



*Atlantic Ocean (Nov. 4, 2005) The Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69) is reflected in a set of "Big Eyes" binoculars on the signal bridge of the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75). U.S. Navy photo by: **Photographer's Mate Airman Ricardo J. Reyes (RELEASED)***

## Six Feet of Separation: Virtual Outreach during the COVID-19 Pandemic

By LCDR Desiree Frame, USS  
Gerald R. Ford PAO &  
CDR Jenn Cragg,  
COMNAVAIRLANT PAO

After months of planning, in early March 2020 two Public Affairs Officers finalized a one-year, jam-packed strategic Distinguished Visitor embark program for the Navy's most technologically advanced and newest aircraft carrier, USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78). The goal: outreach efforts to maximize public exposure to naval aviation and showcase naval air assets and naval personnel.

As Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower said, "... I have always found that plans are useless, but planning is indispensable." Little did those

PAOs know that their robust plan to execute 27 embarks consisting of more than 300 DVs and influencers on Ford would turn into an opportunity to expand awareness of this strategic asset to over 21,700 people



USS Gerald R. Ford PA production team spearheads the virtual tour series *House of Wolverine* to continue outreach during the pandemic: (l to r) LTJG Ayifa Brooks, APAO, series content executive producer MC2 William Spears, and LCDR Desiree Frame, PAO. (U.S. Navy photo by MCC RJ Stratchko, CVN78 Public Affairs)

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internationally. Here is their (our) story...Within a few weeks of finalizing the plan, the entire world seemed to pause as schools and businesses began to close under state mandates to combat the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19). Initially, for Sailors assigned to Ford, life went on unchanged. At the height of the onset of the pandemic, Ford was underway in the Atlantic Ocean conducting an independent steaming event and not scheduled to return to port for weeks. The crew read reports and watched the news as if the events taking place were fictional, something out of a movie, and like all good movies would end with little fanfare or long-term impacts to their lives. It did not take the Public Affairs community long to conceptualize how to communicate in this new environment.



LT Wil Klinger provides a Distinguished Visitor (DV) tour of the C-2A Greyhound. The VRC-40 pilot flies high priority cargo, mail, and passengers to and from Atlantic Fleet aircraft carriers. Pilots and squadrons like Klinger's are key Navy public affairs partners in executing carrier embark programs for VIPs and news media around the world. VRC-40 is homeported at Naval Station Norfolk. (U.S. Navy Photo by MCC Mike Cole, COMNAVAIRLANT Public Affairs)

In one swift act the Department of Navy terminated the DV embark program on March 16 by issuing a stop movement order restricting Sailors' travel and prohibiting ship visits. Our communication efforts instantly turned internal, providing much needed guidance and information to the crew of Ford to ensure their health. Rightfully, our attention stayed there for some time as we received weekly or daily updates from the Pentagon that required vigilant response.

As operations and day-to-day life began to normalize, we brainstormed how we could give new life to our outreach efforts. After a few weeks of planning, and a catchy title provided by the USS Ford's CO, the brainchild was born: *House of Wolverine*. Ford launched a weekly virtual tour video series to bring the ship to our DVs if we couldn't bring them to the ship.

In our initial plans we identified the primary target audiences for Ford's virtual tour videos: congressional and defense department stakeholders, naval aviation influencers, and the American public – to include Sailors and their families. Over the course of two months, *House of Wolverine* introduced these audiences to Ford's latest technology, special evolutions, and operations. Episodes were uploaded on DVIDS and amplified on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to increase outreach to target audiences.

While the series was designed to take us past the end date of the stop movement order, we realized that our COVID-mitigation travel restrictions for DVs would continue. At the conclusion of the two-month series, we took a brief pause to evaluate "season 1." Ford's Assistant PAO, LTJg Ayifa Brooks, and *House of Wolverine* content executive producer Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class William Spears, determined that "season 1" had better reach and engagement than previous video series. But, there was still room for improvement with content style and delivery, which would enable us to maintain an enduring presence with our key audiences throughout the extended pause to in-person tours. We used our content evaluation to update our communication plan, before implementing season 2.



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## House of Wolverine 2.0

We defined a new goal; to expand Ford's outreach efforts through a brand awareness virtual tour 2.0 series that increases audience engagement with more interactive videos that capture the diversity of Ford's crew. In support of that goal we crafted four communication objectives.

1. Increase engagement with identified audiences on Facebook and Twitter by 5% and Instagram by 2%, in four months via targeted audience tagging.
2. Expand brand awareness to the American public as reflected in a 2% increase of followers on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, in four months, with eight interactive virtual tour videos. (FB:54,334; IG:3,874; TW:3,008)
3. Increase DVIDS views by 5% in four months with WAVETOPS articles and direct emails to Congressional members via OLA's liaisons, and direct emails to CVN 78 PAO stakeholders.
4. Improve relationships with 50% of DVs identified (and previously scheduled) to embark Ford via direct email contact with links of *House of Wolverine* season 2, resulting in an updated DV embark roster by December 2020.

COVID-19 has changed the way we eat, sleep, and work. In many ways, it requires us to rethink every action we take, every moment of every day. As PAOs we continue to stay on the front lines of the pandemic, not only with the vital mission of educating our internal audiences to keep them safe and well-informed, but also through the development of unique and new ways to communicate to our audiences about the Naval operations that have ceased to be deterred by COVID-19, and will continue daily in support of our national security.

Follow the Ford PA team on this communication success story journey and tune into Season 2 of *House of Wolverine*.

DVIDS: <https://www.dvidshub.net/CVN78>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/USSGeraldRFord>

Twitter: [https://twitter.com/Warship\\_78](https://twitter.com/Warship_78)

Instagram: [https://www.instagram.com/cvn78\\_grford](https://www.instagram.com/cvn78_grford)



Capt. J.J. Cummings, USS Gerald R. Ford's commanding officer, back left, speaks to a reporter on a satellite telephone as Ford's Media Department documents the conversation May 17, 2020 while conducting an independent steaming event in the Atlantic Ocean. (U.S. Navy photo by MCC RJ Stratchko, CVN78 Public Affairs)



## From the Bridge...

Dear USNPAA Members:

Welcome to the fall edition of *Sightings*. Here in Maryland the air is getting crisper and soon the leaves will start changing — both in anticipation of key events this fall— Navy Birthday, elections and Veterans Day. This year has certainly been a difficult one for so many of us as we continue to deal with COVID-19. I see these holidays as more important than ever to reflect on the commitment to duty and service the Navy's Public Affairs Community has rendered in the face of incredible challenges. Many of us recall cruises that lasted several months before we touched land again. Our Sailors are now seeing cruises that go nearly a year without the relief of more than a few days in port. Their sacrifices reflect the toughest op-tempo in years if not decades.

A clear and sustaining USNPAA goal is to grow the membership and participation of the active duty public affairs community. For us to succeed and remain viable, it's critical that RDML Charlie Brown and his selfless team of Navy communicators see USNPAA as educational, informative, and occasionally entertaining and fun.

We have met some of the current PAOs in recent issues of *Sightings* and there's more in this issue. After you read their stories, there will be no doubt about how well they are "answering the call" under difficult circumstances.

For example, you'll enjoy learning about the efforts of the *USS GERALD FORD* and AIRLANT PA teams. It's a classic tale of how to pivot when life throws you a curve and a great plan goes over the side because no one could see a viral pandemic coming. Definitely a BZ performance for the CVN 78 team.

This issue continues the series by Dave Sturges on mentoring and the people who helped shape him in his Navy PA career. If there is one thread that runs through the USNPAA and brings us together, it's mentorship. I'm sure that one day our present communicators will be documenting the role their mentors played in their careers.

As we look forward to October and our Navy's birthday, we take a closer look at the *Navy's History and Heritage Command*. Though its name has changed over the years, this repository of all command histories and operational reports remains a vigilant steward of Navy treasures — from academic texts to artifacts and underwater graveyards.

Speaking of history, Evelyn Moy let us know she is a volunteer interviewer for the *Veterans History Project* (VHP). This Library of Congress initiative documents



RDML Tom Jurkowsky

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veterans' service and archives their memories and/or memorabilia into searchable collections. One option to capture personal stories is through veteran interviews. VHP needs volunteers nationwide to assist as interviewers for the project. As we celebrate all veterans on November 11, consider this opportunity to help document their stories.

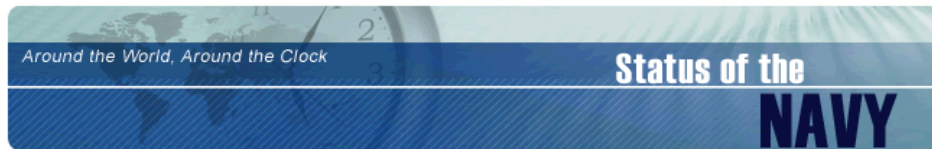
As many of you know, we lost a legend this summer with the passing of retired JOCM John Burlage. John served as a CHINFO Command Master Chief where he mentored officers, enlisted and civilians. He then joined *Navy Times* where, for 18 years, he advocated for Sailors and their families. He did a wonderful job telling their story and had a knack for identifying issues that leadership needed to focus on or change.

Like many in these times, USNPAA leveraged technology to launch our first 'Virtual Happy Hour' this summer. Our guest was RDML Dawn Cutler, now Executive Vice President and Chief Operations Officer of the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society. Dawn provided a tremendous update, one so compelling that my wife Sally became a volunteer at the office here in Annapolis. In the short time she has been with the Society, she has come home with many stories about the wonderful job NMCRS does to support our Sailors and Marines. Stay tuned for more 'Virtual Happy Hours.'

Finally, I want to welcome Tim Taylor as our new webmaster. Tim succeeds Mike Dean who did a superb job in that role. I am very grateful for Mike's efforts that took our website to the next level. I know Tim will elevate it even more.

Enjoy this issue. My best wishes to all to stay healthy and safe.

Sincerely,  
Tom Jurkowsky



## SHIPS AND SUBMARINES

**Deployable Battle Force Ships:** 296

**Deployed Battle Force Across the Fleet including  
Forward Deployed Submarines:**

Deployed Ships Underway: 63

Ships Underway: 88

Local Ops / Training: 25

**Aircraft Carriers Underway:**

USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) – US Fleet Forces

USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) – 7<sup>th</sup> Fleet

**Amphibious Assault Ships Underway:**

USS Tripoli (LHA 6) – Eastern Pacific

USS Essex (LHD 2) – Eastern Pacific

USS America (LHA 6) – Western Pacific

## NAVY PERSONNEL

**Active Duty:** 342,187

- Officers: 56,061
- Enlisted: 281,568
- Midshipmen: 4,558

**Ready Reserve:** 101,243

**Reserves Currently Mobilized:**  
4,653

**Navy Department Civilian Employees:**  
282,121

*As of September 10, 2020*

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## USNPAA Launches Virtual Happy Hour with RDML Dawn Cutler

USNPAA debuted a more COVID-friendly member gathering July 28 when it launched its first Virtual Happy Hour (VHH). Guest speaker RDML Dawn Cutler, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer at the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society (NMCRS), shared an overview of challenges and efforts the Society faces meeting the needs of our Sailors and Marines during these difficult times. (See story below for details.)

USNPAA Virtual Happy Hour extends the reach of our Navy PA collegial get-togethers. Modeled after *Third Thursdays* in DC and other like gatherings in Norfolk and San Diego where Navy PA professionals meet, mentor and share sea stories, this new format is COVID-safe and open to members world-wide. Participants just mix their own cocktail and sign in.

"We're still in the beta stage, but we hope to host Virtual Happy Hour once a quarter going forward," shares USNPAA President Tom Jurkowsky. USNPAA members who would like to mix their own cocktails and log in to future happy hours should stay tuned to USNPAA Facebook Page and membership e-mailings for updates about future Virtual Happy Hours.



Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society Executive VP & COO Dawn Cutler chats with fellow USNPAA members during our new *Virtual Happy Hour*.

**\*\*Make sure your USNPAA membership info/email is up-to-date or become a member at <https://usnpaa/membership.html>. Membership is FREE to all current and past Navy public affairs officers, enlisted and civilians. Send your VHH feedback and suggestions to RDML Jurkowsky at: [tjurkowsky3@comcast.net](mailto:tjurkowsky3@comcast.net)**

## Supporting Sea Service Families

*By Gillian Gonzalez, CFRE, Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society*

Despite pandemic lockdowns, shutdowns, quarantines, and social distancing, the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society (NMCRS) in the first half of 2020 supported nearly 15,000 Sailors and Marines with \$1.4 million. That included COVID-19 specific assistance of more than \$1.3 million.

In San Diego, following the devastating July 12 fire aboard USS Bonhomme Richard (LHD6), local NMCRS staff immediately went into disaster relief mode. Working with the Bonhomme Richard's Command Master Chief, Sailors with immediate needs were identified and provided \$100 gift cards to begin replacing their losses at the Navy Exchange. Over the course of the next three weeks, almost \$200,000 in additional grants were provided to over 300 Sailors affected by the fire.

As 2020 draws down, our service men and women and their families will continue to be tested. An active hurricane season is already upon us. COVID-19 continues to present ever-evolving challenges. Active duty commitments stress those deployed and those left at home. And, Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society continues to prepare for what's next.

To support our sea service families, please visit: [www.nmcrcs.org](http://www.nmcrcs.org) or [www.facebook.com/nmcrcs](https://www.facebook.com/nmcrcs)



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## COVID & the Navy

### Straight Talk from PAOs in the Thick of It

**BUMED** — *“Medical is one of those things that people tend to put in a box, thinking ‘Oh, that’s medical’s to deal with, I don’t need to know about it.’ So, it can be difficult to get people to contextualize a pandemic in their own situation and understand this isn’t something they can just put in a box. I was privileged that the Navy Surgeon General is very good with media and on-camera and is able to explain things as your family physician might. We worked to communicate the latest science and best public health practices across the Fleet and Fleet Marine Force as a key to keeping people healthy and ensuring readiness. Based on the feedback we received, our efforts were trusted and appreciated.”*

CDR Denver Applehans, Chief of Public Affairs, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery. pictured right. (U.S. Navy Photo)



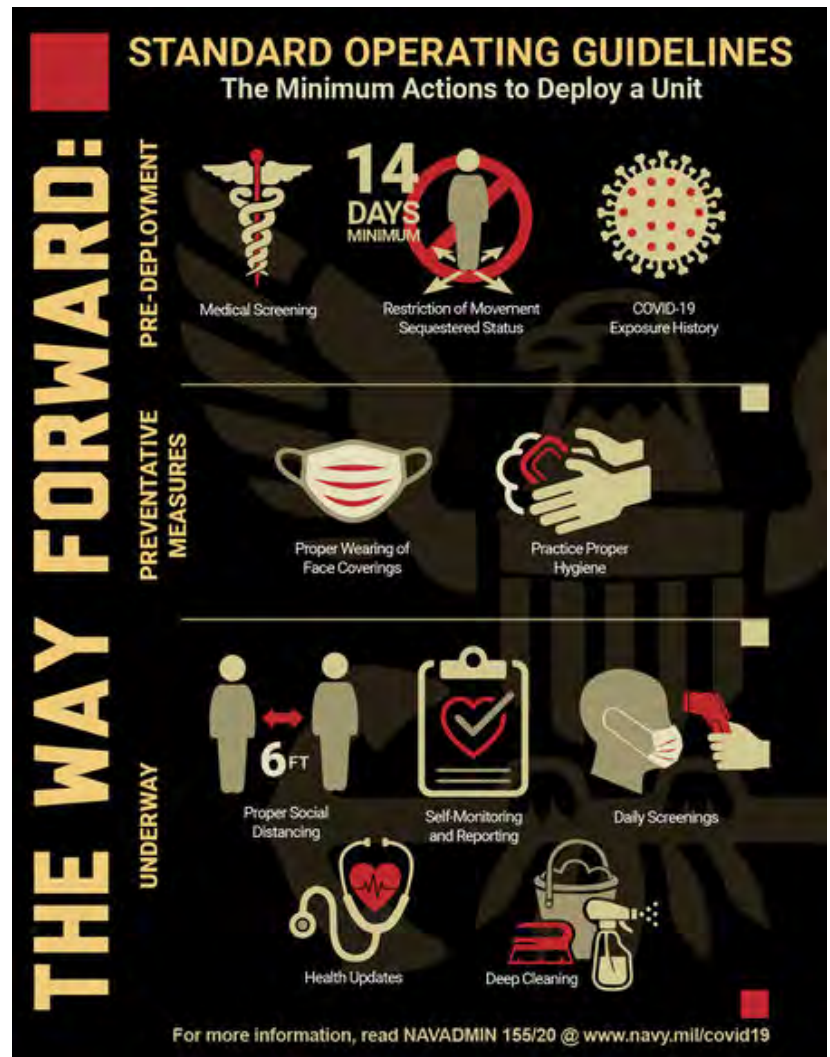
**PACFLT** — *“Communicating in the COVID-19 environment brought unique challenges. It was an enemy we had little understanding of that was having widespread impact across the fleet. Leadership quickly put new mitigation measures and restrictions in place to ensure continuation of operations and to support warfighting readiness. The volume and velocity of this change was overwhelming at times. It was critical as PAOs to keep pace with this change in order to communicate to the fleet. COVID also demonstrated the distinctiveness of Navy PA. COVID was not just a PACFLT issue but also impacted the entire Navy. As a community we were able to quickly come together in order to communicate effectively what the Navy was doing to counter this threat.”*

CDR J. Myers Vasquez, Deputy PAO, Commander Pacific Fleet

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**NAVPERS** — *“The irony of a global pandemic is that behind the scenes the Human Resource functions of recruiting, training and detailing Sailors quickly come to the forefront as critical enablers. The sheer scale of the pandemic’s impacts is hard to put into words. Just look at the nearly 42,000 sets of orders cut between March and July alone that were affected. The MyNavy HR team (formerly known as MPT&E) redefined every aspect of how we safely bring in new recruits, train our sailors, detail them, and ensure the fleets are manned and ready to defend our nation. To date, MyNavy HR has released 57 COVID-19 related NAVADMINs, which required massive coordination and communication across the MyNavy HR enterprise. Our PA teams handled countless overlapping communication plans to ensure Sailors across the Navy understood the ramifications of policies that ranged from grooming standards to leave, liberty and orders.*

*Since the outbreak of the pandemic, we have reached approximately 1.25 million people per month and have a 55% engagement rate (likes, comments, shares) on our merged content. With the massive increase in reach, engagement becomes our next priority. Our small team has personally responded to each of the 1,200+ people who direct messaged us for a response. We increased our average response rate from “weeks” to roughly 10 hours. We also responded to in-post comments and questions, which helped us build a solid foundation of trust and support to the Fleet. CNP’s PA team has doubled in size to support this massive effort and will further grow as the digital communication need continues. MyNavy HR Facebook page has become the leading source of Navy HR-related news, outshining all other branches in reach, engagement, followers, and content - a one-stop-shop for all career questions. We are currently working to promote the same functionality to Twitter and Instagram, our other social platforms.”*

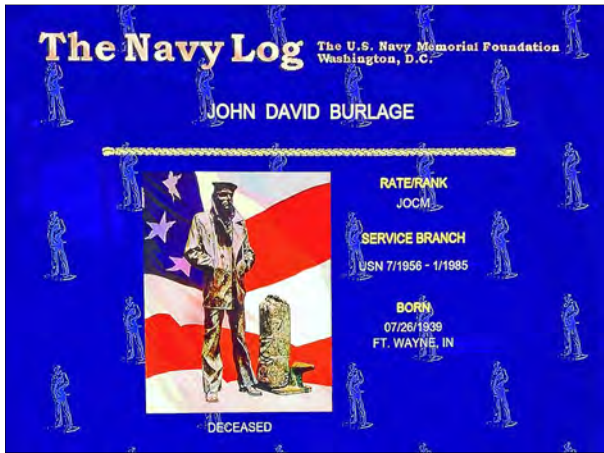


CDR Dave Hecht, PAO, Navy Personnel Command



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## Parting Thoughts...



For his continued contributions to the Navy and Marine Corps teams, ADM Vern Clark presented John Burlage with the Navy Superior Public Service Medal upon his *Navy Times* retirement in 2002. (U.S. Navy Photo)



*"There are few people in history who have done more to tell the stories of our Navy and our Sailors than John Burlage..."*

*Master Chief Burlage helped shape the community we are today, improving Navy public affairs both while he served and well after he retired.*

*...as a Senior Staff Writer for Navy Times for 18 years, ... he approached his job with same keen eye he had as a Sailor ... Always fair and accurate, he retained the respect of leaders of the Navy he had served so honorably."*

RDML Charlie Brown, APR+M  
Chief of Information

**"Master Chief John Burlage** was larger than life. He was a sailor's sailor and a chief's chief. He was all Navy, the ultimate company man. *He retired from the Navy on a Friday and started reporting for Navy Times on the following Monday.* That was John. He had a strong work ethic. If you worked hard for him -- he would work harder for you...."

*Former Military Times Reporter Mark Farham, MC1, USNR*

*"Me, being a cocky-know-it all Syracuse PHOJO, John had a way of letting me know I did not know it all. He taught me many lessons that I still benefit from today. "A photo is no good unless it is published!" was one of his lessons. He pushed me into writing better captions and marketing my photos."*

*Military Photographer Harry Gerwien, PH1, USN, Ret.*

*"Master Chief Burlage cast a giant shadow within the Navy's Journalist community... All who knew him—but especially those who served with him—agree he was a sailor's sailor. His was an ironclad work ethic of the highest standard which rubbed off on those around him."*

*Fred Klinkenberger Jr., JOCS, USN, Ret.*

*"John Burlage was a great copy editor. He was the fastest two-fingered typist I ever heard!"*

*Former Military Times Reporter Mark Farham, MC1, USNR*

## *... Fair Winds, Master Chief.*

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## Be a Part of Veterans History

*Volunteer as an Interviewer for the Veterans History Project*

Established by a unanimous act of Congress in 2000, the Veterans History Project (VHP) has archived firsthand stories of over 100,000 veterans going all the way back to WWI. Most of VHP collections are audio or video oral histories, but these Library of Congress (LOC) collections also include original photos and letters taken or written while the veteran was in service, as well as written memoirs, military documents, and other primary sources.



USNPAA member Evelyn Moy discusses veteran interview procedures with Veterans History Project (VHP) Liaison Andrew Huber. Moy volunteers to interview veterans for the project and believes former Navy PAOs and communication specialists have the perfect skill set to contribute to this meaningful program. (Veterans History Project Photo)

### Veterans History Project Qualifying Collection Requirements The 30 - 20 - 10 Rule

30-min or longer interview (audio or video)  
20-page manuscript  
10 original photos or letters (or combination)

VHP collections are accessed over three million times a year at [www.loc.gov/vets](http://www.loc.gov/vets). They are used for everything from research papers to family histories, to professional books and movies. Over 600 published books and papers have used VHP as a source, as well as several popular documentaries such as Ken Burns' "The War" and "The Vietnam War."

VHP interview subjects seeking to create their qualifying collections *must find their own interviewer*, making USNPAA members ideal partners in this effort. Want to help ensure veterans' stories remain available for future generations? Volunteer and help a vet.

In the D.C. area, contact USNPAA member Evelyn Moy, CDR, USN, Ret. at [evelynmoy@aol.com](mailto:evelynmoy@aol.com) for more information. USNPAA members nationwide may contact Andrew Huber, Liaison Specialist, LOC, VHP at [Ahub@loc.gov](mailto:Ahub@loc.gov).

For entire VHP submission process, requirements, instructions & forms, download your Field Kit at:  
<https://www.loc.gov/vets/kit.html>

This instructional video covers everything interviewers need to know to conduct a VHP interview:  
<https://www.loc.gov/vets/companion-video.html>

Sample interview questions can be found at:  
<https://www.loc.gov/vets/kit-generalquestions.html>





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## Naval History & Heritage Command Communicating History

By LCDR Daniel Day & MC2 Mutis Capizzi,  
Naval History and Heritage Command



Mass Communications Special 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Mutis Capizzi (left) and LCDR Daniel Day (right) view a gun mount in the WWII exhibit at the *National Museum of the U.S. Navy*. Day and Capizzi are active duty military assigned to Naval History and Heritage Command (NHHC) located at the Washington Navy Yard. (U.S. Navy Photo)

While Naval History and Heritage Command (NHHC) works to preserve and present an accurate history of the U.S. Navy, it is the Communication and Outreach Division (COD) that shares that history with Navy leadership, Sailors, and the American Public. Like the rest of NHHC, COD is powered by a cadre of civilians, with only a few military personnel assigned. Specifically, the division's Communication Branch is billeted for one 1650 public affairs officer, an MC1, and an MC2. While limited in personnel and time, those of us who serve at NHHC are *not* limited in scope of responsibility.

As active duty military communicators, working at NHHC is a rare experience that encompasses multiple aspects of PA. Our portfolio includes public outreach, public queries, assessments, planning, media engagement, digital engagement, fleet PA support, and support to major motion pictures, documentaries, and authors. The diverse aspects of the job provide immense value and communication education, but given the historic subject matters we deal with, the job also offers growth as professional Sailors and individuals. NHHC is much more than a collection of documents and artifacts. It's a wealth of



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information, context, inspiration, and perspective that may appear overwhelming and difficult to articulate. However, the professionals here - historians, archaeologists, curators, conservators, librarians, and archivists - are extremely dedicated and willing to share their depth and breadth of knowledge, talent, and experience. The challenge is keeping up!

*Every ship, submarine, squadron, and Navy command listed in the Standard Navy Distribution List creates a new chapter of Navy History when they submit their annual Command Operations Report (COR) (formerly Command History) to Naval History and Heritage Command.*

Every Navy policy, action, and decision has a reflection or root in history. NHHHC is a resource for fleet and senior leaders to tap into for that historic context. It's amazing to see how the work Sailors do becomes part of the American story. *Work done today by fleet communicators becomes the first draft of naval history.* Artifacts and command operations reports are key elements to documenting and understanding our Navy history. Numerous scholarly journal articles, papers, and books written by our cadre of professional historians refer to press releases and articles written by our PA teams in the fleet.

We ask a lot of the American Sailor. The price of admission for day-to-day service is difficult, dangerous work; duty in bleak or hostile locations; and long periods of time away from friends and loved ones. Yet, we are all part of the great legacy that is the U.S. Navy. Helping provide context for what is at stake for Sailors, the Navy and the nation guarantees steady work at NHHHC.

As communicators, we are proud to have contributed to Navy History and Heritage during our tenure here. We look forward to taking the experience with us to our next assignments where we hope to provide important historical context to the new Navy stories we will tell.



LCDR Daniel Day (left) and Mass Communications Specialist 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Mutis Capizzi (right) discuss exhibits at the National Museum of the U.S. Navy at the Washington Navy Yard. Day and Capizzi are active duty military assigned to Naval History and Heritage Command. NHHHC, located at the Washington Navy Yard, is responsible for the preservation, analysis, and dissemination of U.S. naval history and heritage. (U.S. Navy Photo)

*Paul Taylor, Deputy Director, NHHHC Communication and Outreach, contributed to this article.*

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# Naval History & Heritage Command

## Crib Sheet for the Curious PAO

### Key Divisions & Branches

**Collection Management Division (CMD)** — Maintains and interprets Navy material culture, using art and artifacts to tell the Navy's history online, through the Navy museums and through loan program to museums and other institutions worldwide.

#### ***Art Branch***

Loans works created through the *Combat Art Program*, founded in 1941 to send artists into the field to document the Navy in action. With more than 20,000 paintings, prints, drawings, sculptures, and engravings, the collection dates from the early 19th century up to Desert Shield/Storm, Operation Iraqi Freedom/ Enduring Freedom, and current operations.

#### ***Conservation Branch***

Applies highly sophisticated conservation techniques to document and conserve objects in both the central collection and in Navy museums. Its lab's 2019 state-of-the-art upgrade gives NHHC conservators the ability to perform complex scientific conservation work on many historic artifacts in-house.

#### ***Curator Branch***

Manages the central artifact collection of more than 300,000 objects reflecting the operational, technological, and social history of the Navy.

#### ***Underwater Archeology Branch (UAB)***

Protects and studies submerged cultural resources. Ranging from the Revolutionary War to the Nuclear Age and including more than 3,000 shipwrecks and 14,000 aircraft wrecks, this represents a fragile and non-renewable collection that not only hold historical importance, but also serve as war graves or pose environmental or public safety hazards.

**Histories and Archives Division (HAD)** — Includes Navy historians and researchers, the Navy Photographic Section, and the Navy Department Library (182,000 books, 374,000 manuscripts). Extensive pictorial reference files —the principal source of photographs and other illustrations of U.S. Navy subjects made prior to 1920; also, wide selection of unique photography from later years. Houses nearly 11,000 reels of microfilm, six terabytes of data, and over 200 million pages of documentary history.

#### ***Archives Branch***

Manages organizational records, photo archives, deck logs, command operations report of active duty Navy ships, aviation units and shore commands. ***Freedom of Information Act Requests.***

#### ***Navy Combat Documentation Unit***

Deploys documentation teams to Navy, joint, and combined commands. Conducts oral history interviews; collects historically significant artifacts & records; documents operations through photography and art. Reserve unit teams provide a vital link between NHHC and the fleet. Collection efforts contribute to Navy lessons learned; preserves history of current naval operations during crisis response, wartime, declared national emergency, or as directed.

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### **NHCC Museum Operations Division (MOD)**

Responsible for the 10 Navy museums, including the National Museum of the United States Navy, U.S. Seabee Museum, National Naval Aviation Museum and USS Constitution maintenance and repair. MOD staff works with each facility to maintain American Alliance of Museums accreditation and develop NHHC properties into a "Smithsonian-class" network of museums.

### **NHHC Communication and Outreach Division (COD)**

Established in 2013, maintains the command website, blog, social media presence; oversees the publication of books, essays, and pamphlets on naval history. COD is responsible for ensuring resources; information, history, communication material, and onsite support are available for *notable commemorative annual events* (e.g., *Navy Birthday*, *Battle of Midway*), and other naval anniversaries, celebrations, and commemorations.

*Sightings thanks Sandra Gall and the entire NHHC Communication and Outreach team.*

Learn more at [www.history.navy.mil](http://www.history.navy.mil).



**245<sup>TH</sup> NAVY BIRTHDAY**



Mentoring

# Remembering PAO Service Opportunities

## *Part 2 - Doing What We Could Do and More*

By LCDR David K. Sturges, USNR, Ret. (Life Member)

*This is the second in a series of articles by Dave Sturges on mentoring and the people who helped shape him and his Navy career.*



Author's gag portrait for Enterprise (CVN 65) Cruise Book. Note the vintage Speed Graphic camera which, along with Underwood 5 typewriter, was then-standard gear for Navy journalists.

**Background:** *Within a year USNPAA lost two of its founding and most accomplished members: CAPT John Cameron MacKercher and CAPT James Patrick Mathews. For Navy Public Affairs, they leave basic and timeless standards molded by meeting a combined 65 years of challenges to the Navy of their times and mine. For me, they both were reporting seniors, mentors, and close shipmates from active duty days and long into retirement. Bonded by designator and joint heritage, I am now the survivor of this trio. Our story continues here.*

By mid-1967, CAPT Holloway had been deep selected for flag and CAPT Kent Liston Lee was our new CO on Enterprise. Because of our ship's size and nuclear power, she was the "showboat" among

attack carriers deployed to the 7<sup>th</sup> Fleet. Our small PAO shop had to manage the constant stream of U.S. and allied command visitors, VIPs, press that created crowded, intricate scheduling.

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Apart from mission demands, the public regard for the ship was so high that we had to be ready for anything at any hour.

For CDR Ned Conger, the ship's PAO, duty was a tight balancing act in several ways. In his career, Public Affairs was only one of his talented achievements. Air Intelligence was the other before he retired as a Captain in 1975. As our reporting senior, Ned took a genuine personal interest in each of us seven JOs in the office, harnessing the best performance for CHINFO, fleet and ship standards. We came from uncommonly diverse backgrounds, and were each quite well-educated for service.

One had been an experienced reporter for local papers in the South. Another was a California national park ranger who had been drafted. Another was the son and scion of a Caribbean hotel chain owner. And, at one point, we had Joe McCain, younger brother of the prisoner of war, aviator, and U.S. Senator.

By fall, as CAPT Lee was readying the ship for another Yankee Station combat deployment, the unexpected descended and wheels turned. While we were pier-side at Alameda in late October, the CO, XO and fleet command staff were asking questions about our state of accommodation and ability to react to a "high level VIP visit." We took it seriously and started connecting the dots: Vice President Hubert Humphrey would come aboard on a brief campaign stop.

A month later, the other shoe dropped. We received only a week's notice that President Lyndon Baines Johnson himself was coming aboard for Veteran's Day weekend. We prepared, overlooking nothing, to be the "White House at Sea." In the hangar bay, both "black shoes" and "airdales" gaped facetiously at us and joshed: "Man, you pencil pushers (JOs) have got a job!" The party was going to be huge: 200 people that comprised staffers, security, the White House press corps, Defense Secretary Robert McNamara and the poised and engaging presence of ADM Thomas Hinman Moorer, then CNO, and whom I was soon to get to know better.

Out of our small shop, we hosted the press corps and tended to the VIPs. My assignment was split

between escorting columnist Walter Winchell, while helping out Hal Pachious, assistant White House Press secretary and Congressman Jake Pickle, close friend of the President.

What few knew then, in his mind LBJ was discouraged and burdened by the war. He was using Veteran's Day and a naval vessel as a setting for a speech urging a Viet Nam War summit of opposing sides, somewhat similar to what FDR and Churchill did with the signing of the Atlantic Charter in 1941. After all, Roosevelt had been LBJ's political mentor.



**Commander-In-Chief arriving! President Lyndon Baines Johnson, flanked by CO CAPT Kent Lee (left) and CNO, ADM Thomas Moorer, begin Veterans Day visit to Enterprise, Nov. 1967.**

The setting he envisioned was perfect that early Saturday morning: bright sun, light haze, and flat seas. After we all gathered on the flight deck, the President began his remarks by saying, "It's good to be back in the Navy!" Then, he made a plea to Hanoi:

*"...just give us the word for our quarrel to be discussed and buried beneath the waves on a neutral ship in a neutral sea, where men are only specks. A ship is as good as any site and a wardroom is as good as any conference table...."*



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Afterward, he walked among us toward his helicopter, shaking hands vigorously and saying, "Keep doin' what you're doin', proud of y'all!"

I will never forget this and as his helicopter lifted off, we weren't finished. CDR Conger beckoned me over and said explicitly, "as ship's editor, the Captain, XO and I are counting on you to write all this up, not only how we handled a Presidential visit, but relate, too, the background significance of what President Johnson had in mind. We'll be waiting to see the results!" (Gulp)

I labored the rest of that day and night and submitted my copy and photos for their approval. Waiting for most of the following day with churning stomach for their reaction. We were called to CAPT Lee's cabin, he held the copy up and said, "Send this to the White House, SECDEF, CNO and CHINFO. Well done!" (Whew!)

Under CAPT Lee's dedicated command, Enterprise got through a high-tempo deployment in 1968, which included responding to the Pueblo Crisis, the siege and battle of Khe Sanh and the Tet Offensive early that spring. The war had reached a tense turning point, and noticeable was

something unusual going on about the hangar bay: increased frequency of high security, nuclear weapons handling drills. Nothing was said, of course, about a reason why and we just took what we saw as mission-training routine. It leveled off, followed later with a ship's visit by COMUSMACV, GEN William C. Westmoreland, who had been relieved to become Army Chief of Staff.



CDR Ned Conger, Enterprise PAO, explains tour features to a staff officer of Korean Forces Vietnam during a typical VIP visit.

What all the hubbub was about did not become de-classified until 2014. A plan called "Fracture Jaw" involving the possible use of tactical nuclear weapons in Vietnam had been devised by Westmoreland and Pacific Command. Again, it actually followed an historical precedent set by President Eisenhower when he threatened to do so as part of his successful effort to end the stalemate during the Korean War. Even though the same situation had developed in Vietnam, Johnson shut the plan down, fearing it would broaden the war by bringing in more Chinese involvement as well as increased public disapproval of the war at home.

That spring, I was advanced to Second Class and was due to rotate to shore duty in October. When asked by the personnel team where I wanted to go, I entered anywhere East ...Washington? I was not immediately aware, yet another wheel was turning. Enter Senior Chief Journalist George Tyler, then head of CHINFO's Manpower Management Division. In April, he wrote to me: "We have a brand-new billet to fill in the PAO office (OOD) Personal Staff, Chief of Naval



"Big E" magazine cover showing Army GEN William C. Westmoreland addressing crew during his visit to Enterprise, June 1968.



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Operations. You might have to extend, and your record is under review by the Washington detailer at BUPERS. They needed it filled by August and we'll have to see."

Aboard ship I was told that my PCS move depended on coordinating my relief as Editor and that of others in the shop later that year. Current assignments were to continue. In June came a surprise as Enterprise out chopped from Seventh Fleet and transited off deployment. CAPT Lee called me and said, "We have orders to detach you when we reach San Francisco. We had to ask for and agree to an early transfer!" Having had prior

enlisted service in his own career, there was fatherly regard in his voice. "Congratulations! I know you'll make the best of it."

When I reached the Pentagon and CHINFO, Chief Tyler simply said, "You're going upstairs and here's how to get there." I reported to CAPT Bob Brett and then-LT Brent Baker until they were succeeded by Jack MacKercher and Jim Mathews, respectively. Moving across the E Ring hall into larger space, Jack and Jim acted swiftly to recreate the office team from the Big "E" where in Jim's words, "Everyone knew the mission and supported it fully and loyally."



## Mentoring

# My Most Memorable PAO Couple: Russ and Cathy Harney

By Gene Wentz (CAPT USN, Ret.)



Some of the 1964 LANTFLT HQ Public Affairs team— 1st row, l to r: PHC Milt Nuttal, LTjg Brent Baker, JO2 Ray Ivey, JOC Bill Dennison, JO1 Gary Fullerton, unknown. 2<sup>nd</sup> row: LCDR Russ Harney is center/third from right; LT Gene Wentz is second from right. The officer in the back row (over Russ Harney's right shoulder) is Ensign John Cox. (Unfortunately, the remaining names to match these smiling faces have been lost to posterity. If *you* can identify anyone that CAPT Wentz could not, please let *Sightings* know. Thank you!)

Russell Francis Harney was one of those larger-than-life characters that everyone has met during his lifetime. Humorous, bombastic, cagey, flamboyant, ambitious, and ostentatious. He was all those things and more. I first met Russ at CINCLANTFLT in 1964. I was a lieutenant 1105 trying to change my designator to 165S. He was a lieutenant commander 1650 and media relations officer for CAPT Barney Solomon. I was assigned as Russ' assistant. Our lives and careers would intertwine for the next 20 years.

In Norfolk, Russ was the key point of contact for newsmen such as Jack Kestner of the *Virginian-Pilot*. Russ and Jack would meet after work for drinks at the officers' club or some off-base watering hole. I was amazed how charming,

amusing and self-deprecating Russ could be. He always had a new joke to tell and some sea story, largely exaggerated. If bonhomie were the only requirement for promotion, Russ would have been CNO.

Russ and I were selected in 1966 to be part of the University of Wisconsin's first post-graduate 1650 class. In all the years I knew Russ, I only saw him clash with one person, and that was with Scott Cutlip our faculty supervisor. Russ was too laid back and Scott was too serious. Russ had one other problem at UW: he never learned to type. He hired a typist for all his term papers and thesis. "I write the cost off as a business expense on my income tax," he laughed.



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After we got our diplomas, we were assigned to Vietnam, with Russ preceding me by six months. During that half-year the Wentz family and Russ' wife Cathy and their four sons occupied adjacent quarters in an Air Force housing area near Madison. Twice a week I would place AUTOVON calls to Russ in Saigon so that Cathy could keep in touch. She was an incredibly loving and supportive spouse and essential to his successful career.

Once I arrived at the Saigon AFRTS station, Russ, who was assigned to MAC-V, and I met frequently at the Rex Hotel for lunch and laughs. Russ next went to CINCUSNAVEUR in England and in 1972 I was assigned as the first PAO at Fleet Support Office Athens. In the chain of command, I reported to Ed Sullivan in Naples and then Russ in

London. In spite of Sullivan in between, Russ and I still spoke frequently, and he managed a boondoggle to Athens. I was later assigned as Sixth Fleet PAO, reporting directly to Russ. Later I became the NAVEUR PAO and who should be my boss at CINCEUR in Germany: my old buddy Russ Harney. When the NAVEUR TAD budget could not support a trip to Stuttgart for a planning conference, Russ' office picked up the tab.

After retiring in 1978 Russ became an editorial writer for the *Charleston News and Courier*. Still unable to type, he wrote out his opinions in long hand and "had an editor polish my Naval Academy grammar and punctuation." Cancer claimed him in 1986, at 55. Cathy died a short time later. Both requested burials at sea.

## U.S. Navy Public Affairs Association

Signaling inclusiveness with all aspects of Navy public affairs: active, reserve, retired, civilian, officer and enlisted, in 2013 *U.S. Navy Public Affairs Association* (USNPAA) became the new name of an organization that had been honoring its rich heritage and keeping friendships alive since 1994.

### Our purpose and objectives:

To foster and enhance cordial relations and mutual understanding among *former and current active duty personnel and civilian employees* of the U.S. Navy who were, or are, engaged in performing public affairs functions.

To support and promote the professional growth, education, and development of individuals engaged in all aspects of U.S. Navy public affairs.

To stimulate and promote a broad acquaintance and a spirit of fellowship among members and others interested in an effective U.S. Navy public affairs program.

The Association publishes a quarterly newsletter and an annual membership directory.

Membership is free at <https://www.usnpaa.org/membership.html>.

Please forward *Sightings* newsletter submissions to: [beechert@icloud.com](mailto:beechert@icloud.com) or [ttallman1650@gmail.com](mailto:ttallman1650@gmail.com). Copy deadline for *Winter 2020* issue is October 30th.





## A (Cold) Sea Story

By Capt. Michael F. Kenny U.S. Navy (Ret.)

The year was 1987. I was attached to the SACLANT (Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic) Unit in Battle Creek, Michigan. The city - home to cereal maker Kellogg - was an unlikely venue for a Unit attached to NATO Headquarters in Brussels, Belgium. That said, the Unit was peopled by an array of men and women from a host of disciplines with compelling backgrounds who reveled in their Navy assignments to one of Europe's most cosmopolitan cities.

Prior to our customary 17-day active duty tours, we would convene at SACLANT headquarters in Norfolk for exercise pre-briefings prior to travel overseas. In 1987, the exercise was "Cold Winter," a multi-nation amphibious landing on Norway's northern coast above the Arctic Circle.

In the history of military training, no exercise could have been more aptly named. The avowed exercise purpose - "test amphibious landing procedures and abilities in the most demanding of cold weather environments." Underline the words "most demanding".

Someone in the NATO Press office - an obvious acolyte of the Marquis De Sade - had decided with Machiavellian malevolence that two officers should be "on the landing beaches" to manage and inform the anticipated press hordes. That counterpart, boss and friend, CDR (soon to be CAPT) Stan Sirmans. He looked to me in search of

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message had been relayed to my active-duty a candidate for "beach duty," which was given the grandiose designation "Allied Press Information Center" or APIC for short.

Whispered down through military ranks since the time of Alexander the Great and Caesar's Legions is the two-word warning known to officer and enlisted alike, "Never volunteer." I stupidly ignored this centuries-old advice and put my hand up. I came to rue what was, for me, an uncharacteristic decision.

I had been a Boy Scout in my youth. I had also "camped" with the Scouts. But I was not a Scout that could start a blazing fire from two toothpicks, and I had no idea why those Swiss Army knives had so many tools. If there had been a vote, I would have probably been chosen "Least Likely Camper to Survive in a Slight Mist". However, I had endured numerous Michigan winters, skied with wild abandon, and still played "beer league" ice hockey. I was not stressed by the idea of a frigid assignment. I comforted myself with the notion, "Hey, how cold can it get?"

The Norwegian army quickly warmed to the beach officer idea. (Although "warm" is an unknown concept in northern Norway.) The Norwegians promised to supply the beach "media center" with a rudimentary 2-man tent, a sizable wood-burning stove, and an abundant supply of wood. They hit on two out of the three. Wood - apparently an essential component for a wood-burning stove - was conspicuously absent and would remain so during our entire week-long "campout".

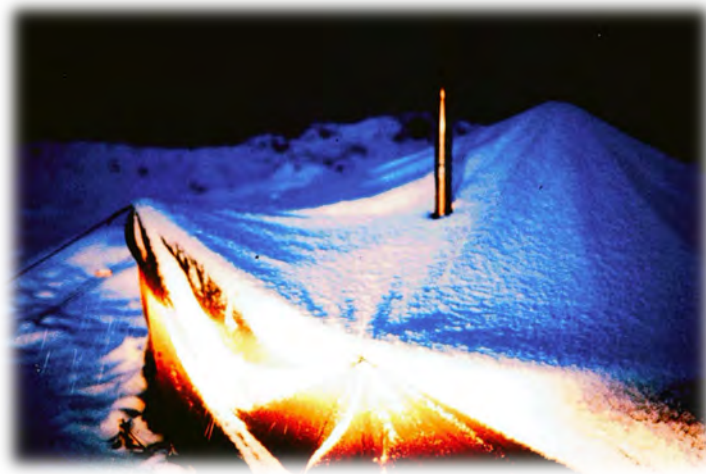
There was another officer who had ignored the warning about volunteering. He was a U.K. Royal Navy "Lieutenant Commander". With the curious English penchant for hyphenated last names, his name was the improbable but true, "Roger Bush-Shrubb". Upon meeting, he informed me his friends called him "Bushy." With that name, I suggested he should own a nursery or become a horticulturist. He looked at me with barely concealed self-restraint. He was to be my tent-mate.

Bushy was, however, an affable and seasoned NATO Press Officer with an astonishing supply of



The tent prior to D-Day. No wood, so no smoke exiting from the chimney pipe.

what we in the U.S. Navy would traditionally call alcoholic beverages. These were stored in the capacious, seemingly bottomless "boot" of his rented automobile parked discreetly in a nearby forest. Bushy was under the impression that members of the news media occasionally resorted to alcoholic libations. Bushy wanted to be prepared for any such eventuality. He succeeded gloriously - we had enough booze on hand to satisfy the entire population of Norway. If there was a dent in the Royal Navy's budget that year, Bushy was solely responsible. And here I was, with the prescient foresight for which I am so well



The tent at night.



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known, stupidly having shopped for freeze-dried edible arctic rations at REI.

Bushy also had a serious leg up on winter attire. He had smartly borrowed a sleeping bag from the Norwegians which promised the wearer comfort even while sleeping outdoors in 50-below weather in Antarctica. I, on the other hand, subscribed to a willy-nilly, hastily assembled foul weather, multi-layered ensemble. The resulting winterized "Pillsbury Dough Boy-look" did nothing to stop the ravages of the biting, bitter cold.

Our initial dismay upon discovering we had no stove wood was tempered by resorting to Bushy's abundant libation supply. There is an old canard that says liquor is an appropriate way of warming the body. Not! We imbibed over a course of many hours making not a dent on Bushy's mountainous supply. I felt no warming - my shivering constant. At midnight, with temperatures in the minus 20-degree Fahrenheit range - outside and inside the tent - I mercifully fell asleep.

At some point in the midwatch, however, I was jolted awake by the call of nature. The nearest head was the fjord, a reasonable 25 yards away. On the horizon sat the entire fleet at anchor. I was convinced a search party would find my frozen form in the spring thaw - assuming there was ever a thaw that far above the Arctic Circle. Finally, my task completed, I slowly turned toward our tent. My teeth were chattering like castanets. I was frozen to the bone. The tent, previously 25 yards away, now seemed a football field distant. I sluggishly lumbered forward. It was Napoleon's retreat from Moscow redux. Those brain synapses, not giddy from alcohol absorption, were all muttering mutinously - tell us again, why did you volunteer?

On D-day, there was only one TV news crew hardy enough to brave the elements as troops rolled ashore from the assembled flotilla. While tanks lumbered past, the news crew seemed more intrigued by my curious multi-layered haberdashery than the appearance of a gigantic amphibious landing. They were also captivated by my Sorel Caribou fleece-lined snow boots which had kept cozy one lone anatomical part - my toes. The boots were a loan from my brother - an

experienced outdoorsman - who had prudently suggested I take an abundance of winter clothing for the expected harsh temperatures. I had once again ignored a voice of reason, stating breezily, "Hey, how cold can it get?"



Showing off my Sorel Boots to the single TV news crew on D-Day. (They were more interested in my footwear than the amphibious landing.)

Exercise "Cold Winter" was ultimately deemed a success. On the other hand, I returned from Norway to my waiting family in Brussels with a severe case of Pneumonia. I immediately slept for 24 hours.

Fortunately, I revisited Norway the following summer. Cautiously, I inquired where they had hidden the snow. The country was a delight in many ways that had previously been concealed under winter's blast. A new NATO exercise proceeded successfully. Somehow, without the ministrations of "Bushy".

I haven't camped since.





Waiting to board a German Luftwaffe C-130 for our departure from Norway for Brussels. From the left, CDR Mike Kenny, LCDR Roger Bush-Shrubb, RN, LCDR Cheryl Duft, USNR of St. Louis, MO., Capt. (Select) Stan Sirmans, USN of Norfolk, VA, and JO2 James Donahue, USNR of Battle Creek, MI. (Both Sirmans and Donahue are now deceased.)

*Michael F. Kenny was born in Scotland and holds U.S. & Irish citizenship. After Navy O.C.S. he joined USS Kenneth D. Bailey (DDR-713) and then staff, Commander Amphibious Forces Atlantic (VADM John Mc Cain). Post-Navy, Mr. Kenny was news director for a Michigan radio station, then ABC-TV's Detroit outlet as on-air "street reporter," weekend anchor and contributor to ABC-TV network news. He then became news anchor for Michigan's largest radio station - WJR. Mr. Kenny's 17-year radio/television career includes several journalism awards. His Naval Reserve career includes commanding three Public Affairs Units - Detroit, Kansas City and St. Louis. Mr. Kenny is a member of the State Bars of Michigan and California, a college law professor and private pilot. He and his wife of 57 years, Alberta, reside in Carlsbad, California and are parents of two adult sons.*

## Five Questions for Karen Jeffries

### Q1 – How did you happen to become a 1650?

I grew up in Fleetwood, PA (Pop. 1,000). Walking to school every day, I saw Navy recruiting posters (little boy holding hand of a first-class petty officer standing in front of the USS Constitution; “Join the Navy, See the World”) hanging in the Post Office window. Ran away from a farm town with factories that were closing and offered no prospects. Enlisting in October 1977, I could have been a yeoman, journalist or corpsman and elected to become Yeoman Jefferies. Boot camp was in Orlando; first duty station in San Diego. Decided college would be a good idea, so enrolled in University of California-Berkeley and took a degree in political science. Commissioned in May 1984, I was hell bent on being a Surface Warfare Officer. So, I went to sea among the first cohorts of women and surface warfare qualified aboard USS Samuel Gompers (AD37). (Only tenders were open to women in those early years.)

As a result, my follow-on shore tour landed me in Washington on the *Women in the Navy* desk (OP-13) and working closely with BuPers. One of the first PAOs I met was then-CDR Kendell Pease. He and Al Twyman both tried to recruit me into the 1650 community then. But at the time, I was committed to surface warfare and returning to sea, still hoping that combatant ships might one day be open to women.



Then-LCDR Karen Jeffries with fellow Navy PAO then-LCDR Ed Austin in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina with NATO-led multinational Implementation Force (IFOR) in 1996.

My time as a SWO lasted until my tour aboard the fleet oiler USS Monongahela (AO-178), when, after increasingly debilitating illness, I was diagnosed with Multiple Chemical Sensitivities. I am allergic to



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petroleum products! My daily exposure to NSFO, gasoline, jet fuel, etc. had done me in - and my SWO aspirations with it.

Landing my limited duty feet at COMNAVSURFLANT's policy shop in Norfolk, I ran into then-CAPT Pease, the CINCLANT/CINCLANTFLT PAO. Soon I found myself helping organize the Desert Storm victory parade, a PAO-led event. After being selected as CHINFO, RDML Pease invited me to serve in the Pentagon, work on the allergy for a year and get fit for full duty as a PAO. He thought I had something to offer and wanted me to bring my fleet experience to the News Desk. That was 1992 and how I came to be a 1650.



**BOOKENDS**—Seaman Apprentice Jeffries graduates RTC Orlando in 1977; CDR Jeffries retires from Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) in 2001.

### Q2 – What would you say was your most formative assignment?

My first tour at CHINFO, 1992-1994. I loved working in the Pentagon. The tough Navy public affairs challenges in those years included: Tailhook. Allowing women to serve in combat assignments in aviation and on cruisers and destroyers. *"Don't Ask, Don't Tell."* We at CHINFO were in the thick of things.

At the USNPAA reunion last year, we were called the "Tailhook Lieutenants." There were six to nine of us who had been junior officers on the News Desk in 1992-93, and 25 years later it was like we had seen each other just yesterday. I learned a lot working with some very smart, very bright people. We worked long, crazy 12 to 13-hour days, 0600 to 1900. (*My husband at the time said he lost a year of his life waiting for me in the Pentagon parking lot.*) CAPT Fred Leeder was the Deputy. Then-LCDR Steve Pietropaoli ran the news desk. Craig Quigley, Jim Mitchell, Chuck Connor, Sheila Graham...a team of absolute professionals.

How did CHINFO make a difference in that era? We spoke the truth and backgrounded the hell out of each issue. We had a fabulous relationship with the Pentagon press corps. We worked hard to speak in one Navy voice, getting the word out. We mended fences, repaired relationships.

### Q3 – Who were your mentors and what did you learn from them?

CAPT Joe Mancias (Ret.) has been my mentor since 1992 on active duty and as a later as a government civilian. The late JOCS (Ret.) Russ Egnor, the photojournalist who took over Media Services from Bob Carlisle. Russ asked for me to work with him and teach PAOs about what kinds of news photos the Navy needs and how to get them to Washington. That led to then-LT Rod Hill (CDR, USN, Ret.) transmitting the first photo from an aircraft carrier at sea (USS Ranger (CV-61)) to our office in the Pentagon during Operation Southern Watch off Iraq in 1992. It took three hours to transmit one image, but it marked a transformation for Navy photography and media services.

Beci Brenton (CAPT, USN, Ret) and I were in the Pentagon together. She was a PAO and I was a SWO - both from the get-go. She taught me how to be a PAO in the Pentagon and I gave her the benefit of my experience as a SWO in the fleet. Anthony Cooper (CAPT, USN, Ret.) was my partner when I shifted to the Marketing Desk.



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*Q4 – What was your toughest challenge as a PAO? Your most satisfying assignment or project?*

Toughest challenge for me as a PAO was in 1999 when a Marine Corps pilot accidentally dropped a bomb and killed a civilian contractor on the Vieques Island range in Puerto Rico. The politics of what came next were nearly intolerable.

Back at CHINFO, we were challenged by the then-new 24-hour news cycle and getting public affairs guidance and statements out fast enough. Lawyers, environmental staff, Puerto Rico's congressional delegation, DoD, CINCLANTFLT and more were driving messaging and responses. The incident became a referendum on statehood. Local residents resented the decades of using their homeland as a bombing range. When I did the daily clip report early each morning -- and my Spanish is fairly good -- I'd see the Spanish-language coverage was much more incendiary than their English-language counterparts. Ultimately, the Navy had to move the range, spending millions to clean up the island.

*My most rewarding assignment:* DOD PA, diversified portfolio, always something new.

*My most significant, fun, off-the-charts experience:* Making seven Navy recruiting commercials!



Executive Director LCDR Karen Jeffries and award-winning Director Spike Lee focus on the mission while filming Navy recruiting commercials aboard ship in 1999. (U.S. Navy Photo, K. Jeffries Collection.)

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After suffering the worst recruiting year since the start of the All-Volunteer Force, Recruiting Command had fired several PAOs in their frustration to re-start the pipeline. RADM Tom Jurkowsky was CI. He sent me with a simple directive: "make it work." Failure was not an option.

I had made some training films and knew my way around a camera and a production suite. I knew all the best backdrops - Hawaii, Texas and San Diego. Pre-cell phones and email, so all message traffic and a \$1,000 phone bill for one month.

I was executive producer, writer, editor, casting director, and advisor to the award-winning director Spike Lee. They gave me a \$2.5 million budget. We got pushback from some on Capitol Hill who didn't care for Spike Lee. But he was just the ticket to reach the recruits we needed. He's an incredible film maker and made phenomenal recruiting ads for the Navy. [Spike Lee Enlisted By Navy](#), *Ad Week* May 31, 1999.

What a thrill: shooting at 13 locations in three states, premiering during Fleet Week in theaters along with a *Star Wars* release, running on television with NFL and NBA games. This was before cell phones. It was a kick interviewing 600 sailors for a casting call. It was a kick coming up with an idea and running with it. I loved it. I didn't know I could fail. Up at 0-dark-30, casting calls, six-seven vehicles through the gate every morning. Approving shots, backgrounds, sailors, staging, angles, no ships "smoking black," explaining rendering honors while passing Pearl Harbor.

### Q5 – *Where are you today and what's next?*

I currently work in the Department of Veterans Affairs. After retiring from active duty in 2001, I founded and ran for nearly five years a nonprofit organization, *Veterans Moving Forward*, which provided service dogs and canine therapy to veterans with physical and mental health challenges. Prior to that, I created Jeffries Communications Group, LLC as a service-disabled, veteran-owned, small business that specialized in marketing, business development, and communications.

Who knows what's next? There is the possibility of a change in administrations at the end of this year and I will be ready for my next move. I am open to whatever is tossed my way.

### *KJ's Pro Tips:*

- *Take every job offered to you and make it your own. Even a job you don't want.*
- *For clip reports or news briefings, see if translation services are available if coverage is in more languages than English. There can be important differences in nuance.*
- *The Navy prepared me for success. From the time I enlisted in 1977 until 2001. Taught me I can do anything. Just work hard. Treat people well and respectfully. Tell the truth.*

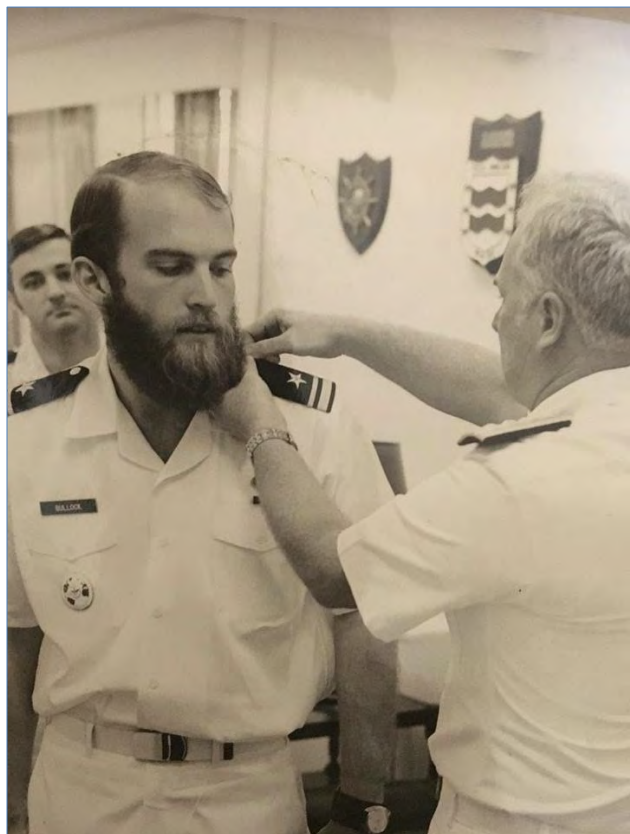
*CDR Karen Jefferies, USN (Ret.) currently serves as the Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary for Human Resources and Administration/Operations, Security and Preparedness, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Washington, DC. Most recently, served as the Executive Assistant in the Office of Accountability and Whistleblower Protection (OAWP) at the VA.*

# Author! Author!

## *Jim Bullock Reviews—*

### *Secret Sauce for Organizational Success: Communications and Leadership on the Same Page*

A book by Tom Jurkowsky, RDML, USN, Ret.  
Air University Press (July 2020)



Author Jim Bullock receives his LTjg boards from the "father of Navy Public Affairs" RADM Bill Thompson during a 1973 CHINFO visit to CINCLANTFLT. (U.S. Navy Photo from J. Bullock Collection)

Not quite back to the days of "wooden ships and iron men," when Admiral Jurkowsky and I served together as lieutenants in CHINFO, the Navy was encouraging its young 1650s to study public affairs formally, and many of us did so via a public relations master's degree program at nearby American University. Even as our daytime routines focused on our respective pieces of Navy PA's "holy trinity:" media relations, internal relations and community relations assignments, at night we pored over our early edition copies of *Cutlip and Center* to learn that "public relations is a management function" and that "public affairs is the specialized part of that function relating to relationships between governmental agencies and their various stakeholders." We were introduced to Walter Lippman, Edward Bernays and William Benton - our illustrious predecessors in this new world of public opinion management.

In those days, Walter Cronkite was anchoring the CBS Evening News, the leak of "The Pentagon Papers" was a recent memory, and Gerald Ford had become our unelected president following the Watergate revelations. As eager young acolytes at the public affairs altar, most new arrivals in CHINFO aspired to get on the rotation to give SECNAV/CNO media briefings, to handle incoming queries from the major media, and to jog the halls of the pre-Internet Pentagon in rubber-soled shoes to clear our proposed responses to those queries with high-ranking program managers. Those were heady times for us. Working in media relations, more than anything else we could imagine, offered excitement, challenge, and status.

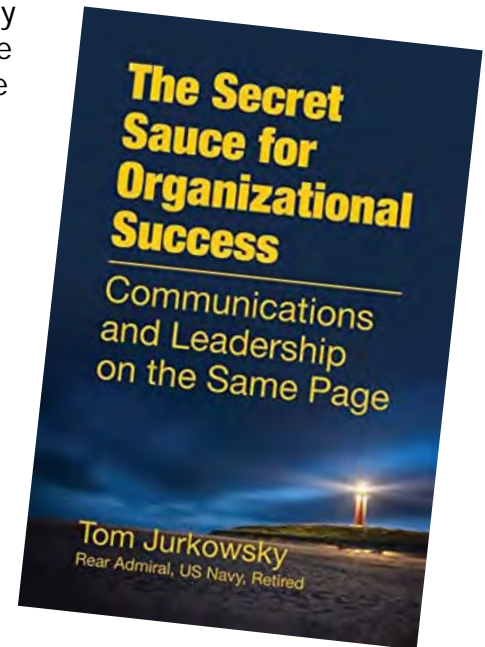
Much has changed in the succeeding years, of course. Navy PAO's today must cope with a more fragmented and disorderly communications environment. The major media are diminished and challenged. Social media, disinformation, Internet-linked infrastructure, and commercial "spies in the sky" all have contributed to toppling the major media from their former dominance. The memories of



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when Cronkite could reassure us each evening that “that’s the way it is” linger, however, and “sea stories” from the past still have wisdom to impart to new generations of practitioners, who are building the Navy public affairs function of the future.

During his forty-plus years as a public relations/public affairs practitioner, Tom Jurkowsky managed a wide range of programs, in many locales, for many different bosses, and he earned a solid reputation as an effective manager, planner and problem solver. In all the time I have known him, I have always found him to be a stellar shipmate: generous with his time and patient with the questions and concerns of superiors and subordinates alike. Now, in retirement, he has done what many contemplate but few actually complete: he’s produced a book to preserve and hand on some of the lessons gleaned from his long years of experience, lessons that will now reach a wider audience than his immediate “colleagues and co-conspirators.”



President Jimmy Carter thanks Navy LT Jim Bullock after a successful White House social event in 1978. (J. Bullock Collection Photo)

*Secret Sauce* is not a textbook. Neither is it a “*tour d’horizon*” of the communications function as seen from the senior ranks of the Navy, Lockheed Martin or the U.S. Mint, nor was it meant to be; and it is certainly not a compendium of official after-action reports. Rather, it is a heartfelt recounting of memorable chapters of a well-lived life, full of those sticky bits that stay with us after other details fade. Tom is not trying to tell us all that we need to know to be effective communicators. He is telling us what he remembers as the most important things we need to be good communicators – and, recalling those heady days when the major media really were dominant – he focuses on the media relations piece: Be responsive to the media, provide them access, maintain good working relationships with them, and always protect your integrity.

Lists like this are inevitably idiosyncratic. Mike McCurry’s “Five C’s,” quoted toward the end of *Secret Sauce*, are neither an addendum nor a correction to Tom’s initial list. (1. Credibility – tell the truth; 2. Candor – admit mistakes; 3. Clarity – work to be understood; 4. Compassion – show respect; 5. Commitment – protect the relationship – and Tom’s suggested #6: Courage – accept the consequences of your actions.) These C’s are just another way of looking at wisdom earned through experience. I could easily assign all five (or six) to Tom’s final point about always protecting one’s integrity. I am also

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reminded of Colin Powell's Thirteen Leadership Points. His first is "It ain't as bad as you think. It will look better in the morning." The wisdom of experience can be served up in many ways.

There are many endearing anecdotes to be found in *Secret Sauce*: reading them, I can imagine myself relaxing at the bar, "splicing the main brace" with Tom after a particularly challenging problem solved. I recommend these stories now, especially, to our newest crop of Navy PAOs. Read them for their overall spirit of optimism and commitment. Read them not as a "how-to" manual, but as an inspirational text, shining a light into the past of an honorable colleague, who did his best with the challenges that he was given, and who made a difference. Read them and know that you will have your own challenges to face in this Navy PAO business, and - like Admiral Jurkowsky - you will have your own chances to make a difference.

**Jim Bullock** *is a Chicago native who served on active duty in the Navy 1971-1978. After commissioning via Yale NROTC, and some initial time at sea, he had PAO tours at CINCLANT and CHINFO, with a collateral assignment as a White House social aide under Presidents Ford and Carter. Post-Navy work included brand management for Procter & Gamble and a 30-year Foreign Service career with USIA and the State Dept. Fluent in French, Arabic, and Russian, Jim served as head of U.S. Embassy public affairs sections in Baghdad, Beirut, Cairo, Doha, Paris, Rabat, Riyadh, and Tunis. He was also the U.S. Embassy's press attaché in Moscow, 1989-91. He is married to the former Carole Hoeveler, and they have two grown children. Jim and Carole reside on Capitol Hill.*

More information about *The Secret Sauce for Organizational Success* can be found at:  
[www.tomjurkowsky.net](http://www.tomjurkowsky.net).

For those interested in obtaining a copy of the book:

- Active duty and retired military personnel can obtain a **FREE** copy by contacting the Air University Press (AUP) at: [AirUniversityPress@au.af.edu](mailto:AirUniversityPress@au.af.edu)
- A **FREE** copy can be downloaded by going to the AUP website at:  
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# Sightings

Navy public affairs team past and present, let us hear from you!

Send your stories and photos to *Sightings* c/o:

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