



United States Navy Public Affairs Alumni Association

SIGHTINGS

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A Successful Norfolk Reunion XIV Was Entertaining and Informative

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I hope we can speak for all who attended Reunion XIV in Norfolk when we say. thanks to the members, spouses and Navy and civilian guests who were there and participated in the well-planned, informative and fun activities.

The reunion planning committee of Craig Quigley, John Donaldson, Troy Snead, Bobby Lincoln, Chris Miller and Kathleen Jabs went all out to make sure those who came left with a good feeling.

Although he didn't give us a Key to the City, Norfolk Mayor Paul Fraim sent a welcoming letter inviting us to visit such historical places as the National Maritime Center, the USS Wisconsin and the MacArthur Memorial. These sites and many others were just a short distance from the Sheraton Waterside Hotel.

On Friday afternoon, folks quickly assembled at the Hospitality Suite where

Bobby Lincoln was pouring. That was followed by a Reception and a presentation by RADM Greg Smith.

Saturday was full of information and interesting presentations including those from RDML Denny Moynihan, RADM Dave Thomas (COMNAVSURFLANT), and ADM Tim Keating, the retired Commander of PACOM. The *Captain Thomas Coldwell Award*, the *Exemplary Service Award* and the *Distinguished Service Award* were presented to very deserving recipients. Very informative briefings were also given by Navy representatives on the state of the PA officer and enlisted communities.

On the next several pages are relatively detailed summaries of the remarks and awards presented during the Reunion.

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The Reunion Team settles down after weeks of hard work and presentations. From left to right: John Donaldson, Craig Quigley, Troy Snead, Bobby Lincoln and Chris Miller.

View from the Bridge

Fellow Members –

We missed you. Although we had a good turnout by Reunion standards, we're still only talking about less than 20 percent of the Association membership. It would be great to see that number climb in the years ahead, and I encourage each of you to think about ways we can make our USNPAAA



Reunions more accessible and more attractive to our primary audience ... YOU!

We will hold a Board meeting in early January to review “lessons learned” from the Norfolk reunion and begin the process of selecting a site for the spring 2013 get-together. Our discussions and deliberations would benefit greatly from any insights you might be willing to share about where and when we hold our reunions ... and what things you might like to see included in future iterations.

Please accept my apologies also for the delayed transmission of this edition of *Sightings*. Your intrepid editor did his level best to get me to focus on both writing this column and reviewing his great copy in a timely fashion ... but as I admitted in a previous column ... I am an inveterate procrastinator. So you'll just have to sit back and enjoy this “holiday edition” of *Sightings*. I hope it was worth the wait.

Many, many great people collaborated to make the Reunion in Norfolk a resounding success. First and foremost I have to thank Craig Quigley and his team of superb workaholics for laboring over every detail for months.

The result was a finely tuned, thoroughly

enjoyable and affordable weekend of professional development and self-serving sea stories for the participants. Bobby Lincoln was an outstanding host at the hospitality suite ... John Donaldson and Troy Snead had the local coordination wired ... and Chris Miller made the trains run on time. It was a great effort by first-rate professionals. BRAVO ZULU!

Rear Admiral Moynihan led a supporting cast of PA whiz kids who effectively demonstrated just how strong the talent pool is in our community. As CHINFO said, these kids may be walking in our footsteps ... but they are taking the profession to new heights of excellence as they walk. Today's PAOs are expected to master an incredibly diverse set of communication skills ... while simultaneously fulfilling all the traditional duties of the career field.

It's eye-watering to see how the Navy Public Affairs Support Element meets operational commander requirements even as they train the next generation of PAOs and Mass Communication Specialists. And for those who worried that the loss of most of the NAVINFOs would leave the Navy without a “presence” in the heartland ... well, I think the successes of the Navy Week program and the CHINFO Community Outreach Office speak for themselves.

The final guarantor of success for the reunion was the quality of the outside speakers we were able to attract. From Rear Admiral Greg Smith's insights on both the current conflicts and the communication challenges they present ... to COMNAVSURFLANT's very personal takeaways from Navy humanitarian efforts in Haiti ... to Admiral Tim Keating's closeout tribute to the role of Navy Public Affairs in the Navy and the Joint Force ... it was a pretty special weekend.

So please enjoy this Holiday Edition of *Sightings*. With a successful reunion now receding in the wake, the Board can turn its attention to some new business: changing our IRS status ... developing programs to create closer ties to the active PA force ... and revitalizing our member base. More on this after the holidays. My best to all of you and your families during this season to be thankful.

V/R SRP

USNPAAA Awards Presented to Deserving For Their Untiring Efforts to Support Us

Retired LCDR Alan Goldstein was given the Captain Thomas Coldwell Award for Significant Achievement. This very special award recognizes his achievements over 43 years of active duty and civilian service to the Navy and the Nation.



In addition to his excellent service as a journalist and then as a Public Affairs Officer, his work greatly benefited the Navy and advanced Public Affairs. After he retired in 1994, he pioneered the integration of new technology into the Navy PA program. As Assistant Chief of Information for Technology Integration he created

CHINFO's first website and earned the Navy Superior Civilian Service Award. His achievements were also recognized by the National Capital Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America when he was recognized for meritorious service as their worldwide web consultant. He was the first editor of the Association newsletter and has been its webmaster since 2004.

The Association presented its Exemplary Service Award to MC1 Waldemar Swobada, USN, leading Petty Officer for the Navy Public Affairs Support



Element East. He was recognized for his "superb leadership and attention to detail in leading a team of 38 Sailors in all facets of media operations." The award states that he ensured that each Sailor was ready in all respects to deploy in support of several worldwide contingencies and Navy operations that included: Hurricane Irene damage documentation;

Bataan Amphibious Group surge deployments;

Continuing Promise 2011; and Southern Seas 2011. He also demonstrated his manifold talents by acting as public affairs officer onboard USS Forrest Sherman, a position normally held by a junior officer, during operation Joint Warrior 2011.

The award also says that he acted with consummate skill, when he personally assisted the Navy Special Warfare Command in coordinating civilian media coverage of funerals of 30 service members." It also recognized his leading effort during New City Fleet Week in 2011, when he was responsible for producing quality public affairs products for this highly visible event."

The Distinguished Service Award went to four outstanding Directors of the Hampton roads offices of the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society. They are Captain Kathy Nelson USN (Ret.) Director of



the Norfolk office; Lolita Sheats, Director of the Oceana office; Christina Murray, Director of the Little Creek office; and Sarah Stewart, Director of the Portsmouth office.

They were recognized because, "they have shown incredible energy, boundless innovation and dedication to service above and beyond all expectations." They were

credited with providing \$6,900,000 in interest-free loans and grants to 16,000 Sailors and Marines and their families. And, this was done in 2010 alone, "by leading tireless teams of volunteers working long hours for a cause in which they believe."

The award cites their actions during Hurricane Irene when their offices stayed open during the storm's presence in Hampton Roads, seeing ten times their normal load during that stressful time. Overall, the award recognizes their distinguished service to the tens of thousands of Sailors, Marines and their families in Hampton Roads.

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“Admiral Nimitz” Authored by CAPT Brayton Harris

CAPT Brayton Harris has authored a new book simply entitled, “Admiral Nimitz.” It is a Macmillan publication set to be on bookshelves by Jan. 2, 2012.

According to Brayton, the book features Chester Nimitz as an admiral’s Admiral, considered by many to be the greatest naval leader of the last century. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, Nimitz assembled the forces, selected the leaders, and—as commander of all U.S. and Allied air, land, and sea forces in the Pacific Ocean—led the charge one island at a time, one battle at a time, toward victory.

Nimitz was there to accept, on behalf of the United States, the surrender of the Japanese aboard the battleship USS Missouri in August, 1945. In this first biography in over three decades, Brayton Harris uses long-overlooked files and recently declassified documents to bring to life one of America’s greatest wartime heroes.

Following are a few comments on the book: “In this fresh new biography, Brayton Harris puts flesh on the bones of an icon and shows us how and why Chester Nimitz became the irreplaceable leader—in both war and peace.”-- J. William Middendorf II, Secretary of the Navy

“The book, ‘Admiral Nimitz’ is a superbly written biography of one of the towering but least known heroes of World War II.”-- Carlo D’Este, author of Eisenhower and Patton.

“In the skilled hands of Brayton Harris, the biography of one of our nation’s greatest Naval leaders comes to life and jumps off the page as if you were reading stories about your own grandfather. Harris has a knack for finding the details, the anecdotes, that build a comprehensive portrait. Read it for the pure joy of getting to know Admiral Nimitz.”--Gregory A. Freeman, author of The Forgotten 500 and Troubled Water.

Editor’s note: As a junior PIO at the Twelfth Naval District (San Francisco) in the early 1960’s, I had almost daily contact with Admiral Nimitz and can say that he was brilliant but also a most humble and gracious person. **Bill Gengler**

CDR William Spann Heads International Association

The International Premium Cigar & Pipe Retailers Association based in Columbus, Georgia, has named association member William Spann as its new Chief Executive Officer.

Spann had served as chief of staff of the Florida Office of Financial Regulation and, as president and CEO of the Associated General Contractors of Greater Florida. He served as part of Governor Jeb Bush’s leadership team first as communications director and then chief of staff at the Florida Department of Children & Families.

He earned the rank of Commander during a 20 year career with the U.S. Navy. His final duty station was as Director of Communications for the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis.

With more than 2,000 members in the U.S. and 31 foreign countries, the International Premium Cigar & Pipe Retailers Association is the leading non-profit industry organization representing retailers, manufacturers and distributors of hand-made cigars, pipes and accessories.

CAPT Gordon Peterson Revisits the Rex Hotel



Although I was assigned to a helo gunship detachment of the Seawolves of HAL-3, I made a few visits to Saigon. The Rex Hotel held no special interest to me in those days, but when I visited the city in April, for the first time in 40 years, I knew there certainly were Det. C veterans in our Association who might like to see what it looks like today. **V/R Gordon**

CAPT Bill Stierman, USN (Ret) passed away at his home in Vienna, Va. in October.

He had a long and prestigious career in the PAO community. He was one of the top PAO leaders during the Vietnam War, serving as Director of Public Affairs at COMSEVENTHFLT Det. Charlie in Saigon, and as CINCPACFLT PAO. He is survived by his wife Lynne and daughter, Karen.

Bill graduated from OCS in 1953, and was stationed at Ninth Naval District when he applied for and became a public information officer in 1957. In 1965, as the Vietnam War heated up, he was stationed at COMPHIBPAC. He was then ordered to CINCPACFLT for a one-year period and sent TAD to Saigon to assist in gaining publicity for SEVENTH Fleet operations off Vietnam. Following that he was assigned as PAO at the Fifth Naval District (1966-1968).

He returned to Vietnam where he was Officer in Charge of SEVENTHFLT Det. Charlie in Saigon (May 1968-May 1969). He was awarded the Bronze Star for his service in Vietnam. When he was Head of News Division, Office of Information (1969-1971), CAPT Bill Thompson, then Deputy CHINFO, asked Stierman to design the first CHINFO "Coat of Arms."

Bill was then assigned as CINCPACFLT PAO at Pearl Harbor during the last years of the Vietnam War (1971-1977). In RADM Bill Thompson's memoir "GUMPTION", he recalled his first visit as a "frocked" Flag Officer to the Pacific Fleet and Hawaii. He was the guest of CAPT Bill Stierman who was CINCPACFLT PAO. CAPT Stierman hosted his staff PAOs and their wives at his home. His most significant remembrance from that evening was that Bill's daughters made him a two-star flag. They were in their early teens, but had picked up on their father's enthusiasm for a 1650 Flag Officer."

After the North Vietnamese Offensive in 1972, Bill had to ramp-up the old COMSEVENTHFLT Det. Charlie Public Affairs Operation in Saigon (which was then called Fleet Coordinating Group and headed by LCDR Erv Sharp).

Then, after his time in South Vietnam, Bill reorganized the WESTPAC Fleet PA Organization and created an upgraded COMSEVENTHFLT PA Detachment at Subic Bay. He was Deputy CHINFO (1977-1978), and then PAO at Naval Material Command (1978-1983). He retired in 1983.

RDML Brent Baker has some warm memories of his friend, dating back to the early 1970s when Stierman worked for a very demanding boss, ADM Bernard A. "Chick" Clarey, at CINCPACFLT. In February 1973, when the Navy began Mine Clearance Operations (Operation End Sweep) off Haiphong, North Vietnam, Clarey insisted that Bill personally handle the international public affairs issues. ADM Clarey held off any fitness report on Bill for three years, until the mine clearance operations were over and Clarey himself was detached from CINCPACFLT in September 1973.

The second thing I remember is a telephone call I received from Bill at my house in Coronado, CA in April 1972. I was then a LCDR and PAO for FIRST Fleet. The call came a day after the North Vietnamese started their major offensive on Easter. Bill was CINCPACFLT PAO. Bill said, "Brent, I need you to go back to Saigon and help Erv Sharp out. He needs immediate help and you already know the SEVENTHFLT operations. I replied, "I'm ready, just send a message to my boss," and he did. In 24-hours, I was on my way to Saigon. Bill always called you before he sent any official message that was his way of "checking in" and never surprising his fellow PAOs.

Association member CDR John Rohr passed away in Blacksburg, Virginia on August 10.

Retired Commander John Rohr joined the College of Architecture and Urban Studies at Virginia Tech in 1979 and received the title of Professor Emeritus



in 2008. This is where he contributed to the research and study of governance and policy administration, writing numerous articles and seven books. He also received the Dwight Wald Award from the American Society for Public Administration and the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and

Administration.

Commander Rohr received a bachelor degree from Loyola University of Chicago and graduate degrees from Loyola, Georgetown and the University of Chicago.



Jill Votaw - Dick Thompson



Friends welcome Mary Anne Coldwell



Ravitz and Whitney



The Noones



Carolyn Pape - Don Dvornik - Jerry Pape



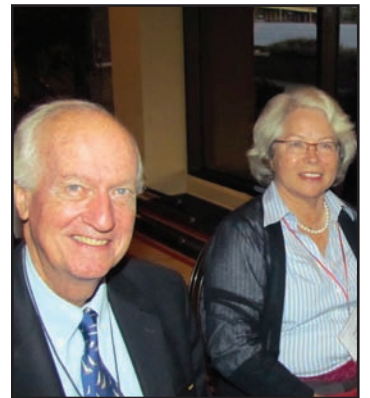
Jim Mathews - Chris Miller



Admirals Thompson-Smith



Host Bobby Lincoln Pouring Some Wine



The Whitneys



Thompsons - Genglers - and an Intruder



Marsha Nemer's Table



Santa Dave Woods



Tom and Diane Platenberg in a Crowd



Goldstein - Doubleday and the Hanleys



Bob Ancil



Dining with the Thompsons



Kay and Jim Finkelstein



Don Dvornik Parties



ADMs Pietropaoli, Thompson & Keating



Jim Mathews and Brian Gray



Cullin & snackers



Perry Bishop and Jim Mitchell

Miss the Reunion? Read This-- You Will Think You Were There

Friday evening at the traditional “Welcome Aboard” reception there were two pieces of business.

First, **President Steve Pietropaoli surprised guest Jack Dorsey** (retired “Virginian-Pilot” military reporter) by presenting him a certificate of “**Honorary Membership**” in the USNPAAA. He is the respected “Dean” of Tidewater Military reporters. He had accurately covered the Navy and U.S. military for three decades. He is only the fourth person to receive Honorary Membership in USNPAAA.

The second presentation involved remarks by RADM Greg Smith, USN (Ret) who recently returned from Afghanistan, where he headed all communication activities in the Afghanistan Theater from June 2009 to May 2011. Greg spent the last four years in three unique joint information positions.

Admiral Smith described how in early 2007 while serving in his first year as CHINFO, then CNO Mike Mullen, asked him to go over to Iraq for a few weeks to help the new Commander in Iraq, General David Petraeus sort out his public affairs efforts. He said General Petraeus passed “the word” before he even left that he didn’t need another three-week visit by “experts” to tell him what changes were needed. So, Greg knew in advance he would be in Iraq for at least three months.

He said his assessment to General Petraeus was pretty “straightforward” with 47 recommendations to implement within the Public Affairs division. General Petraeus not only accepted all of Greg’s findings, but also asked Admiral Mullen if he’d give up his CHINFO to “get to work and make this thing a reality.” Greg spent the next year leading the Iraq public affairs efforts, returning to the states in May 2008. Frank Thorp had taken over as the new CHINFO, so Greg had orders to the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD). All that changed days before he was due to report, with new orders to the U.S. Central Command in Tampa, where Petraeus was also ordered as the new commander.

In May 2009, Greg, “We were ready to finally retire. We had moved out of our house in Florida and were a few weeks from leaving CENTCOM. I had the business cards for my consulting firm I was going to start. Then, I got a call from Chairman Mullen

saying that the President had fired the Commander in Afghanistan and that General Stanley McChrystal was nominated as the new commander and that I was going to have my retirement orders cancelled and deploy with McChrystal.

Admiral Smith knew General McChrystal from his time in Iraq and in early June 2009, he boarded a plane with the General and headed for Afghanistan in. He said that McChrystal was full of energy, which engulfed the entire staff. There was a tremendous amount of change in the first few months and while he said it was a struggle to get the information assets they needed, he had the full backing of the Chairman, and Generals McChrystal and Petraeus.

Admiral Smith stated the Afghan people, not the government, the enemy or the United States and NATO were going to decide when this insurgency will be over. He stated that we can’t unlink what’s happening in Afghanistan with what’s happening in Pakistan. “Many of the religious schools in Pakistan teach young Afghan and Pakistan boys a “twisted” version of Islam.” And, he declared that the Taliban and other insurgent groups would be part of Afghanistan for years to come.

Regarding his PA mission in Afghanistan, he pointed out that he was not a staff position that reported to the Commander. Instead, he was the two-star Director of Communications, a peer to the other line functions, such as operations and intelligence. As such, he had a strong voice at the decision table, and had 190 military and civilian people on his staff.

Who was his primary audience? Admiral Smith said there were many audiences. Sometimes it was speaking to the enemy. “I was communicating to the enemy all the time.”

“We were trying to convince the Taliban they’re not going to win this war. Our guys did a great job. They became very educated about who the enemy was, often with the help of the Afghan people.”

Finally, Admiral Smith said, “We have to build understanding and support of the role of the military in advancing national policy. The communication must be clear on why our military is being used to further our interests overseas. Most Americans will accept it, despite the heavy costs of lives that is often the price of furtherance of national policy.”

On Saturday morning, **RDML Denny Moynihan, CHINFO**, gave a briefing on the state of Navy Public Affairs. He began by saying, "We walk in your footsteps." He said he felt like he was giving a report to shareholders.

He addressed a few issues that included Don't Ask, Don't Tell and the Budget. Regarding Don't Ask, Don't Tell he said that a lot of training went into getting ready for the policy change effective in September. Every sailor had to go through training and some communities, including public affairs, had special training. So far the change has come and gone, and for the young people this is not an issue at all.

And, he said that the Budget is the big issue and what the Navy will be like in the future is being debated. The admiral said, "The bottom line is that we are going to be dramatically different." "You will see things like deploying four ships to Rota, Spain, because we can no longer afford to keep all ships on the East coast and then transit back and forth. There is talk of stationing some ships in Singapore."

The admiral said, "We have been a military where the combatant commanders ask for assets and we always kept giving. I think we will turn to a supply driven military, where we say to the combatant commanders - here is what we have. The hard (budget) decisions will be made in the next six weeks or so."

In regard to CHINFO's refocus on the news media, he explained that younger Americans are not getting their information from the TV news. They are going to You-Tube.

He said, all the kids are texting their friends, so the production focus is now on new digital and social media products. The old print products are dead. For example, there is no printed "All Hands Magazine." "That was an efficiency that was levied on all the services by OSD. We also looked at all the people who produced a monthly Navy News Program. And, we looked at our sailors who were not watching a 30-minute television news program anymore. So what we have done is try to realign our resources better, so that they're in the environment where people are now. Where is that? It's a place like social media, with compelling content rather than long-form content. I've got to get things out fast. We are not going to lose the ability to write feature stories, for there will be a place for them on Navy dot.mil.

In regard to the PAO community, he reported that we are in good shape. The young officers are

better trained and have more experience than ever before. They are going on the deployments and the exercises two and three times during their assignment to Navy Public Affairs Support Element (NPASE). This is before they get to an aircraft carrier as PAO. It is no longer a "learn on the job or pickup game." Officer promotion zones are pretty tight. Senior officer retention is no longer a problem. There are still a lot of Individual Augmentees (IAs), but that number will go down.

The admiral mentioned the upcoming movie "Battleship." The story on battleship is that we all played the game as kids. So, Hasbro says to Universal Pictures, "Can you make a movie-we'll pay you \$200 million." Universal said, "You bet!" They have been on our ships and the movie will be out next May.

NAVINFO LA is working with Jerry Bruckheimer's studio on Top Gun II. The film is expected to be released in a few years.

And, he said, "The Navy is using Gallup Polling to learn what Americans think about the U.S. Navy." The data tells us they like the Navy, but they don't understand us. He said we have to dumb down our language so we put all of our messages on a card. What does the card say? "The Navy is important because 70 percent of the world is water. Eighty percent of the people live near that water." Those are the basic ways we have to talk to the American people."

CHINFO then introduced **MC Master Chief Priscilla Kirsh** who briefed on the state of the enlisted Mass Communications (MC) community. She said there are 1,216 enlisted MCs. Half of them are "hybrid MCs" meaning that they never were journalists or photographers. She said that they are all amazing and many have a degree.

But, just like in the officer ranks, MCs are staying in, so senior grade MC numbers are high and the Navy has to make room for the junior MCs to advance. So, some good sailors are being asked to go home, when their enlistments are up. MCs have to apply to stay and only the very best can stay, she said.

Master Chief Kirsh is going to schools and educator conferences telling people about MC opportunities in the Navy. CHINFO asked Association members who have contact with schools to tell them about MC opportunities.

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And the Good Briefings Continue to Amaze.....

Following the CHINFO presentations, three PAOs briefed on their organizations. The first was **CAPT Chris Sims, PAO, U.S. Fleet Forces Command (formerly known as CINCLANTFLT)**. He briefed on changes, including the merger of Second Fleet functions into U.S. Fleet Forces Command. He also talked about the reduced budget implications that affect public affairs. For example, he had a staff of 27 at Fleet Forces Command before the merger. He now has a total of 25 public affairs billets to handle the increased responsibilities.

Sims explained that US Fleet Forces Command staff is split into three sections. There is a three-star, in charge of joint operations, a two-star Chief of Staff who is in charge of fleet management, and a civilian senior executive service (SES) person who is in charge of fleet readiness.

Regarding the reduced budget, he cited the four destroyers going to Rota, Spain as an example of trying to save money. How many carriers are up for study? He said there is uncertainty out there and that the Navy can no longer say “Yes” to every request for assets. He stated that Fleet Forces Command owns the Individual Augmentee (IA) program and in the future, there will be fewer IAs. And he speculated that with reduced forward deployed forces, IAs might go away. The only 1650 IAs now deployed are in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Horn of Africa and Gitmo.

CDR Thurraya Kent, Commanding Officer of Navy Public Affairs Support Element (NPASE), said her command is the Navy’s only public affairs expeditionary organization (Active and Reserve). “We have 55 officers, 220 enlisted and 80 civilians, with detachments worldwide.” They have six-person sea “operational-detachments” used to augment deploying fleet units. Originally, the detachments went to the large unit, such as a carrier or major amphibious ship with one 1650 and five Mass Communication Specialists. Now the focus is training that DET team so that it can disaggregate. That is so MCs can be individually assigned to smaller units that may be sent on solo missions, such as anti-piracy.

She said, after the public affairs DETs return from a deployment, they remain as a unit for 60 days, so

if there is an emergency call, they are most ready to respond. For example in response to the 2010 Haiti earthquake, the DET that had just worked with the ships were sent back aboard the same ships for the humanitarian recovery operations.

After the Defense Information School, NPASE is the main Navy public affairs training command for officers and enlisted Mass Communication (MC) specialists. The PAO or E-5 or E-6 MC, who deploys to a unit knows how to provide a full-scope of products (including video) from the unit to the release point. One point made is that unclassified PA material is sent via e-mail. Unlike our sister service PAOs, Navy 1650s are trained to provide a full-service line of products including images and video.

The Fleet Hometown News Center is now a division of NPASE. It operates as it did before. As milestones happen during the deployment news releases are sent out. They also release stories on individual sailors when they are promoted or receive awards, etc. There are still branch information offices in Los Angeles and New York.

CDR Kim Marks, Director, Navy Office of Community Outreach in Millington, TN said her office works under the direction of CAPT Rob Newell, USN (Ret) in CHINFO. The office has five action officers (four LTs and one LCDR), four MCs and three civilians. They have an active aviation support program to coordinate requests for flyovers and the Navy Parachute Team. They work with the fleet on scheduling Navy units for Navy Week visits, etc. The office’s biggest program is Navy Week. The Navy hit 21 cities with Navy Week Programs this year. They also run a speaker’s bureau.

While measuring public affairs effectiveness is difficult, Outreach has contracts with Fleishman-Hillard and some other folks working on public impressions of the Navy and metrics. They have what is called “scorecard” which lists every message they are using at each Navy Week.

She pointed out in answer to questions, that the Fleet still works with NAVINFOs in New York and LA on Fleet Week, and the fleet works on major Navy visits, such as SEAFAIR in Seattle. They also work in areas where there is usually little or no Navy presence.

How do they decide where the 21 or so Navy Weeks are scheduled? They start planning 13-months out. They use data from the Navy Recruiting Command.

The programs go to areas where people do not realize the career opportunities in the Navy. The office links to various civic events that may already be going on. The 2012 Navy Week Schedule is being created now, and you are invited to help with suggestions, and by providing local contact points.

Saturday Luncheon: RADM Dave Thomas, USN, Commander Naval Surface Forces, Atlantic

He talked about why the Navy is always going to be in demand in the future. He said today the Navy is really busy. He recalled that when Admiral Miller was CINCLANTFLT in the 1990s, about 34 percent of the fleet was at sea. But, today, 58 percent of the fleet is at sea doing the nation's business.

So, he noted, the Navy is deployed forward today. "We've been involved in ground wars for over a decade. We are now drawing down from those ground combat theaters, so when troops can't be ashore you need to have that forward deployed combat presence at sea. The need for the Navy-Marine Corps Team will not decrease, and may even be greater in the future."

Admiral Thomas then gave a unique personal narrative of what the Navy "force for good" can and is doing. He cited his experience as a fleet commander, who was deployed on the ground in Haiti to coordinate logistics for the Haiti Relief Operations in 2010. He lived in a small tent pitched at the American Embassy compound. The one airport in Haiti was overwhelmed by relief response. They moved many of the planes to GITMO and re-loaded the relief supplies on smaller ships and brought the supplies ashore by helicopter. He pointed out that many of the Navy-Marine responders had just returned from long deployments, and re-boarded their ships and got underway to help the Haitian people. He said it was another example of the grit and dedication of Navy and Marine people.

To the Haitians, he said, one of the most visible ships was the white hospital ship USNS COMFORT. He described how the Haitian people were not looking for a handout, but wanted "a job." One young boy showed up with a bucket of soapy water, and wanted to give Admiral Thomas a "shoeshine." "He broke my heart," said the admiral. Needless to say, he agreed to several soapy "shoeshine's," and made sure the boy took the money to his mother.

Looking at challenges, he turned to the future. He said, "This is our time as leaders." He continued, "I'm up for the challenge. We will get through whatever the nation decides."

ADM Tim Keating, USN (Ret) former Commander of the Northern and Pacific Commands was the speaker at the Saturday Awards Dinner. He delivered a personal salute to the "service" of each individual, and praised the Navy Public Affairs professionals and those PAOs he had served with over the years.

He quoted Pulitzer Prize winning author Saul Bellow as saying, "We all need our memories. Memories keep the wolf of insignificance from our door." He cited Adm. Bill Thompson's book "Gumption" as an example of a life of important memories. He said, when you read the book, "You think about service, and you think about what it means to be a 1650."

The admiral admitted that as a young naval aviator, he didn't care much about public affairs. He said the last thing his generation wanted to do was to talk to the media. He simply didn't appreciate what Navy public affairs did. But later as a flag officer, he said, "I learned; I got religion." He recalled how he watched General Pete Pace (Vice Chairman, JCS) and General Myers (Chairman, JCS) as they "sought out the advice and depended upon well-educated, well-trained, well-versed public affairs professionals. It was not happenstance that those professionals were from the United States Navy," he stated. He cited several Navy PAOs with whom he worked including, Steve Pietropaoli, Frank Thorp, Jeff Alderson, and Craig Quigley. He said he was grateful to each and every public affairs professional.

Admiral Keating cited a key lesson he learned while dealing with public affairs challenges over his long career. He said, "You don't have to be very smart to be truthful. The folks who don't tell the truth need to be very smart because they have to remember the string of fabrications. But, if you're truthful you just have to remember one story. This is perhaps the most important thing I learned and observed from my dealings with all of you. To speak truth is power! There are times when it is uncomfortable. There are times when it is inconvenient." But, he said that the 1650s with whom he served always, always, always said, "You have to be truthful about it."

He ended, saying, "You have served and your memories are not insignificant. God bless you for your service, for what you have done for our nation and our Navy and God bless your families. Their sacrifices are beyond comprehension and we take them for granted a lot."

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