibious Ready Group during Talon Vision and Amphibious Landing Exercise FY07, 16–28 October 2006. An item on page 37 of the Jan–Feb 2007 issue listed the wrong squadron.