

CHILDREN CELEBRATE TR HOLIDAY PARTY

TR SAILORS ATTEND NY FUNDRAISER

USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT

ROUGH RIDER



Sailors Of The Year

Santa brings smiles, toys for TR's tots

Story and photo by MC3 Kimberly L. Romanowski

Lining up in front of the Naval Air Station Oceana's Youth Center Dec. 10, parents and their children eagerly entered USS Theodore

Roosevelt's (CVN 71) children's Holiday party. The temperature was in the low 50's with a bone-chilling wind and gloomy gray skies but the weather was ignored as the children tugged their parents through the front doors.

"The snow and the weather gives the Holiday party a wintery feel," said Capt. William J. Hart, Commanding Officer of TR, referring to the bubbles shooting from the bubble machines and blanketing the ground. "The children seem to be really enjoying themselves."

A line of impatient children waited wide-eyed and excited for their special moment with Santa. As he and Mrs. Claus arrived in a fire truck, the children ran forward giving him hugs and smiles.

"This year there are more activities for the children," said Hart. "The snow, hay rides, and pony rides put it way over the top, making it more special for the children and the families of the Theodore Roosevelt."

Parents watched fondly as

their children jumped around in bounce houses, giggled at the paint brushes moving over their faces and threw their arms into the air as they bowled their first strikes.

In addition to the many activities, every child was given a wrapped present as they arrived to the party. The presents were sorted by gender and age to ensure every child received a fitting gift.

"These toys were all donated to the TR from the Office of Personnel Management which held a fundraiser for the toys," said Holy Scheidt, TR's FunBoss.

The event was complete with a buffet full of many children's favorites including corn dogs, applesauce, cookies, cotton candy and much more.

"I'm having fun," said Julian Arias age 7, the child of Air Traffic Controller 2nd Class (AW) Juliel Arias assigned to Operations Department. "We just took pictures with Santa."

As some children were carried out sleeping in their parent's arms and others were pulled out screaming and demanding to stay longer, many of the parents agreed that the party was a great success.



Electrician's Mate 1st Class (AW/SW) Christopher Wright colors with his daughter Skylynn at USS Theodore Roosevelt's (CVN 71) Children's Holiday Party Dec. 10.



Polar Bear Classic

Story and photo by MC3 Sean Hurt

Sailors from USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71) participated in the 2nd Annual Polar Bear Winter Golf Tournament, sponsored by the TR Mustang Association (TRMA), at Riverside Golf Course in Suffolk, Va., Dec. 12.

Stepping out into 50-degree weather at 10 O'clock sharp, TR's Sailors braved the arctic-like winds to play what would be, for most of them, their final 18 holes of 2011.

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Fred G. Fisher, one of the organizers of the event, said that this year's event was just as fun as last year's, despite it not being held in the same place.

"We chose a new location this year," said Fisher. "We wanted to have some variety in our play so we went with a more upscale location."

The tournament was open to TR crewmembers, Supervisor of Shipbuilding, Newport News staff, and shipyard workers from Newport News Shipbuilding, a Division of Huntington Ingalls Industries, who took home first place.

The event was a great morale booster at a time when morale can be an issue for many Sailors who don't always get the chance to celebrate the holiday season the way they would like. The event also fosters communication between the junior and senior members of the ship.

"More people need to get involved," said Master Chief Logistics Specialist (SW/AW) Jean M. Heitzman, who was playing in her first Polar Bear Classic. "It's a way to bring the officer and enlisted communities together for those who may want to pursue a commissioned career path. It bridges that gap without skewing the lines [of propriety]."

The golf match was concluded with a much-needed hot barbecue lunch and presentation of awards. Awards were given for longest drive, closest-to-the-pin, and best overall team score. The best moment for a few lucky Sailors though was having their name called out during a raffle as an assortment of golf items were awarded.

The TRMA is already planning the 3rd Annual Polar Bear Classic, Fisher said, and plans to make it an annual winter event long into the future.



Master Chief Logistics Specialist (SW/AW) Jean M. Heitzman enjoys her first Polar Bear Classic at Riverside Golf Course in Suffolk, Va. Dec. 12.

TR raises the bar on PT

Story by MC3 Jon Donnelly

The current Physical Fitness Assessment (PFA) results show that many USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71) Sailors have been living a healthy lifestyle and taking the necessary steps to meet those standards regardless of the challenges.

As a command, TR accomplished a pass rate of 92.5% this PFA cycle compared to last cycle's 87%.

"It was a collective effort," said Logistics Specialist 1st Class (SW) Alhaji M. Kabba, TR's Fitness Enhancement Program (FEP) Administrator and Assistant Command Fitness Leader (ACFL). "Effective leadership was critical to the success of our program."

TR went from a 10% failure rate last cycle to 7.5% this cycle.

"We changed the culture of fitness in the command," said Kabba. "We identified our areas of weakness with regard to specific components of fitness and modified our program to correct those weaknesses."

Many departments saw the success of taking an aggressive approach towards enhancing their department's PRT scores.

Cmdr. John Hughes, TR's Combat Systems Officer, implemented a mandatory departmental PT two times a week while allowing the muster report to be open to the entire department. He also challenged his Sailors to meet or exceed the CO's physical fitness standards. He offered 72-hour liberty for his Sailors who achieved an outstanding PRT score and 24-Hour liberty for those who im-

proved from good to excellent.

Combat systems increased its number of Excellent and Outstanding PRT scores and significantly reduced the number of BCA and PRT failures, successfully completing the cycle with zero E-6 failures.

Hughes attributes the positive results to providing intrusive positive leadership and individual counseling as well as using all available resources.

As TR moves through the Holiday season, Sailors are being encouraged to utilize many new resources provided by the Command FitBoss to include a Nutritional Bootcamp and Step Aerobics. Many departments are already looking to improve their PFA numbers once again come spring to not only better the command but to also better themselves.

Theodore Roosevelt's Sailors Of



The USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71) Junior Sailor of the Year is Electronics Technician (SW/AW) Joel Cureton from the Combat Systems Department CS-6 division.

Cureton, a Dyersburg, Tenn., native, has only been assigned to the TR since May 2010 and to receive this honor is a testament to his hard work.

"I was very grateful when I found out I was selected as Junior Sailor of the Year," said Cureton. "I felt like all of the hard work and long hours I put in was noticed."

Cureton is the Combat Systems Hab Team leading petty officer and CS-6 division assistant leading petty officer.

Cureton has received his associate's degree in applied science and is only seven classes away from receiving his bachelor's degree in business management. In his spare time, he plays guitar in a local band.

Cureton has some advice for Sailors who want to be Junior Sailor of the Year next year.

"Know your job and do what is expected of you without having to be told," said Cureton. "Look at your boss' job and do whatever you can to make their job easier."



The USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71) Bluejacket of the Year is Electrician's Mate 2nd Class (AW/SW) Ronnie Williams from Air Department's V-2 division.

Williams is from Chicago, Ill., and enlisted in the Navy in March 2008.

Williams reported to TR in November 2008.

"I was shocked, thrilled, and honored all at the same time when I heard I was Bluejacket of the Year," said Williams.

Williams is the visual landing aids (VLA) leading petty officer. He manages the maintenance and installation of all integrated launch and recovery television systems (ILARTS), improved Fresnel lens optical landing systems (IFLOLS), flight deck lighting, and systems components.

"I believe I was selected as Bluejacket of the Year because of all the hard work the VLA personnel completed that made our division stand out," said Williams. "I take the extra initiative and always put the division before myself."

He is also a divisional command fitness leader, fitness enhancement program coordinator, and recently joined the second class petty officer association after being capped at the holiday party.

"My goal is to make sure everybody in VLA is dual warfare qualified," said Williams. "If you stay focused and motivated with the tasks at hand then success will definitely come your way."

The Year



The USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71) Sailor of the Year is Aircrew Survival Equipmentman (AW/SW) Jason Etheridge from the Aircraft Intermediate Maintenance Department (AIMD) IM-2 division.

Etheridge is from Monroe, La. and he enlisted in the Navy in March 2000.

Etheridge reported to TR in Sept. 2010.

"I was honored and extremely humbled to receive such a prestigious award," said Etheridge. "I am still in shock that my name is listed under USS Theodore Roosevelt Sailor of the Year."

Etheridge is the Light Industrial Support Facility (LIFAC) leading petty officer and he manages the day to day operations of LIFAC in the repair and refurbishment of various shipboard assets.

"I'm not really sure what set me apart from the other outstanding 1st classes on board," said Etheridge. "I just try to come to work, get the job done, and be a positive influence to the Sailors I work with."

Etheridge is president of the First Class Petty Officer Association, EAWS Board Director, and an enlisted section leader.

"I advise all Sailors don't sweat the small stuff that can strip your motivation daily," said Etheridge. "Do the best you can to stay positive in all endeavors, and above all take care of your Sailors."

The USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71) Rough Rider of the Year is Cryptologic Technician (Technical) Seaman (SW/AW) Nicole Thompson from Operations Department's OS division.

Thompson is from Fredericksburg, Va. and she enlisted in the Navy in Oct. 2009.

"I wanted to join the Navy to support my family and start my career," said Thompson.

When Thompson reported to TR in Aug. 2010 she immediately began impressing her chain of command with her hard work and determination to be a well rounded Sailor.

"I felt honored when I was selected as Rough Rider of the Year," said Thompson. "I always try to learn and keep up to date with any information related to the Navy and my rate and it paid off."

Thompson is on the TR honor guard and soccer team. She enjoys spending time with her husband and son in her spare time and focusing on getting her associate's degree.

"If you do your best to be a team player and not always look at yourself first the chain of command will notice," said Thompson.



Fundraiser in NY

TR Sailors attend Manhattan soiree

Story and photo by MC3 Sean Hurt

Sailors stationed aboard USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71) attended a fundraiser for the Theodore Roosevelt Association's Teddy Bears for Kids Campaign Dec. 1 at The Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace Home in Manhattan.

Members and donors of the Theodore Roosevelt Association attended the event.

The Sailors were given the opportunity to speak about the Rough Riders Motorcycle Group's Teddy Bear ride in September when the group rode from Newport News to the Children's Hospital of the King's Daughters in Norfolk to deliver more than 80 teddy bears to children.

"It means a lot to see the crew come to our events," said Terry Brown, Executive Director of the TRA. "It helps create a tangible connection for many of our members between the life and history of Theodore Roosevelt and one of his greatest modern namesakes."

The motorcycle ride was a large topic of the night with many donors praising the idea of a motorcycle delivery.

"I think it's brilliant," said Brown. "It wasn't a gimmick. This was real."

One of the sailors at the event, Fire Controlman 2nd Class (SW/AW) Jennifer Jones, had toys delivered to her children when they were sick and said it was an amazing feeling.

"I don't really do the whole 'Harley' thing," said Jones, a member of the TR motorcycle group, "but it is nice to see our big tough teddy bears handing out little soft teddy bears to kids."

The sailors agreed that the opportunity to attend the fundraiser was very special.

"I love to volunteer and give back to the community," said Aviation Maintenance Administrationman 3rd Class (AW/SW) George S. Clarke. "When they told me I had the chance to do both, I jumped at it."

"I feel blessed that I could take part in something like this" said IC2 (SW/AW) Rosalyn Bryant. "I am going to recruiting duty in a few months and I plan on getting a program like this up

and running when I get there."

Brown encourages all sailors to get involved with helping children in their area.

"There are more than 200,000 beds in children's hospitals across the country," said Brown, "That's more than 200,000 kids at their weakest, most vulnerable moments who we can help. That's what this program is about."

The Rough Riders Motorcycle group plans to do another ride in 2012.



Interior Communications Electrician 2nd Class (SW/AW) Rosalyn Bryant and Aviation Maintenance Administrationman 3rd Class (AW/SW) George S. Clarke from USS Theodore Roosevelt are interviewed by Terry Brown, Executive Director of the Theodore Roosevelt Association in New York Dec. 1.



Photo Find by MC2 (EXW) Joey Morgon

Photo Find

Can you find the 9 out of place items in this photo?

1. Broom 2. Nail 3. Pencil
4. Quarter 5. Mouse 6. Batman
7. Basketball 8. Pirate Hat 9. TR the man

TR's Honor Guard retires the colors during Ensign Jones commissioning ceremony Dec. 1 at Huntington Hall Gym.

Photo by MC3 Cory Asato

TR Sailors give gold star families Gold star reception

Story by LS3 William G. McCann

USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71) Sailors greeted Gold Star families at Norfolk International Airport in Norfolk, Va. Tuesday who were returning from an all expenses paid trip to Dallas as part of the Snowball Express Event.

Gold Star families are the spouses and children of servicemembers who died or were killed while serving in the armed forces.

The Snowball Express is a charity organization formed for the sole mission of supporting the children and families of servicemembers who have lost their lives in the line of duty. According to their Web site, www.snowballexpress.org, the Snowball Express began in 2006 to help give hope and new memories to the children of fallen military heroes who died while on active duty since Sept. 11, 2001.

“The children greeted us with wide smiles and excitement while getting off the plane,” said Interior Communications Electrician 2nd Class (SW/AW) Erica Tapia. “The event seemed to make a positive impact on the children and their families.”

Sailors from around the Navy and Virginia’s 5th District Patriot Guard, a National organization that supports the families of servicemembers who have fallen in action, stood alongside TR Sailors to honor the returning families.

“We participate in this event to honor the fallen themselves and their children, which are their legacies,” said Becca “Lady Harley” Landick, Assistant State Captain of Virginia’s 5th District Patriot Guard. “We’ve attended their parent and spouse’s funerals, so it means a lot

to them to see us there welcoming them home.”

This year the organization flew 1500 families to Dallas to get exclusive treatment at several venues around the area, including a concert by Gary Sinise and the Lt. Dan Band.

“We kept them busy from the early dark of the morning until late at night,” said Landick. “This whole event is a great way to cheer these families up during the holiday season.”

The interactions with the families also impacted TR Sailors.

“It is great to see what people will do to help out my family when I am deployed,” said Tapia. “It also puts me at ease to know that there are people who will take care of my family if something was to happen to me.”



Top photo by LS3 William G. McCann

Master-at-Arms 2nd Class (SW) Berenice Mack, from the USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71) Second Class Petty Officer Association, shakes hands while greeting Gold Star families returning from Dallas at Norfolk International Airport in Norfolk during this year’s Snowball Express event Tuesday.

Bottom photo by MC3 Christopher Church

Interior Communications Electrician 2nd Class (SW/AW) Erica Tapia, from the USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71) Second Class Petty Officer Association, hands flags to children while greeting Gold Star families returning from Dallas at Norfolk International Airport in Norfolk during this year’s Snowball Express event Tuesday.

Photo of the Week



Adm. David Miller (Ret.) walks through side boys during a tour on the USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71) regarding its progress during Refueling Complex Overhaul (RCOH).

Photo by MCSN Andrew Sulayao

Staff

Commanding Officer

Capt.
William Hart

Executive Officer

Capt.
Douglas Verissimo

Public Affairs Officer

Lt. Cmdr. Karen Eifert

Media Officer

Ensign Michael Larson

Senior Editor

MCCS (SW/AW/EXW)
David Collins

Editor

MC2 (SW/EXW) Joshua
Bruns

Layout & Design

MC3 (SW) Sean Weir

Rough Rider Contributors

MC2 (EXW) Joey Morgon
MC2 Christopher Church
MC3 Tyrell Morris
MC3 Sean Hurt
MC3 Jon Donnelly
MC3 Corey Asato
MC3 Kimberly Romanowski
LS3 William McCann
MCSN Andrew Sulayao

Command Ombudsman

April Kumley
cvn71ombudsman@yahoo.com

The Rough Rider is an authorized publication for the crew of USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71).

Contents herein are not necessarily the views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government, Department of Defense, Department of the Navy or the Commanding Officer of TR.

All items for publication in the Rough Rider must be submitted to the editor no later than three days prior to publication.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

From TR

Blood Drive

Who: TR's Medical Dept. and Naval Medical Center Portsmouth

When: Jan. 11, 8:30 a.m. to 12:30

Where: Huntington Hall

One pint of blood will be drawn from each donator. The goal of the drive is to have 150 TR Sailors donate blood to be stored in the blood bank at NMCP for patient treatment throughout the Navy and Red Cross. Transportation will be provided between the turn-style and Huntington Hall. Every donator is given a 24-hour special liberty to be used at the department's discretion.

"It's a great way to save someone's life." - HM2 Marcia Baker