

SIGHTINGS

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RADM Gregory Smith Assumes CHINFO Role During July Ceremony

RADM Gregory J. Smith succeeded RADM T. L. McCreary as the Navy's Chief of Information (CHINFO) during a July 14 ceremony at the historic U.S. Navy Yard in Washington, D.C.

In a message addressed to Team PA, Smith wrote, "Admiral McCreary has set the stage for us with advancements in professional education, integration of the active and reserve forces, streamlining of the Navy PA organization and tremendous advancements in our leadership to joint public affairs. I intend to continue on this course. I am inspired by the tremendous work that you are all doing for Navy PA and the Navy and I am looking forward to working with you. All the best."

At the time of his selection to flag earlier this year, Smith was serving as special assistant for public affairs to the vice chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff. Additional joint and NATO experience included serving as director of public affairs, U.S. Joint Forces Command and chief of public information for NATO's Allied Command Transformation.

During this period, he oversaw the establishment of the Joint Public Affairs



Support Element, which provides combatant commanders with expeditionary public affairs, exercise and mission rehearsal training and joint public affairs capabilities.

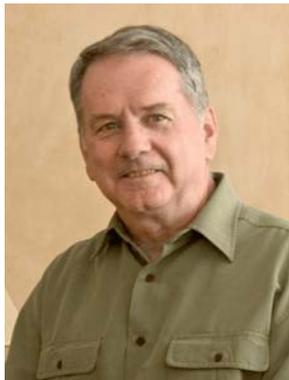
His other public affairs tours of duty included three overseas assignments to Guam, Italy and Japan; at-sea

assignments aboard the USS Nimitz (CVN 68), the Sixth Fleet flagship USS Belknap (CG 26) and the Seventh Fleet flagship USS Blue Ridge (LCC 19); three previous tours in the Pentagon as special assistant to the assistant secretary of the Navy for research, development and acquisition, media desk officer and director of media operations for the Chief of Information; and in direct fleet support as director of public affairs for Naval Air Station Whiting Field/Training Air Wing Five, Submarine Forces Atlantic Fleet and Commander U.S. Pacific Fleet.

A native of Dubuque, Iowa, Smith received a bachelor of arts degree in marketing from the University of Iowa and was commissioned in 1982. He was a 1997 honors graduate of Old Dominion University where he received a master's of public administration degree.

View from the Bridge

I attended the Friday July 14 CHINFO Change of Office Ceremony at the Sail Loft in the Washington Navy Yard, representing the USNPAAA. Several other members were there including: Bill Thompson (The PAO Godfather) Nathan Jones, Frank Thorp, Craig Quigley, Marge Holtz, Jim Mitchell, John Carman, Chuck Connor, Alan Goldstein and Tom Burgess.



I should also note that long-time CHINFO staff veteran Judy Van was working the reception and had just received her 45-year civil service pin. Judy recently had visited our beloved member Norma Connelly in Fredericksburg, Virginia. Norma is doing well in her apartment and loves to get cards and letters.

I want to salute RADM Greg Smith, USN, who is our new CHINFO. We wish Greg and his PA team the very best in the coming years.

At the same time, we say thank you for a job “well done” to RADM T. L. McCreary, who has done a fantastic job as our CHINFO for the past three-years. “T” was a key player (along with Brian Cullen and Steve Pietropaoli) in instituting the media embedding program during the 2003 Gulf War. “T” worked tirelessly on the PA community reorganization, and full reserve PA integration, to better harness the full power of both regular and reserve Public Affairs in the post 9/11 war on terror, which has been highly successful. He also pushed a new post-graduate master’s degree program at San Diego State University. (By the way, at the request of “T,” and thanks to the hard work of Chris Miller, our association sponsored a post-graduation gift of 13 signed copies of Torie Clarke’s book (“Lipstick on a Pig”) to the first 13 graduates of this new Navy PA post-graduate program on May 20.)

T” also supervised the enlisted ratings merger to Mass Communication Specialist on his very busy watch. As previously reported in Sightings, the new MC rating became effective on July 1.

Secretary of the Navy Donald C. Winter awarded “T” the Distinguished Service Medal for his CHINFO watch. The CNO, ADM Michael G. Mullen, praised the great job “T” and his PA team

did. You should know that in his farewell remarks “T” gave full credit to all present and retired PA Team members for the professionalism that has become the hallmark of the Navy PA Team. I was struck by informal comments to me by an Army brigadier general and an Air Force colonel saying that they had mastered their PA skills as the “understudies” of Navy PAOs while in joint staffs. “T” said in his remarks that the guiding principles on his watch had included the three “Ts.” That is, telling the Truth, building Trust and Transparency. “T” has become our newest USNPAAA member, joining just before he retired. We hope to have a retrospective interview with “T” in the next Sightings.

It can’t be officially announced, but the rumor is that “T” will be staying in the Washington area working in another high-level government public affairs position.

Board Meeting

To bring you up-to-date, I should mention that Friday, May 5 was also a busy day for the USNPAAA. First, we had a board meeting at the Army-Navy Country Club, Arlington, Virginia, and elected two new vice presidents: Steve Clawson and Jim Noone. We then discussed the location for the next reunion in 2007. The board voted to have the 2007 reunion at Ponte Vedra, Florida, located near Jacksonville, Florida. This decision is subject to coming to a final agreement on a firm date and satisfactory hotel financial arrangements. Bob Brett submitted the winning reunion location proposal.

The second event (also at the Army-Navy Country Club) was a wonderful luncheon, arranged by Jim and Marcia Nemer. After lunch we bid a Washington, D.C., area “farewell” to Tom and Mary Ann Coldwell, who are in their new home at Cary, North Carolina. Tom will continue his active role in our association with his new Internet connection. Tom just produced the new July USNPAAA membership directory, which members should have received by now. RADM Jack Garrow presented Tom with an ugly necktie as a departing gift. Since Tom no longer wears shirts (or shoes) in North Carolina, we all are sure Jack’s gift would find a suitable place in Tom’s new Southern home.

We then saluted the long-time Navy Public Affairs supporter, Rear Adm. Earl “Buddy” Yates (Ret) as the first “Honorary Navy Public Affairs Officer.” Buddy was in charge of the U.S. Seventh

Fleet's Detachment Charlie in Saigon, 1966-1967. He is a distinguished naval aviator, and was the first commanding officer of the carrier USS John F. Kennedy. In his introductory remarks, Jack MacKercher told us of how much RADM Yates did for the PAO community throughout his career. When it came his turn to speak, Buddy Yates proved that he was a great public speaker with a keen sense of humor. He claimed to be the PAO "understudy" of the RADM Bill Thompson' school of facial non-verbal communication. You had to be present to get the Buddy' "insight" into Bill Thompson's secret style of leadership by facial expression. Rear Adm. Thompson took Buddy's comments in stride, with a facial expression that proved the speaker's point.

Also present at the luncheon was CAPT Bill Stierman, our Pacific Fleet PAO during the last part of the Vietnam Conflict. A good time was had by all. Special mention should be made of the attendance of two long-time USNPAAA members, Ruth Donohue and Anna Urband, who we all know from CHINFO our days.

Book Recommendation

Finally, in the public affairs professional reading area is a new book of special interest that Ken Pease, Steve Pietropaoli and I recommend: "Cobra II: The Inside Story of the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq" (Pantheon Books, New York, 2006). It is written by Michael R. Gordon, New York Times military correspondent, and LTGEN Bernard E. Trainor, USMC (Ret), former New York Times correspondent.

Frankly, it is discomfoting to read, because it shows our military chain of command with all the mistakes made during the 2003 Gulf war. But, it is one of the best "insider" war accounts I have ever read from both the tactical and strategic perspectives. One of the discomfoting comments was, " In the Iraq War, Rumsfeld and Franks dominated the planning, the Joint Chiefs of Staff were pushed to the margins and largely accepted

their role." This comment is well documented in the book.

The insider interviews at all command levels give the reader a clear insight into the disconnect between what the field soldiers and Marines experienced, and the more narrow CINCENT, Pentagon and White House perspectives during the war. American public affairs efforts and Iraqi government propaganda were key concerns of CENTCOM, and that is clearly documented in the book. For example, U.S. air forces tried to take out the Iraqi government TV station to stop the Iraqi propaganda mill in the initial days of the war, but failed. The so-called "Thunder Runs," or Army armored task force raids into Baghdad, were initiated to show the press and Iraqi people that the Iraqi government was lying to them about the U.S.



RADM Buddy Yates, second from left, receives designation as an Honorary PAO from USNPAAA prez Brent Baker—flanked by two former Seventh Fleet Det Charlie "employees" of Yates, Jack Mackercher on the left and Jack Garrow on the right.

Forces being defeated.

In the second Baghdad "Thunder Run," soldiers were ordered to find a statue at Saddam's palace gate to blow up, and to have the operation video-taped to counter the Iraqi Information minister's claim that U.S. troops were not in Baghdad. A Fox TV News crew accompanied the raid troops.

There was American confusion in the Baghdad battle. The

second "Thunder Run" by the 3rd Army Division into Baghdad on April 6 was not supposed to end with the forces staying in Baghdad, but they stayed. There was an amusing description of a 3rd Division embedded reporter (Chris Tomlinson of AP) with the "Thunder Run" troops calling a colleague at CENTCOM on his satellite phone and telling him that he was in Baghdad at the parade grounds. The CENTCOM-based colleague checked with the CENTCOM PAO, who said that the Army troops were not scheduled to be downtown Baghdad that day. The headquarters colleague told Tomlinson that the troops would be leaving Baghdad soon. Tomlinson replied, "I think they are staying."

And stay they did! The senior American commanders then acted like they planned for the

unit to stay. It was one of those court martial or medal moments! The SECDEF's micro-management style, and the lack of good post-war planning by the Pentagon and CINCCENT headquarters is clearly explained.

The authors (both of whom I know and respect) point out five grievous errors during the 2003 war. Gordon and Trainor wrote, "They [U.S. leaders]... underestimated their opponent and failed to understand the welter of ethnic groups and tribes that is Iraq. They did not bring the right tools to the fight and put too much confidence in technology. They failed to adapt to developments on the ground and remained wedded to their prewar analysis even after Iraqis showed their penchant for guerrilla tactics in the first days of the war. They presided over a system in which differing military and

political perspectives were discouraged. Finally, they turned their backs on the nation-building lessons from the Balkans and other crisis zones and fashioned a plan that unrealistically sought to shift much of the burden onto a defeated and ethnically diverse population and allied nations that were enormously ambivalent about the invasion. Instead of making plans to fight a counterinsurgency, the president and his team drew up plans to bring the troops home and all but declared the war won."

Did you know an embedded reporter saved the life of an American soldier in the battle for Baghdad? It's in the book.

That's it for now. Please send us your stories, book reviews and comments to ensure this newsletter is informative and fun. All the best!

—Brent Baker

"Associated Press Arriving"

—Or How a PAO Briefer Cleared the CNO Briefing Theater

by Ralph Blanchard

Junior officers in the public affairs community are called on for a wide variety of assignments, some sought after—like scoring a shipboard public affairs billet—and others that I, as a junior officer, considered unspeakable.

Being told as a newly caught junior officer, for example, that you are going to be a "briefer" for a senior admiral in the Pentagon would easily fit into the "B. S., not me" category.

Proudly wearing gold bars in 1958, I found myself reporting to the Navy press desk in the Pentagon, following a short career as a civilian journalist in Atlanta and a first assignment to the NAS Alameda public information office, working for LCDR Ray Robinson.

Those of us assigned to the press desk in the late 1950s, and probably still today, were responsible for coordinating responses to incoming news media and public inquiries. Each morning the Chief of Naval Operations, ADM Arleigh Burke, was given a short desk-side update on articles resulting from those inquiries as well as other news.

LCDR Buck Wilhide, CNO's personal public affairs officer, was doing an admirable job at these morning desk-side briefings. After receiving the news highlights, the CNO then joined a waiting phalanx of admirals and captains in the Op Center's large walk-in vault, where he was updated on Navy-

wide operations and intelligence.

Only a few months after I arrived at the Pentagon LCDR Wilhide stopped me and—possibly in the interest of building character through terror—advised me that I had been selected to do those desk-side CNO press briefings each morning. Drawing on the limited intuitive powers I possessed, I quickly deduced that I was not being consulted. I swung around to determine if perhaps LCDR Wilhide was addressing his remarks to someone behind me. Behind me, however, was a long, dark and empty C-Ring corridor.

It marked the beginning of a succession of daily morning news briefings for ADM Burke at 0800 each day, following a couple of hours spent scanning a half dozen newspapers, wire service reports, and listening to early morning radio reports.

The morning of my first desk-side briefing, I clearly recall walking through the admiral's outer office, where his busy personal staff already was hard at work. The executive assistant nodded toward a door, indicating that I should go in. With a dry mouth and my briefing notes clenched in my hand, I walked through the large, silent inner office to ADM Burke's desk.

He quietly smiled and thanked me when I finished, and somehow I found my way back through the Pentagon's warren of corridors to the

press desk to start my regular day.

Within a month or two, the desk-side press briefings for the admiral were incorporated into the formal, daily briefing line-up, which was held for him in that large walk-in vault with room to seat about two dozen officers. A modern information center was completed soon after that and all of our briefings were conducted in the new facility. As press briefer, I was first in the line-up, sometimes to the consternation of the intelligence officer when a news item ‘scooped’ the intelligence report.

The new state-of-the-art information briefing center with graphics and projector capability obviously was more appropriate for CNO’s morning briefings, but the old walk-in vault had achieved a special place in the hearts of those of us who presented our daily reports.

As we entered the Operations Center vault, each of us was required to call out our name and department. A petty officer at a table by the vault’s door routinely entered the information into a log. One morning, after stating my name, I jokingly

added the words “Associated Press.” It was duly logged.

From that morning on through the remainder of my tour in CHINFO, I harbored a deep and abiding appreciation for the fact that keel-hauling had been outlawed by 1958. I watched wide-eyed as the assembled admirals and captains were directed to get up, leave the room, and log back in. It was obvious from their steely looks they knew.

Along with many other PAOs, I often was assigned briefing duties during my Navy career. In retrospect (and retrospect only), being a “briefer” as a junior officer was not all that unspeakable; and the dry-mouthed moments usually passed without dire consequences.

One briefing, however, stands out from the others and is etched indelibly and fondly in my memory. It was that first day I walked alone into ADM Burke’s cavernous Pentagon office. And he looked up from the sea of papers on his desk at the frightened junior officer standing in front of him and smiled.

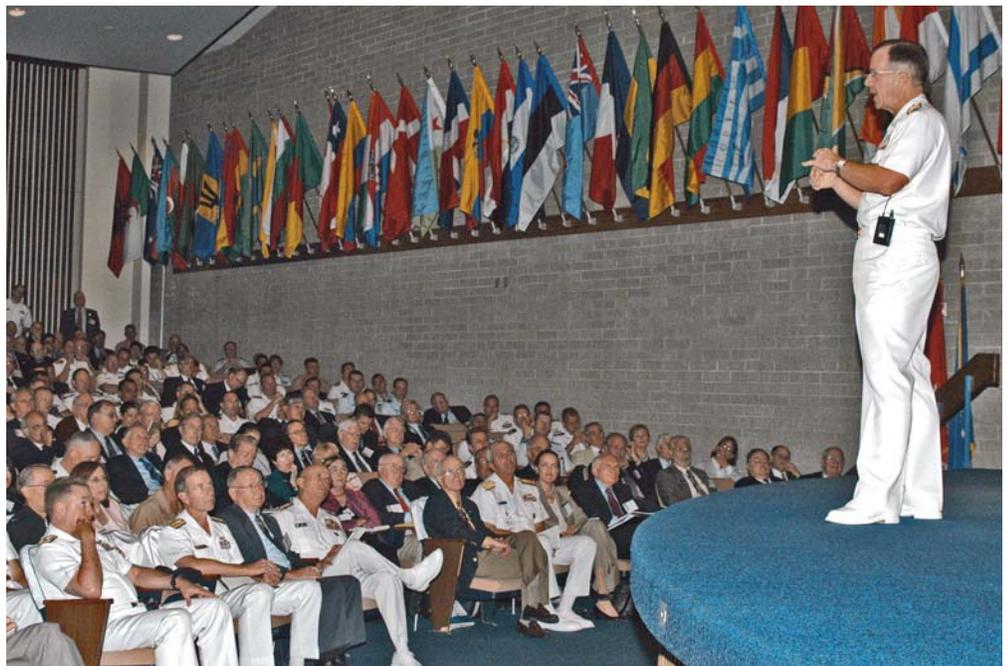
Navy’s top leaders gather at Naval War College to discuss strategy in the twenty-first century

by Ryan Gallucci

Newport, R.I.—The 57th annual Current Strategy Forum convened at the Naval War College on Tuesday, June 13, and brought together senior military leaders, academics and national policy makers for an up to date examination of American military strategy in the post Cold War era.

“Today’s uncertainty and today’s threats are of an entirely unique sort caused and perpetuated by new challenges,” said Chief of Naval Operations, Adm. Michael Mullen in his address to the forum. “Challenges brought on, quite frankly, by the collapse of (the Berlin) wall and the unstoppable, unrelenting pace of globalization.”

Both Mullen and the Secretary of the Navy, Donald C. Winter addressed the forum over the



Adm. Mullen addresses Current Strategy Forum participants

two-day conference.

“Our experience in Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom leads us to conclude

that expeditionary warfare is changing in important ways," said Secretary Winter. "It is no longer enough to storm a beach, rebuild an airport and then leave."

The new demands that face the military in the era of transnational terrorism and economic growth in India and China were the major topics of discussion among military and civilian participants in the conference.

Adm. Mullen called for a new maritime strategy that reflects the newfound stresses of the global world economy. He said that the United States must look to its allies to ensure safety and security in global sea lanes. Mullen calls this international security vision "the 1,000 ship Navy."

"We must unite all freedom-loving nations to defeat a diverse array of fourth-generation threats," Mullen said. "Everywhere I go, heads of navies I speak with are excited about the concept of bringing together a fleet comprised of ships and capabilities from many law abiding nations, standing watch over the seas—standing watch with each other."

The panels of the forum elaborated on the comments of Winter and Mullen, and sought to define how America should project its power in the 21st century.

All of the panelists agreed that the United States would continue to be the most powerful global state through the next century, but they disagreed on how the United States should respond to Chinese economic growth and the role that the U.S. mission in Iraq would play.

"I believe the United States will lose in Iraq," said Dr. John Mearsheimer, a professor from the University of Chicago. "However, what happens in Iraq is largely irrelevant to the U.S. power position."

Mearsheimer is co-author of a recent controversial paper on the influence of the Israeli lobby in global politics.

He said that Iraq has a greater resolve to fight off American forces; but, much like Vietnam, a loss in this particular conflict will not affect the ability to win the fight against radical Islamists.

"Power does not necessarily mean victory," he said. "Material capabilities are what determine a state's power."

This is why Mearsheimer believes that China

should be of strategic concern to the United States in the next century. However, this does not mean that China must be a strategic enemy.

"China is not the Soviet Union," said Dr. Robert Art of Brandeis University. "China can have a peaceful rise."

The panels determined that the United States needs to realize the

capabilities and limitations of power in the current global situation.

"This 'Long War' on terrorism is a war for social scientists," said retired Army Maj. Gen. Robert Scales. "In this conflict, psycho-cultural victory is more important than geographic victory."

The forum called for several solutions to build an effective military strategy in the 21st century.

The United States must make a greater use of sea-basing, the same way that it was used in response to Hurricane Katrina and the Southeast Asian Tsunami.

Also, American forces must have a discourse among leaders of all levels since tactical decisions can have strategic consequences. This includes building cultural awareness among its military service members.

Finally, the American public must be actively engaged in the global conflict.

"The military is fully mobilized, the population is not," said Michele Flourney of the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

The annual forum is the capstone event in the Naval War College's year-long curriculum. More than 1,000 military and strategic decision-makers from around the world participated in this year's event.

Mullen said he is optimistic about the role the Navy will play in 21st century military strategy, which is why he chose the 2006 Current Strategy Forum to challenge the Navy to develop its maritime strategy for the challenges ahead.



SecNav Donald C. Winter

Don't move to Cary, NC—*Please*

by Tom Coldwell

Since Mary Ann and I snuck in, there's enough of us here in Cary, NC, a beltway's width west of Raleigh and a ways down the road from Durham. Our town is just too nice to clutter up with any more PR bozos, and the place doesn't need hyping; everyone we've met thus far seems crazy about it. One local wag (not me) said Cary stands for Containment Area for Relocated Yankees, and we are one. By the way, another one is USNPAAA Life member Tom Hegele, who, with his wife Ethelyn, has lived in Cary for 35 years.

We're in the middle of the so-called Research Triangle, heavily populated by tech firms and their tech families—plus a good number of retired folks, most of whom golf, hunt or fish (I do all three when playing golf). Where do we fit? Let's just not say *techie*, although I can set the clock on a VCR when a train leaves Philadelphia going 55mph.

We lived in Fairfax for 31 years, Tom employed in turn by CHINFO, BUPERS, The (Waring) Partridge Group consulting firm; the Navy Memorial Foundation; Mary Ann by Woodward and Lothrop and Fairfax County Police Department. Shepherded Lee, Jeff and Ann through college and weddings and arrivals for four beautiful grandkids.

Warmed up by tuitions and weddings, we continued disposing income with three boats, stepping up each time, eventually to 40-foot (not a yacht—a yacht is any boat bigger than yours).

Anyway, friends of ours in Cary invited us to stop over en route to visit my brother in Florida; did that three years in a row. And we just fell in love with Cary, while fearing we may have worn out our welcome for stopovers. Bought this nice place, “downsized” to a thousand square feet larger, near a golf course but no navigable water—a circumstance that accelerated our decision to sell the boat after 19 years “at sea.”

Back in '75, Fairfax was going to be a three year tour only, so no wallpaper went up, and since we learned from 18 prior Navy moves, we did our best to keep down the accumulation of stuff. But still, 31 years is a long spell. March and April brought us a new kinship with the Salvation Army and the trash man, donations to whom may have been close to interchangeable.

We did everything on the households effects checklists, and our movers put us in the new home with not a single breakage. Unpacking is still going

on and will continue through Autumn. We are unpacking the stuff we should have pitched in Virginia and repacking it for storage before taking it on the next move. These are our leech possessions: They are useless but keep on sucking our space and attention. Did I mention the furniture we are buying to replace the furniture we gave away? You smile, but when you move, you will do it, too.

Then there's the local details: gas, electric, water, sewer, cable, Internet, telephone, North Carolina plates and lastly, drivers license and studying for the test. Did not know that there are specific rules allowing transportation of children in the back of a pickup truck. I missed two questions, Mary Ann missed only one, which detail she proclaims to everyone we meet.

So that's that, we are very happy in our new home and town, grateful to all our friends in Virginia who gave us some grand send-offs, even the USNPAAA luncheon they scheduled for the week after we left.

I knew it was time to move.

Navy Memorial offers free enrollment in Navy Log

Enrollment in the Navy Log, a computerized register at the U.S. Navy Memorial in Washington is now being offered for **free**. Set up in the 1980s by USNPAAA Life member Bill Thompson, the Log is a permanent public registry where Sea Service members and veterans can record their individual record of service. The Log is available on the Internet.

The goal of The United States Navy Memorial is to have all eligible veterans and service members enter their data into The Navy Log.

Currently more than a half-million people are listed in The Navy Log, but there are millions more who can and should be enrolled. Eligible veterans, service members, friends and family can simply enter the appropriate information at www.navymemorial.org or call The Navy Log hotline at 1-800-NAVY LOG (1-800-628-9564).