



Visual Information's Critical Role in Naval Aviation Readiness

By MC3 Bayley McMichael, USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77)

Even before the Navy created aircraft carriers nearly a century ago, visual information (VI) has been a core element of naval aviation's mission. LT Arleigh Burke's 1930s Battle Force Camera Party recorded fleet target training. During WWII, CDR John Ford garnered public support for war efforts through documentary motion pictures such as *Midway*. From these early beginnings, from still imagery, film and video to today's ever-expanding digital information environment, VI's operational significance in today's Navy only continues to grow.

To better support today's fleet and strike group commanders, warfighting communities are continually re-investing in their public affairs (PA) and visual information (VI) assets to enhance this essential role for fleet readiness. *This is no more apparent than in Naval aviation and the A18A, or Aerial Cameraman, Navy Enlisted Classification (NEC) for Mass Communication Specialists (MC).*



"Aerial photographers have been vital assets to the HSC community, the Carrier Air Wing team, and the Navy for ages," emphasizes CDR Thomas "Princess" Van Hoozer, commanding officer of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 5. "The increased capability aerial photographers provide us to showcase the talent and spirit of our hardworking Sailors and the combat effectiveness of our Navy is a powerful tool that can help win over partner nations, deter potential competitors, and improve the morale of the Force and their families are invaluable to today's global efforts. They are force multipliers

Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 5 imagery in action by MC3 Novalee Manzella: Left, Sailors participate in a search-and-rescue exercise off Norfolk, VA in May 2021. Above, Combat Search and Rescue training at NAS Fallon, NV April 22, 2022. The MH-60S Seahawk squadron of Carrier Air Wing Seven embarked aboard USS George H. W. Bush (CVN 77). Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 7 is the offensive air and strike component of Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 10 and the George H.W. Bush CSG. U.S. Navy photos.

that enable our dominance of the information environment. Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Novalee Manzella, a Naval Aircrew Warfare Specialist assigned to USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77), frequently works with Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 5 (HSC-5), one of two rotary-wing squadrons within Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 7. Both CVW 7 and GHWB report to Commander, Carrier Strike Group 10 - the George H.W. Bush Carrier Strike Group - during deployment.

"Before I became an aerial photographer, I didn't fully understand the critical role that MCs played in the military," said Manzella. "Photography and videography offer the truth of operating in an active environment, while also telling the stories of the men and women who serve in the military."

The continued integration between the aviation and MC communities offers a unique opportunity for the Navy to optimize workforce capability and mission effectiveness.

"The H-60 helicopter community has the privilege to work alongside aerial cameramen routinely," Van Hoozer shares. "I am constantly impressed with our aerial MC's skill and look forward to each opportunity to fly with them as part of my crew."



MC3 Novalee Manzella is currently assigned to USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77). In addition to CVN 77, she has both embarked and photographed multiple Carrier Air Wing 7 and Carrier Strike Group 10 aviation and CRUDES units throughout months of pre-deployment training and exercises. Manzella's 2021 imagery of USS Gerald R. Ford's shock trials were featured in national news coverage. (Photo courtesy of HSC 5)

Training

Aerial photographers undergo a rigorous training pipeline in order to become the asset the Navy intends them to be. After finishing MC "A" School, where they learn the basics of being a Navy mass communicator, they move straight to Naval Aircrew Candidate School where they learn the basics of being a naval aircrewman and complete a water survival class. From there they must complete Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape (SERE), a training program that prepares U.S. military personnel to survive and "return with honor" in life-threatening scenarios. The Navy aircrewmen still have much more training and testing to go through before finally earning their wings.

Upon completion of all training evolutions, A18As are expected to be proficient in mission effectiveness, operational tasking and visual information (OPTASK VI), and how naval aviation supports all aspects of the naval doctrine.

Mission Effectiveness

Documenting missions is a good example of how A18As increase mission effectiveness. By getting the Navy's story out first, they limit the spread of misinformation from adversaries, both foreign and domestic. Mission effectiveness is increased when A18As come into play because they allow the public to see firsthand the truth of the operational environment.

"I was lucky enough to document HSC-5 during their Helicopter Advanced Readiness Program (HARP) exercise on Naval Air Station Key West's Boca Chica Field. HARP is an essential tactical training that MH-60S squadrons undergo to prepare for missions performed in a hostile environment," said Manzella. "The

preparation for HARP ensures each Sailor is fully qualified and prepared to successfully complete the mission. Over the course of a week, I captured photos and videos of the crewmen and pilots demonstrate their skills with escape and evasion strategies, ground recovery element evolutions, and humanitarian aid and disaster relief tactics."

Operational Task-Visual Information (OPTASK-VI)

Another key aspect of the fleet-wide optimization of the MC rating is OPTASK VI, the mission to visually document key moments of unsafe, unprofessional or abnormal interactions by vessels and aircraft of other nations against U. S. assets. This applies to naval aviation because of the inherent nature and enduring principles of naval forces. The PA and VI community have supported intensive training for this in recent years. Media has become a weapon adversaries try to use against the U.S., but MCs and now A18As are trained in fighting back quicker with the most accurate documentation.

Maintaining a sharp focus on the Navy's global operations is a top priority for PA because of the increasing need to effectively communicate what the Navy does. As the world shifts to digital media, the PA community helps to keep naval operations on the leading edge of the information age. Media leads the way for intelligence support in meeting the requirements of both regional conflicts and operations-other-than-war. PA also develops doctrine to reaffirm the foundation of U.S. Navy expeditionary maritime traditions. Overall, MCs and A18As alike use their knowledge and skills to effectively communicate mission readiness.

The PA and VI community is always evolving and executing on an increasingly fast and complex information battlefield. A18As today are paving the way for a future where all media grow in their impact and importance.

"The aerial cameramen continue to show the growing capabilities they bring to the HSC community and overall mission of the Navy," Van Hoozer said.



Father-Daughter Operations--Midshipman Claire Brophy acts as a shooter for RDML Richard Brophy, Commander, Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 4, during a launch off USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77), June 20, 2022. The carrier strike group was underway completing a certification exercise to increase U.S. and allied interoperability and warfighting capability in preparation for deployment. U.S. Navy photo by MC3 Novalee Manzella.

*Sightings also salutes legacy NEC 8288 Navy Photographers Mates,
upon whose shoulders today's aviation photographers stand.*

USNPAA Sightings

Freedom at Work

A Closer Look at CVN 77's PA Team

"When I started out as a junior officer at AIRPAC and then on a carrier, there were no social media platforms; we were just getting email. So, how do we prepare junior officers today for the unknown? It boils down to some of the same skills we've always valued.

What's changed is the demand signal and expectations from commanders are different. When I was a junior lieutenant on the carrier with six or so people working for me, I reported to the admin officer and the embarked one-star did not ask me for strategic advice.

Today, we send seasoned O-4s to carriers who have 25-30 people working for them, including other PAOs. And that one-star on board is looking to that senior PAO for strategic guidance. They are asking about how messages will help operational commanders achieve their goals, how this is going to be viewed back in the Pentagon, how this supports the national defense strategy. It's eye-watering to see how well our PAOs are doing with that."

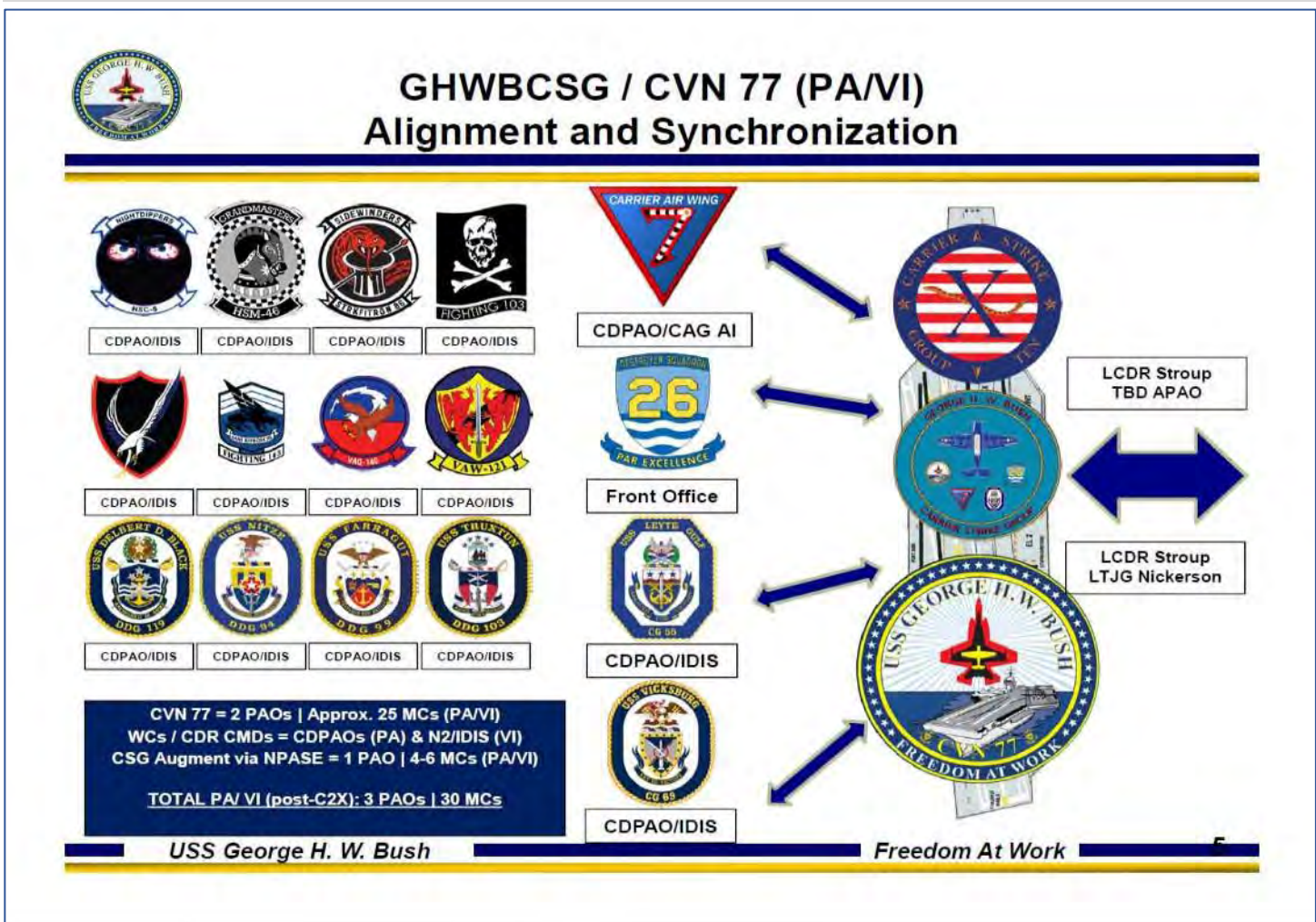
RDML Charlie Brown, September 2020

Look no further better than the USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) Media Department.

After completing an extended 30-month maintenance availability in August 2021, the carrier, her airwing and strike force commands, have worked hard to complete all readiness and deployment qualifications to relieve USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75)'s carrier strike group (CSG) in coming months. For the public affairs team, that's a bit more complicated in today's Navy.



USNPAA Sightings



"We've worked very, very hard to build a team that understands the importance of mission, command-and-control authorities, and our specific PA/VI lines of operation and functions that support the CSG team. Our team's effort is reflected by the support we both provide and receive from across the strike group," explains **LCDR Matthew Stroup**, CVN 77 PAO.

USS George H.W. Bush PA/VI team's tandem mission focuses on serving the both the wider CSG team and their ship. Alignment and synchronization of effort is key for PA team success. CVN communicators must learn how to represent both CVN and CSG team very early in training. "Having tactically-oriented, mission-focused MCs who are also willing to learn, grow, and execute their portion of the mission independently in support of operational and strategic-level-of-war issues is something you can't put a quantitative value on," stresses Stroup.

With more than 20 Mass Communications Specialists as part of ship's company and two PAOs, LCDR Stroup did not wait for the Navy Public Affairs Support Element (NPASE) pre-deployment augment to begin integrating with the Carrier Strike Group.


"While our NPASE support team wasn't able to join us early, we made a choice as a team to send four of our MCs, including MC3 Manzella (see p.1), out to our CRUDES and airwing units to begin integrating with our ships, support VI training, and capturing b-roll and still imagery of our strike group teammates in action," shares Stroup. By building these working relationships over months of pre-deployment training, crucial PA alignment and synchronization networks were developed early, and NPASE teammate integration for deployment eased.

"Our MCs are technically brilliant and can make a variety of products such as print, photos, graphics, and videos to achieve communication objectives," said LTJG Beau Nickerson, Media Department division officer. "However, the most important thing they provide is their subject matter expertise regarding internal communications. Our team works diligently to ensure everyone from an O-6 to a brand new Seaman checking aboard can understand the mission and their role in it. The expectations of the new MCs haven't changed. They're expected to be quality Sailors first and foremost and they must be willing to learn, master, and train others in their skill sets. I can honestly say that every single MC in the shop does this and more, and I'm very proud to be their division officer."

"Every day is a new and dynamic challenge for us to tackle head on," noted MC1 Kaylyn Jackson-Smith, Media Department's leading petty officer. "Not only are we responsible for keeping the crew informed of what's going on in the world and but we also use our capabilities to show the world exact what it is that we do aboard the GHWB and how important our mission truly is. There is nothing greater than that. Seeing the reaction of a Sailor whose photo is in the *Daily Avenger* gives me the same gratification as one of my Sailors catching an awesome shot of the flight deck or seeing a supportive comment on our social media page. It means we're doing our jobs and doing them well."



"Today's MC's have an understanding of the communication environment that those of us who grew up even just a decade earlier don't have," said MCCS Dustin Withrow, CVN 77's Media Department leading chief petty officer. "And like all Sailors, they're hungry for leadership, opportunities to excel, and to be part of the mission. Our team has handled coming out of the shipyard exceptionally well. Their adoption of a more mission-focused, functionally organized team is already delivering results, and I can't wait to see what they do on deployment."

*Photography, storytelling and graphic designs by GHW Bush Media Dept.
Contributions courtesy of CVN 77 and AIRLANT PA teams.*



GHWBCSG / CVN 77 (PA/VI)

Lines of Operation






Production & Acquisition
Still imagery, aerial photography, video, graphics, layout and design, print production, archive management

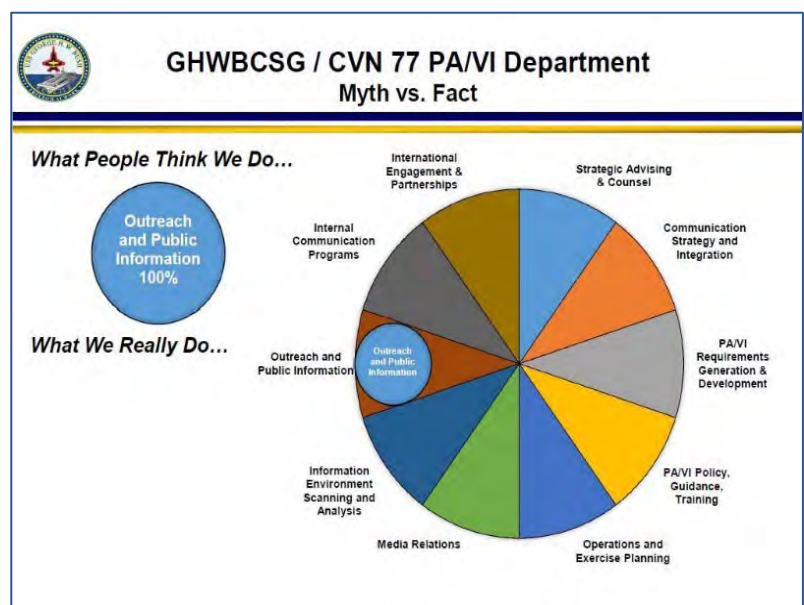
Distribution
Avenger Magazine, Avenger TV, Command Webpage, Social Media (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube), Navy.mil, DoD/Defense Media Activity

Operations & Visual Information
Operational Imagery (Still and Video), Audio Recordings – Unsafe and Unprofessional Interactions

Outreach
Distinguished Visitor Embarks, In Port Tours, External Media Engagements*

USS George H. W. Bush
Freedom At Work



FROM BOOT TO FLAG OFFICER

CARRIER USS SARATOGA (CV 60) LAUNCHES PA CAREER

By Tom Jurkowsky, RDML, USN (Ret.)

I am truly astounded to talk to some of today's PAOs and learn about their role aboard our aircraft carriers. When I compare their roles today to the one I had, I must say there is little comparison.

Some background. I had a degree in journalism from Boston University. But when I graduated in 1969, I was going to get drafted, so I enlisted...., thinking I'd do my four years and then go to grad school. After boot camp (Orlando), I was sent to Storekeeper "A" school and then back to NTC Orlando. Navy life was to my liking, and I was

urged to apply for OCS; selected and off to Newport.

I performed my role as a PAO before I even knew there was such a thing as a PAO designator. I reported aboard my ship, USS SARATOGA (CV-60), as a deck officer. My primary duties were standing bridge watches with the goal of qualifying as an Officer of the Deck (OOD). I was also assigned as a division officer in the Deck Department.

When we got underway for our first deployment, I quickly learned the ship had a newspaper, an internal TV station and several radio stations. I also learned there was a junior officer assigned as the PAO.

Several months into my tour, I decided I would like to assist the PAO with my expertise. The ship's leadership approved my request—but said I had to maintain my bridge watches and division officer responsibilities. In volunteering to assist the PAO, I wound up taking on an increased workload. But I found it rewarding. In fact, it motivated me to remain in the Navy and change my designator.

But our duties were what I call 'straight stick'—put out a daily newspaper, manage the TV and radio stations, coordinate the cruise book and ensure we prepared regular family-grams that our Sailors could send to their family members.

First deployment was to Med/Sixth Fleet in 1971. Second deployment was to go back to Med in 1972 but the Tet Offensive sent SARATOGA to SEVENTH Fleet and Vietnam.



SK3 (Storekeeper) Tom Jurkowsky receives his crow at NTC Orlando, circa 1970. U.S. Navy photo.

After reporting to Gulf of Tonkin and undertaking combat operations, I saw that SARATOGA was not getting much publicity. We were one of six carriers in Gulf of Tonkin. I went to the CO and asked if I could transfer to PAO, that I had some ideas. Unfortunately, I could not leave the Deck Department so he told me I could assist ship's PAO. And that's what I did.

What I started doing was listening to pilot debriefs from their missions over North and South Vietnam. I would draft a message that highlighted our day's missions that went to SEVENTH Fleet and Navy PAOs in Saigon who worked for Det Charlie. Information that I had compiled was given to the media during the infamous "Five O'clock Follies." Before you knew it, SARATOGA started making the news. Families back home in Florida were ecstatic. The ship was getting recognition.

When I was doing the interviews with the pilots (and also sitting in on their debriefs of their combat missions), I was still standing bridge watches and being a division officer. But as we progressed into the 10-month deployment, I also became the ship's assistant PAO.

"The Public Affairs Office, WSAR TV-5 and Radio-4, and Special Services come under one heading, and provide award-winning internal relations, news, and entertainment. POA works closely with the talented lithographers of the Print Shop, who print nearly everything read on the ship, always ahead of schedule."

USS SARATOGA (CV 60) Deployment '72-'73 Cruise Book

Captain Sanderson was very supportive. The ship was getting lots of mention and he was obviously very happy. Our coverage was good for morale, especially when the crew saw SARATOGA mentioned in *Stars and Stripes*. We had lots of media embarks, too.



I think I started the whole endeavor without even knowing there was a PAO designator. If I remember correctly, it was CAPT Sanderson who told me about it and encouraged me to apply for a change of designator – I did and was accepted on my first try.

After detaching from the ship in April 1973 I reported to CHINFO and the News Desk. The rest is history. (Sanderson later made flag and recruited me to his staff as PAO.)

Today's carrier PAOs are a far different breed. Most of them have a tour (or two) as PAOs under their belts before they report to their carrier. Usually, LCDRs with a junior officer assigned to them, they are far more prepared to serve in their roles than I certainly was.

In addition to the 'straight stick' responsibilities (media embarks, newspaper, TV and radio stations, and now social media), CVN PAOs are often assigned additional duty to the embarked battle group commander. In this role, they perform an advisory role to the battle group admiral and his or her staff.

The fact that there are now two PAOs aboard our carriers indicates to me that the PAO is desired and has a respected role aboard our carriers. RDML Charlie Brown has frequently told me that PAOs are in demand. Every flag officer, regardless of where he or she is located, wants a PAO on staff. This demand for PAOs speaks volumes about our community and the respect that it has from the Navy's leaders.

Clearly, the role of the carrier PAO has been elevated. We now have a seat at the leadership table.



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LCDR Desiree Frame,
APR+M

Dear USNPAA Shipmates:

The CHINFO leadership mantle has been passed as RDML Ryan Perry relieved RDML Charlie Brown on 7 July in ceremonies at the Naval Academy. ADM Mike Gilday, the CNO, was guest speaker and offered some incredibly inspiring words about the public affairs community and how it performed under Charlie. It was clear from the CNO's remarks that Navy leadership has a deep respect and appreciation of the role that Public Affairs plays. There is little doubt that Public Affairs has a 'seat at the table.'



Rear Adm. Charles W. Brown (left) accepts the Meritorious Unit Commendation on behalf of the U.S. Navy Office of Information from Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Michael M. Gilday.

On behalf of the entire U.S. Navy Public Affairs Association, I again congratulate Charlie on the leadership he has provided to the community. CHINFO as an organization was awarded the *Meritorious Unit Commendation*. That alone speaks volumes about how effective the Public Affairs community is in telling the Navy's story.

All of us wish RDML Perry good luck as he continues to chart the community's course. He is well-equipped to do that with many successful assignments in his portfolio. I speak for all of us at USNPAA when I say we look forward to supporting Ryan and his team.

Our efforts to support Ryan and the community through the Professional Development Assistance Program (PDAP) are updated in this issue. Personally, I'm grateful to LCDR Desiree Frame for her efforts to assist with the program. Desiree is an energetic young officer (recently selected for O-5) who stepped up to assist us in getting the program underway. We are thrilled she agreed to continue to serve in her new role as *USNPAA Liaison* to the Navy PA community, relieving CDR Beth Teach.

Complementing Desiree's efforts is LCDR Mary Sanford. Mary is currently a student at Georgetown and is finishing up graduate studies. Her final project is focused on the Association and how we can attract new members. Mary has agreed to share her completed project (findings/recommendations) at the end of the summer.

I'm also grateful to Brian Gray, our treasurer, for his role in supporting the PDAP. August Brian also assembled a team that is working on establishing a policy structure for the program. I'm most appreciative of the support that Brian has provided me, along with the several PAO 'veterans' who have agreed to assist him.

This will be my last *Sightings* letter as I will be relieved as president in October by RDML Dawn Cutler. Dawn, as many of you know, is the executive vice president and chief operations officer for the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society and a former CHINFO.

Since taking over the presidency of the USNPAA in 2018, I've been blessed with support from many friends and colleagues. I am so grateful for the many contributions of time and energy these individuals have provided me. Their efforts have helped strengthen our organization, and I know these individuals—and others—will support Dawn with the same level of energy and commitment as she moves the organization forward.

Thank you.

Tom Jurkowsky

President



RDML Tom



Fair Winds and Following Seas

RDML Ryan Perry relieved RDML Charlie Brown as Chief of Information July 7th at a ceremony at the Naval Academy.

Thank you for your extraordinary leadership, Charlie!

USNPAA *Sightings*

CHINFO Change of Office



The U.S. Navy Ceremonial Guard color guard parades the colors during the change of office ceremony for the Navy Chief of Information (CHINFO) at the U.S. Naval Academy, July 7, 2022. During the ceremony, RDML Ryan M. Perry relieved RDML Charles W. Brown as CHINFO.

RDML Ryan Perry relieved RDML Charlie Brown in an inspiring ceremony at the U.S. Naval Academy on Thursday, July 7. Chief of Naval Operations ADM Mike Gilday was the presiding official.

In his remarks, ADM Gilday was effusive in his praise of RDML Brown and the entire Navy public affairs team—officer, enlisted and civilian.

“The Navy public affairs team connects our Navy with those whom we serve,” said the CNO. He added that he cannot overstate the important role CHINFO, and the entire public affairs team plays in telling the Navy’s story.

“The Navy has a noble story to tell,” he said. “And the role of the Chief of Information is an enormous responsibility.”

ADM Gilday praised RDML Brown for his leadership and for his being a role model, saying that RDML Brown “further professionalized the public affairs community.” CNO lauded RDML Brown for giving our Sailors a voice in communicating the Navy’s story. The CNO also cited the public affairs team for being “agile and fast” in responding to the myriad situations the Navy faces and for communicating the importance of sea power.



ADM Mike Gilday, Chief of Naval Operations, oversees the CHINFO change-of-office.

To support ADM Gilday's praise and respect for the public affairs community, CHINFO was presented with a Meritorious Unit Commendation. The award in and of itself speaks volumes about the job RDML Brown has done—along with every member of the Navy public affairs team—officer, enlisted and civilian.

The ceremony concluded with the mantle of leadership being passed to RDML Perry, who brings great depth of experience to the job. He has served as the force PAO for Naval Special Warfare; fleet PAO for Third Fleet; special assistant to the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; director of the national news desk in CHINFO; chief of media in CHINFO; deputy PAO to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; and assistant chief of information for community outreach and fleet media officer at CINCPACFLT.

"The USNPAA looks forward to working with and supporting RDML Perry and his entire team. We are confident he will continue to build on the community's successes," Association President Tom Jurkowsky said.

Incoming CHINFO, RDML Ryan M. Perry addresses attendees during change of office ceremony, center right. Right, outgoing CHINFO RDML Charles W. Brown and wife, Kaye Sweetser, Ph.D., are piped ashore. (CHINFO Photos.)



Former senior enlisted advisor to the Navy Chief of Information (CHINFO) retired Master Chief Mass Communication Specialist Michael Lewis presents a certificate of appointment on behalf of the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy to Rear Adm. Charles W. Brown.



Navy PA PDAP Panel Identifies Needs, USNPAA Support Opportunities

Plotting a Course for the Future of Our Community

By LCDR Desiree Frame, USN & Ms. Susan Henson

In the last issue of *Sightings*, RDML Tom Jurkowsky announced a new USNPAA initiative, the Professional Development Assistance Program (PDAP), that is being established to support the Navy Public Affairs community in a more meaningful and substantive way. Since then, a lot of work has occurred behind the scenes to advance this initiative that we'd like to share with you.

This spring, USNPAA stood up two separate panels - a Navy active civilian/military panel and a Policy panel - to bring PDAP to life. As every PAO knows is necessary, these two panels began with research!

Our primary research was targeted at the active duty community and civilian PA community had the goal of determining their professional desires, resource restraints and mentorship preferences to determine how USNPAA can best support the community. While responses to the online survey were limited, we've been able to glean some telling information about the community thus far - at least from the perspective of the JOs!

We found that today's junior PAOs are looking for assistance with earning their communication management professional (CMP) or accreditation in public relations and military communication (APR+M) certification, and they are also looking for transition and retirement advice.



The findings indicate this group's desire to not just do the job, but to earn professional certifications that reflect their level of expertise. Likewise, looking for help with transition and retirement advice reflects a higher level of career planning and commitment to the public affairs profession.

This professional desire paralleled the response on the biggest challenges (or barriers) facing our development as PA practitioners. Thirty percent of respondents feel that they lack specialized and advanced training, with a close 24 percent stating they lack access to technology software such as *Dataminr* (<https://www.dataminr.com>).

The survey also yielded initial suggestions of how USNPAA might be able to support the community, such as by subsidizing certification and accreditation payments, as well as by providing separation and retirement training and networking opportunities.

Our research also found that 67 percent of survey respondents have a mentor (more than 80 percent of which are active duty or prior service PA professionals), and that they primarily rely on their mentor for

career and personal advice. Great news for our community! View the survey here: <https://www.questionpro.com/t/AVMh8Zr8Rq>.

Interested currently serving uniformed, civilian, and reserve Navy PA team members, please complete it!

As the panel continues its work to discover ways for USNPAA to support the Navy PA community, we welcome your inputs and ideas (email: desiree.e.frame.mil@us.navy.mil). Stay tuned for more PDAP updates from the panel members.

About the authors: LCDR Desiree Frame is the Public Affairs Officer at the Navy Office of Legislative Affairs and co-lead for the USNPAA PDAP active civilian/military panel. Ms. Susan Henson is the Acting Director of the Communication and Outreach Division at Naval History and Heritage Command, and a member of the active civilian/military panel. Other members of the Navy Panel are: MCCS Matthew Bash; CAPT (Ret.) Anthony Cooper; CAPT (Ret.) Jeff Davis; CAPT JD Dorsey; and CDR Beth Teach.



Pictured members of PDAP Navy active civilian military panel clockwise from top left: Ms. Susan Henson, LCDR Desiree Frame, CAPT (Ret.) Anthony Cooper and CDR Beth Teach. (Not pictured: MCCS Matthew Bash, CAPT (Ret.) Jeff Davis, and CAPT JD Dorsey.)

PDAP Grant Program Approved by USNPAA Board

On August 10th USNPAA Board approved establishment of a Professional Development Assistance Program (PDAP) Grant to support professional development activities not otherwise funded through official Navy appropriated funds. The program will be announced officially following approval of the Chief of Information. Navy public affairs officers (ENS-LCDR), Mass Communication Specialists (E4-E9) and civil service civilians (GS9-13) working in public affairs assignments will be eligible to receive grants of up to \$500 toward eligible professional development pursuits through this program. USNPAA expects to begin accepting grant applications for the coming year beginning October 1, 2022. Once available, specific guidelines and application information will be provided at usnpaa.org.

This new grant initiative is the direct result of USNPAA PDAP teams reaching out to learn about and help meet the needs of our currently serving Navy public affairs professionals.

2022 Navy PA Worldwide Symposium

Informational, Educational, and Social:

Navy Public Affairs Community Gathers in Norfolk

By CDR Anthony J. Falvo, USN

More than 400 Navy public affairs professionals met in Norfolk, Va. spring as the community conducted its first Public Affairs Worldwide Symposium in seven years.

Conducted March 28-30, 2022 at the Norfolk Waterside Marriott, the event marked a culmination of three years of progress after the COVID-19 pandemic forced a postponement from the planned 2020 event. The symposium's theme mirrored our community's priorities since 2019: Alignment, Professionalization, and Leading the Fight.



Secretary of the Navy Hon. Carlos Del Toro addressed more than 400 public affairs professionals of the Navy Public Affairs Worldwide Symposium. Del Toro spoke to the guidance released in his "One Navy-Marine Corps Team: Strategic Guidance from the Secretary of the Navy," while encouraging attendees to ensure alignment across the Department, as one Navy-Marine Corps Team. (Photo by MC2 Logan Keown)



CNO Briefing - ADM Michael Gilday addressed the more than 400 public affairs professionals of the Navy Public Affairs Worldwide Symposium March 28. Gilday candidly shared his perspectives and priorities and reiterated the importance and value public affairs. Here he responds to questions from attendees. (Photo by MC1 Sean Castellano)

Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro and Chief of Naval Operations ADM Michael Gilday joined the symposium virtually on the first morning and shared their perspectives and priorities. Both were committed to joining the event in person,

but the President's Budget release slid to the same day, requiring their presence in the Pentagon.

CNO Gilday spoke with candor and about the importance of being truthful. He shared his recollections of the USS IOWA (BB-61), and his perspective concerning how the institution dealt with the 1991 Tailhook convention scandal. Both leaders reaffirmed the importance and value of public affairs.

We also heard from external subject matter experts. Dr. Darren Linvill (Clemson University) walked us through the extraordinary research he and his colleagues have conducted on state-affiliated social media disinformation. Dr. Felicia Blow, APR (Hampton University), provided a no-holds-barred perspective on Diversity, Equity,

2022 Navy PA Worldwide Symposium

and Inclusion in communication industry. Some of you know Mr. Chris Stewart of Gallup, who provided an expert, empirically based assessment on how America perceives Its Navy -- his last act before retiring. Finally, Ms. Charlene Li (author of the *New York Times* bestseller "Open Leadership" and the co-author of the critically acclaimed book "Groundswell") provided perspective on digital transformation and disruptive leadership. (Please see the following table for more detail on external briefs.)



Navy Public Affairs Worldwide Symposium attendees photograph award winner names from the overall list of Russell Egnor Navy Media Awards unveiled on the second day of the symposium. The overall list of winners was released at the symposium allowing event attendees to congratulate the winners in real-time. (Photo by MC2 Lauren Deal)



RDML Paula Dunn, RDML Charlie Brown, and RDML (Ret.) Tom Jurkowsky congratulate MC1 Kelsey Hockenberger as she receives the U.S. Navy Public Affairs Association Award for Exemplary Service. Winners of the 2021 Thompson-Ravitz Public Affairs Excellence Awards, Russell Egnor Navy Media Awards, and the 2021-22 Norma B. Connelly Public Affairs Service Awards were also unveiled and recognized. (Photo by MC2 Lauren Deal)

The group further benefitted from the perspectives of our professionals who continue to rise to today's communication challenges. Our group received eye-opening accounts during a detailed, two-part brief led by CAPT Tamara Lawrence, APR+M (NAVEUR) and CAPT Kyle Raines, APR (INDOPACOM) on "Communicating in an Era of Strategic Competition: Countering Russia/China."

The symposium also featured a parade of community and Navy Public Affairs leadership briefs and discussions. Chief of Information RDML Charlie Brown, APR+M and MCCM Mike Lewis gave a state-of-the-community brief; RDML Paula Dunn, APR+M and MCCM Brian Brannon discussed reserve community capability; and now-Chief of Information RDML Ryan Perry, APR+M and MCCM Tony Sisti, who assumed responsibilities as CHINFO's Senior Enlisted Advisor, gave a spirited, energized, and inspirational vision of the next few years.

One of the biggest hits of the three days was the social hour and subsequent Awards Dinner, which was attended by more than 300 people. *A special thank you to USNPAA and the U.S. Navy Memorial who sponsored the pre-dinner social.* Winners of the 2021 Thompson-Ravitz Public Affairs Excellence Awards, Russell Egnor Navy Media Awards, and the 2021-22 Norma B. Connelly Public Affairs Service Awards were unveiled, and individual award winners were personally recognized.

2022 Navy PA Worldwide Symposium

The Take Away

Feedback indicates this year's event was a huge success. Based on our post-symposium survey results, the intention moving forward will be to conduct these not less than every 18 months. The format was popular (though a minority requested more breakout groups).

Key Qualitative Takeaways:

- 88% rated symposium either "Excellent" or "Good" overall
- 91% rated symposium as worth the time/expense
- 88% rated symposium location either "Excellent" or "Good"
- 89% rated symposium venue either "Excellent" or "Good"
- 79% felt future symposia should be similar in format & venue

Overall, the event reaffirmed what we already know too well:

For the Navy Public Affairs community to remain the standard by which all government public affairs organizations are measured, opportunities to network face-to-face and learn from one another are critical.

If you attended this year's event, we hope you found it beneficial. Let us hear your ideas on how to improve the next one. If you missed this one, we hope to catch you at the next one. You won't want to miss it!

External Subject Matter Expert Presentations

Examining State Affiliated Social Media Disinformation—Dr. Darren Linvill, associate professor at Clemson University, discussed his research exploring state affiliated social media disinformation and how different state actors demonstrate varying tactics in spreading disinformation throughout the media ecosystem.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Communication—Dr. Felicia Blow, Associate Vice President for Development, Hampton University, reminded us that industry communicators and public affairs professionals lift societies and improve democracies through their engagement, words, and actions.

Communicating in an Era of Strategic Competition: Countering Russia and China— Captains Tamara Lawrence (NAVEUR PAO) and Kyle Raines (INDOPACOM PAO) provided first-person leadership accounts and approaches in communicating timely, accurate, and persistent information to demonstrate American commitment, reassure global allies and partners, and combat nefarious behaviors and tactics by adversaries.

How America Perceives Its Navy—Gallup Senior Partner Chris Stewart provided the latest trending data on the public's opinion of the Navy

Leading in Disruptive Times— New York Times bestselling author Charlene Li reminded us that leading is filled with contradictions - being strong and confident while remaining vulnerable and humble are the keys to success.

Please contact CDR A. J. Falvo, Navy Office of Information (OI-8) for additional information and presentation information.



Spring Virtual Happy Hour

Military Officers Association Brief on Issues Inside the Beltway

Col. Dan Merry, USAF (Ret)
Vice President, Government Relations



Walter Cronkite, the legendary anchor for CBS News, once said, "Washington, DC is 100 square miles surrounded by reality."

Oh, so true when talking about Capitol Hill, the Pentagon, and issues near and dear to all military branches, service members and their families.

Retired U.S. Air Force Colonel Dan Merry, now Vice President, Government Relations for the Military Officers Association of America, led USNPAA members through his update on his team's initiatives: retention and recruiting; the Richard Star Act for combat-injured veterans;

stopping overpay of co-pays for mental health services; potential for service members getting a pay raise this year; COLA for retirees; and other pressing matters during our April 12 Virtual Happy Hour (VHH).

Before Merry began, Tom Jurkowsky introduced him by saying that he is extremely impressed with the advocacy mission and the excellent reputation MOAA has on Capitol Hill. "It is the top lobbying not-for-profit per *The Hill* newspaper." Jurkowsky acknowledged he also serves on MOAA's board.

VHH Take Aways for those unable to attend...

On the national debt: It's already \$30 trillion; no one is able to dream that away.

Retention and recruiting: Preserving the core of E-3 to E-6 NCOs who will become tomorrow's chiefs is key to leadership for the services. Excessive losses in these ranks are difficult to overcome. Pay for these grades is crucial, competition intense. Wal-Mart is a good example. The company recently had to raise pay for their truck drivers to \$110,000 a year. "Those jobs will look very attractive to E-3 to E-6 NCOs who not only make less but also have the challenges of deployments, combat, etc."

DOD changes to co-pays for mental health services: These co-pays for military families have more than doubled to \$50 per visit. It's clear that these services for families are more important than ever. MOAA is lobbying to get co-pays lowered to \$20 per visit. Nearly half of all service members today seek mental health services, resources on bases cannot keep pace. High co-pay for families is hurting more than helping.

VHH Take Aways

On the narrowing support for military service:

In the U.S. today there are 19 million veterans of adult age, meaning that about 7-8% of Americans have any experience with the military services. About 55% of 17-24-year-olds do not have a propensity to serve in the military and nearly the same percentage of parents discourage their children from serving. That's a problem which **is** compounded by the new Blended Retirement System (BRS) that means service members now have to fund their retirement. They get 40% of their pay at 20 years and they have to serve 30 years to get 50% of their pay. This will hurt recruiting and retention. MOAA is lobbying to change these formulas.

Annual pay raise:

MOAA is trying to get the troops a 4.6% pay raise. Between 2014 and 2016 the administration shorted the military members a total of 2.6%. If that can be reinstated, the pay raise could reach 7.2%. But finding the funding for this will be a challenge.

Mythology:

Personnel costs are spiraling out of control. Fact: as a percentage of the DOD budget, personnel costs have been consistent at about one-third, including health care, pay, housing. MOAA has addresses this on a regular basis, especially because the elected officials and staff on Capitol Hill rarely have served in the military.

Retiree COLA:

Since 2014 there has been a bill that would have created a shortage of 1% per year that cumulatively cuts a member's annual pay. For an E-7 that has meant a pay cut of more than \$112,000. MOAA has been able to get that bill rescinded.



USNPAA Sightings

VHH Take Aways

During Qs & As

VA hospital infrastructure & its study of the state of VA hospitals

In the civilian world of healthcare, the average age of hospitals is 8-9 years old. Contrast that with 70% of VA hospitals that are 50 years old --or older. They cannot be fixed. They must be closed and replaced --or not.

Cuts to military medicine

There is a proposal to cut 18,000 billets. Congress was under the impression that the civilian sector had plenty of capacity to provide medical services. The billets are mostly empty/unfilled and recruiting people to fill them is incredibly challenging. The pre-COVID idea to send military active duty, their families and retirees to civilian doctors and facilities is now debatable because of pressures on the healthcare industry where doctors, nurses, therapists and technicians are either overwhelmed with work or are quitting altogether.



Arlington National Cemetery before Memorial Day. (U.S. Army phot by Rachel Larue/released)

Food insecurity

Basic Needs Allowance of up to \$400 a month based on family income will make a big difference, but we need to get the BAH dropped as a factor that reduces BNA.

Recruiting bonuses

The services provide a lot of money to get recruits in the door. They will have to pay them even more to get them to stay.

Burial in Arlington National Cemetery

The emerging solution is to find more military cemeteries where the honors - caissons and horses, firing party -- accorded at Arlington can be replicated, maybe one for the East Coast and another for the West Coast. "We have 30 years to figure this out."



Defense Information School

Hall of Fame

Recognizing alumni who exemplify a lifetime of service and accomplishment in military, private sector, and other government and public service roles, Defense Media Activity Director Hal Pittman, RDML, USN (Ret.) and DINFOS Commandant Col. Richard McNorton, USA, inducted seven alumni into the DINFOS Hall of Fame. Two former Navy Journalists were among the those honored during the August 10th ceremonies held at Ft. Meade, MD. ([Watch entire DINFOS 2022 Hall of Fame Ceremony here.](#))



MC1 Mark Faram accepts JOCM John Burlage HOF plaque from Defense Media Activity Director Hal Pittman (l.), & DINFOS Commandant Col. Richard McNorton, USA (r.). (DINFOS photo)



JOCM John Burlage, USN (Ret.)

"Father" of Mass Communication Specialist Rating

A Navy storyteller in uniform and followed by nearly two decades with Navy Times, Master Chief Journalist Burlage was a sailor's sailor and a chief's chief. His foresight and leadership created the framework for today's Mass Communication Specialists. JO1 Mark D. Faram, USNR accepted the posthumous DINFOS HOF recognition for his former colleague and mentor who passed away in 2020. Master Chief Burlage's HOF plaque will find a home in CHINFO spaces. ([Burlage DINFOS HOF story](#))

Paula L. Pedene, APR, Fellow PRSA

Non-profit CEO, Whistleblower, Author, Columnist



A previous *PR Pro of the Year* and multiple Silver Anvil Award recipient, Padene is Chair of PRSA Military and Veterans Task Force, and member of College of Fellows strategic planning team and the PRSA Board of Ethics and Professional Standards. ([Padene DINFOS HOF story](#))



Photos clockwise from left: DINFOS HOF portrait; JO1 Paula LeClaire & Navy News this Week co-anchor JO1 Dan Abrams, Navy Broadcasting Service studios, 1985 (U.S. Navy photo); Padene shares [A Sacred Duty](#); Spinning AFRTS records at FEN Yakota, Japan AFRTS radio studios, 1984 (U.S. Navy photo).

USNPAA Sightings

USNPAA Membership Chair

Dick Thompson Honored for Service

An organization is only as strong as the people who give their time, talent and treasure to support it.

Dick Thompson, USNPAA's Membership Chair, is one such person. For the last 13 years, Dick has embodied the word "selfless" in his commitment to the Association. Because of his work, we have the connective tissue of a directory and the ability to support reunion teams with a smart, efficient database.

For those reasons and many more, Dick Thompson was presented a Special Recognition Award by the USNPAA during the May 20th luncheon at the Army-Navy Country Club in Arlington.



CDR Dick Thompson, USN (Ret.) receives Special Recognition Award from USNPAA during Army-Navy Country Club luncheon in May. CDR Toby Marquez Photo.



Dick Thompson Aboard USS Nimitz CVN-68)

Many in the Association have worked with or known Dick over the years. He says he had great mentors throughout his active duty and reserve career.

"Their guidance and wisdom shaped me for the better as I progressed through life. I wish I had listened better. I am still in contact with many of them today."

Dick Served aboard USS NIMITZ in the 1970s, at Guantanamo Bay, NAVINFO San Francisco, NIRA, and Navy Broadcasting. As a reservist, he had tours at Fleet Hometown News Service, Inshore Undersea Warfare Group TWO and at Commander, FIRST Naval Construction Brigade (an un-numbered fleet command of 12 Reserve Naval Construction Battalions). All were challenging and rewarding, Dick said.

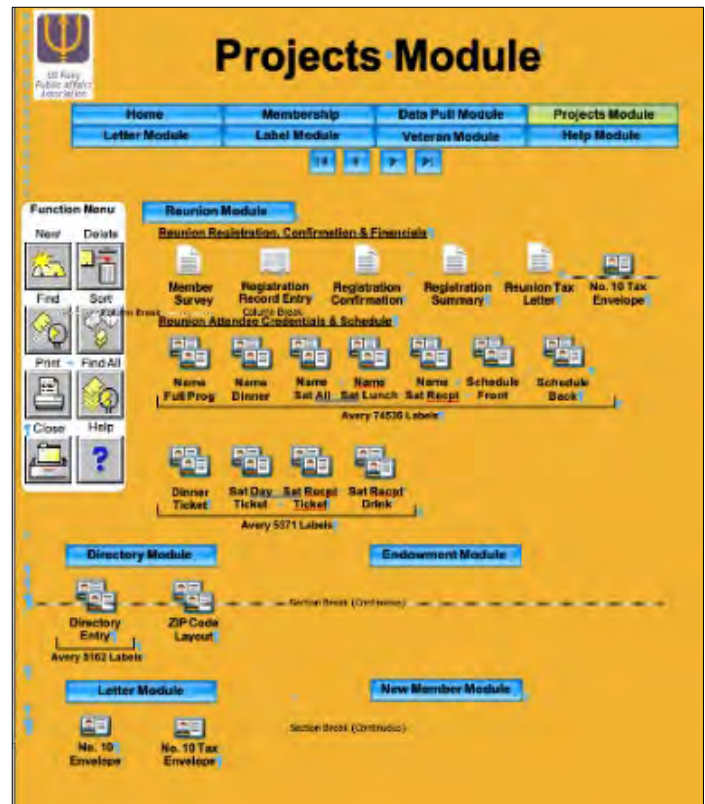
CAPT Jim Noone was USNPAA president when he asked Dick to assume the membership role. They had served together in the reserves and developed a database to manage unit training which had been an administrative nightmare. "I was able to build a database that streamlined the process," explained Thompson.

Based on that reserve unit database, Dick relieved CAPT Tom Coldwell, the Association's first membership chair (who served in that role for 15 years). When discussing the job, Coldwell said that he used an obscure software called FileMaker. Amazing to say, Dick also had been using FileMaker for nearly 20 years.

Sadly, Coldwell passed away shortly after that conversation. "If you didn't know Tom Coldwell, you need to understand he was a great Naval Officer, PAO, and an even better person," Dick remembers.

Regarding the membership database, Dick uses FileMaker Pro Advanced. He developed a granular, icon-driven database that uses one-time entry information that will populate a membership module, a data-pull module (by zip code, state, locality, pay grade and other information), a projects module (including reunion management, reunion financial reports, name tags, directory layout, and envelope/letter generation), a letter module, a label module, and a 501(c)(19) Veterans' Organization/Tax Exempt compliance module.

These modules streamline membership/reunion/IRS compliance management and help with events such as luncheons and board



Sample page from USNPAA's FileMaker Pro Advanced data base managed by Dick Thompson.

meetings. During the pandemic, USNPAA was able to easily transition to ZOOM board meetings and add new Virtual Happy Hours with featured speakers. It also enabled our email communications shift to MailChimp, which creates metrics on communications penetration and reach.

"It's great to be in touch with other members as we transitioned from uniform to second careers. The worst part of this job is reporting the passing of members that I served with," Dick said.

Biggest Change During His Membership Chair Tenure...

"Dropping the word "Alumni" from our Association title in 2013. It's important that we include active duty public affairs professionals in our ranks."

Dick Thompson

USNPAA May Luncheon at ANCC

Recognition & Camaraderie Highlight DC Area Gathering

The delayed presentation of the 2022 Captain Thomas Coldwell Award to CAPT Kevin Wensing, USN (Ret.) and a surprise Special Recognition Award to CDR Dick Thompson (see previous article) drew USNPAA members to the Army-Navy Country Club in Arlington May 20th. Good food, great cheer and community conversation prevailed.

Once again, a gracious *thank you to CDR Toby Marquez, USN (Ret.)* for capturing USNPAA friends and faces at the event. Over the years and miles so many of us have been brought together through Toby's pictures. It's the next best thing to being there.



Captain Thomas Coldwell Award

CAPT Kevin Wensing, USN (Ret.) receives Captain Thomas Coldwell Award for Significant Achievement from USNPAA President Tom Jurkowsky, upper right. This award goes to a USNPAA member for significant achievement after Navy service.

After retirement, Kevin supported U.S. troops and their families through the USO, and later helped actor Gary Sinese launch his foundation. His many volunteer activities include:

- *National Press Club Speakers Committee –curates service secretaries, military leaders, & Veterans Administration officials as speakers.*
- *Organizer for Washington, DC, Memorial Day Parade & New York City Veterans Day Parade.*
- *USS Constitution Museum Board of Directors*
- *Previous chair of FCA Americas, a branch of Finland's largest international charity.*

Read more about Kevin in [Sightings Winter 2022 issue, p. 6.A](#)



Left, Kevin & Hartley Wensing. Right, Jeff Davis, Tom Jurkowsky, Kevin Wensing, Hartley Wensing and Jim Noone.

USNPAA May Luncheon at ANCC



SMILES All Around

Catching up with colleagues, friends and partners in mischief are (clockwise from above): 1) Tim Taylor, Joe Gradisher, Steve Clawson & Lorna Mae Devera; 2) Jeff Davis & CAPT Patrick Evans; 3) Jim Bullock & Sheila Graham; 4) Steve Clawson & Toby Marquez; 5) John Alexander, Lorna Mae Devera & Anthony Cooper; 6) CAPT Patrick Evans, RDML Paula Dunn, Tom Jurkowsky and Dave Werner.



USNPAA Sightings

Defining Gumption:

CAPT Roger Hirsh Honors Our Navy AND Finds a New Funding Stream for the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society

by CAPT Betsy Bird, USN (Ret.)

A couple of years ago, I was cooking. With one eye on my cornbread, I had the other on Channel 7 (ABC/WJLA) evening news. A story caught my attention. The reporter was interviewing a retired Navy Captain. So I paused. Listened. And that was my first virtual introduction to Roger Hirsh, CAPT, USN (Ret.) - a man with incredible initiative and determination. What he has achieved will have an impact on the Navy and Marine Corps for decades.

When I saw him on the news that night, I did not catch all the information, so I went to the Internet and found him quickly. He had already established a website and a Facebook page, trying to promote pre-sale of the Navy specialty license tag by the state of Virginia; Hirsh is the State Sponsor. Virginia requires at least 450 tags to be sold in advance before the specialty tag can be approved by the General Assembly.

Roger is tenacious. After 30 years of service, he retired as a Medical Service Corps Pharmacy Officer. In 2016, as a resident of Chesapeake and a former employee at Naval Medical Center Portsmouth, he had been looking for a specialty tag for his sports car on the Virginia DMV website and noticed Army logo plates, Coast Guard, Marine Corps and NAS Oceana... and hundreds more. Of the 275 different specialty license plates (gracing a little more than 1.1 million of its 8.3 million registered vehicles in fiscal 2016), none were specific to the U.S. Navy.

Roger decided to change that and has been working tirelessly to complete all the requirements necessary to make the Navy tag available in Virginia. He got more than 550 pre-paid orders, shepherding the application through the DMV and, finally, the Virginia state government.



But that is only part of the story. This mission was not only about a specialty plate for a car or motorcycle to show a connection to the Navy. Roger also wanted to support Navy men and women in time of need. So he chose to designate the tag as a revenue-generator for the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society.

The mission of the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society is to provide, in partnership with the Navy and Marine Corps, financial, educational, and other assistance to members of the Naval Services of the United States, eligible family members, and survivors when in need; and to receive and manage funds to administer these programs.

Roger has seen the results of NMCRS over many years and has always been a donor. He decided the work he was doing (he personally paid all costs for the plate effort) was his way of leveraging his "charitable donation" long term. And what a donation this will end up to be.

The revenue share associated with the Virginia "Navy" plate begins after the first 1,000 orders. As of July (2022) there are 568 preorders, and Roger is confident the sales will hit that 1,000 mark easily in the first few weeks--or even days--when the plate becomes available at DMV. At plate #1,001, every sale will generate \$15 annually for NMCRS.

Roger explained, "As of March (2022), Marine Corps has 11,625 plates, Army 5,281, and Coast Guard 1,959. The "Don't Tread on Me" plate is the most popular at 127,753. Virginia has the largest Navy population in the U.S and the plate is available to active duty, veterans and retirees. I am hopeful that over the first two or three years, we will be able to sell at least 10,000 plates. That's \$150,000 to NMCRS."

This project began in 2016, and after more than five years of tireless effort, CAPT Hirsh saw the Navy plate become official on July 1. The DMV is preparing to make and distribute the license tags, aiming to have them available later this year.



HOT ENOUGH FOR YOU?

CAPT Roger Hirsh during his 2004-05 OIF deployment as Deputy Commander, U.S. Military Hospital Kuwait.

It has been a rewarding and challenging project, and Roger feels enriched by his efforts. His Facebook group has over 950 members and 1,400 followers. He has made many friends and has kept in touch with them along the way.

"Over the course of his project, I have had a few cases where a partner passed and the surviving spouse called to let me know. I still exchange Christmas cards and phone calls with one of those. Many other veterans enclosed pictures and notes, sometimes of multiple generations of Navy members," he said.

He feels that it has been a long road, but worth it. And he is looking forward to seeing this symbol

of Navy pride and tradition on Virginia roads, knowing that each one is helping our Virginia military families through NMCRS.

I personally have been inspired by his determination and generosity. He was a one-man band throughout most of this. He carried this initiative. He did not give up. He set up interviews, sent letters and emails, made phone calls, created a [website](#) and set up a Facebook page. And he asked for support to communicate the great benefit this tag would be to so many sailors and marines and their families. He ended up doing it, for the most part, himself. So, I applaud his tenacity and ability to see this project through.

The efforts of CAPT Roger Hirsch will benefit the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society for years to come. I have learned a lot from him as I followed his progress these past couple of years. I'm proud to call him my virtual friend.

Many of you support the Navy-Marine Corps Relief through volunteer work, clothing donations or charitable donations. You now have the opportunity to continue this support by purchasing a specialty license tag. While the pre-order phase has passed, you will soon be able to



Website: www.NavyPlateVirginia.com

Email: navy.plate.va@gmail.com

order your Navy tag through the Virginia DMV website. The strength will be in the numbers.

And, yes, I've ordered my tag. Can't wait to get it.

Betsy Bird is a retired Captain, USN. Her 25+ years included PAO assignments at COMSUBPAC, CINCPACFLT, CHINFO and DoD. Currently living in McLean, VA., and spending time in her home state of North Carolina as well.



CHINFO front office, 1999, left to right: Then-CDR Betsy Bird, CHINFO EA; ENS Mike Blankenship; RDML Tom Jurkowsky, CHINFO; Ms. Norma B. Connelly, Executive Secretary; LT Scott Allen, Flag Lieutenant; CAPT Mark Van Dyke, Deputy CHINFO; YN1 Rhonda Rudd, Flag Writer.

From the Editors

Dear Readers,

We hope you have enjoyed this transition issue of *Sightings*. Just as we recognize RDML Charlie Brown's leadership and welcome RDML Ryan Perry to CHINFO's helm in these pages, we look forward to USNPAA's 'change-of-command' this fall when RDML Dawn Cutler relieves RDML Tom Jurkowsky. And, after a wonderful two+ years for Tina (8 issues) and four+ years for Tim (16 issues), your *Sightings* co-editors are also standing relieved of our watch with this issue.

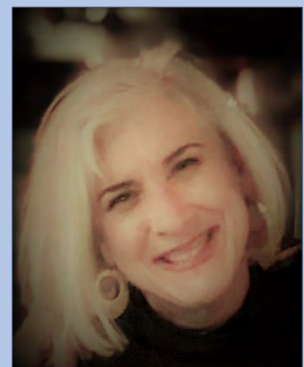
To our contributors - writers and resources, both actively serving and those longer in the tooth - we are incredibly grateful. You help make *Sightings* a better representation of the entire Navy public affairs community - past and present. The newsletter serves as the Association's connective tissue between gatherings and reunions. But also, inspired by NIRA Print Media journal *Directions* (gone by a few years but not forgotten by many of us), we sought to inform, entertain, and recognize the professionalism of the entire Navy public affairs team. YOU are the good people comprising USNPAA.

Finally, we could not have created this genre of *Sightings* without the unwavering support of our fearless leader - USNPAA President Tom Jurkowsky. More seriously, we celebrate all that Tom has done for the Navy and for the Public Affairs community. But here we particularly salute his tenure at the Association's helm: He has revitalized and re-energized USNPAA!

When you read his sidebar about the evolution of carrier PAOs you cannot help but see Tom Jurkowsky from boot camp forward as a top-notch problem solver, communicator, leader, and advocate for all things Navy. More recently, his op-eds have alerted the public and Washington decision-makers to the issues of disabled veterans; the Navy's strategic direction; pay and benefits; commissaries; or food insecurity for military families. Throughout, Tom's commitment, support, and contributions to Navy public affairs and USNPAA have remained steadfast. It has been a pleasure to serve USNPAA under his leadership.



Tim Beecher



Tina Tallman

Originally founded for alumni, today's U.S. Navy Public Affairs Association strives to be compelling, interesting, and meaningful for everyone who touches Navy Public Affairs - enlisted, civilian, officer, active duty, reserve, veteran and retired. It is no small task. Maintaining currency in our craft is essential to our Association's purpose and pivotal to its programming. This relevancy can only be achieved and maintained through the contributions of younger professionals who share our respect and commitment to the Navy and the Navy PA team.

We look forward to the Association's next chapter under Dawn Cutler's leadership. As the first –and so far, only – woman who held CHINFO's helm, and current VP/COO of Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society, we are quite excited for USNPAA's prospects!

Very respectfully and all the best,

Tina Tallman

Tim Beecher

Co-editors

NOTE: *We also must give a hearty shout out to CDR Joe Quimby, USN (Ret) who brought Sightings back to print in October 2018, co-editing nine issues in just 18 months. Joe has always made himself available to answer the odd question, provide tech tips, or cheer us on. THANK YOU, Joe!*

Sightings USNPAA's quarterly newsletter

To all Navy Public Affairs shipmates past and present,

Thank you for sharing your tales of stellar Navy PA team achievement, lessons learned, times in the "hot seat," book reviews and for blessing us with your humor!

Tim Beecher at beechert@icloud.com or

Tina Tallman at ttallman1650@gmail.com

Find USNPAA: Website <http://www.usnpaa.org>

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