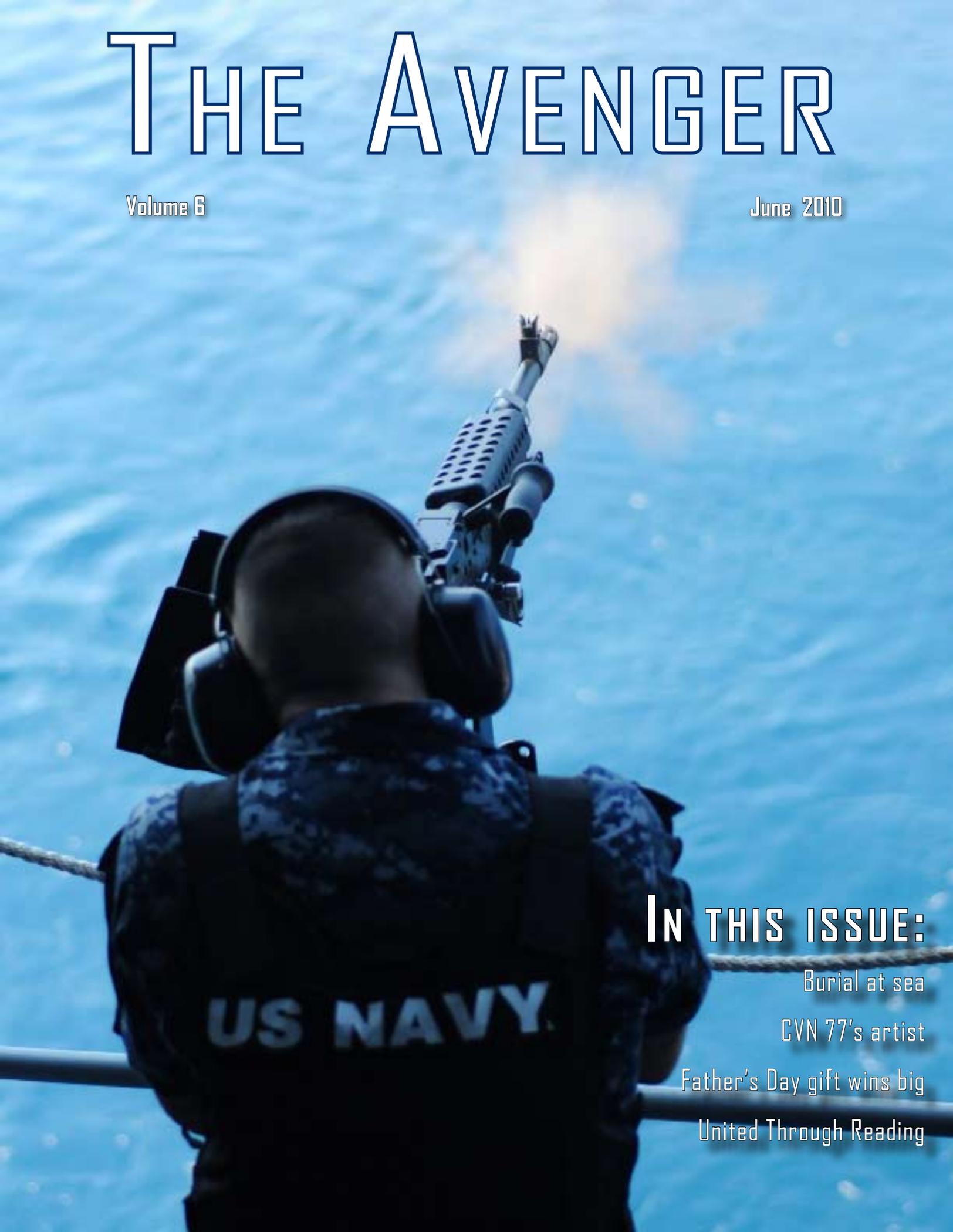


# THE AVENGER

Volume 6

June 2010



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United Through Reading

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Master-at-Arms 2nd Class Donald W. Livingston, assigned to Operations Department's Security Division, fires an M240 on the fantail June 19. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Leonard Adams)

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Looking for our Web site?

It's changed. Please find us here:

[up-www.01.fcc.navy.mil/cvn77/](http://www.01.fcc.navy.mil/cvn77/)



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## From the Commanding Officer



Fellow Avengers,

Let me begin by thanking you for your continued hard work and dedication to professionalism, I assure you it is very apparent.

I am immensely proud of every USS GEORGE H.W. BUSH (CVN 77) Sailor and your outstanding performance during our two weeks at sea. In a 16-day underway period, we successfully completed three major evolutions that contrib-

uted significantly to overall operational readiness and better prepared us for our first-ever combat deployment.

To recap, during the first part of this underway we conducted flight operations; qualifying pilots and gaining invaluable experience for our flight deck personnel and all those involved with flight operations. The second evolution was the ship's first Operational Reactor Safeguard Examination (ORSE), which the Reactor Department handled with expertise, even prompting Commander, United States Fleet Forces, Adm. J. C. Harvey, Jr. to personally congratulate the entire department for their efforts. Finally, the at-sea period concluded with the first launch of our Evolved NATO Sea Sparrow and Rolling Airframe Missile systems, a huge success that involved Combat Systems, Operations and Weapons Departments.

Not only did we successfully complete these major milestones, we met them head-on and surpassed all expectations, greatly adding to the already pristine reputation of this command. Additionally throughout these evolutions we seamlessly continued day-to-day operations and aggressively conducted ship-wide training evolutions such as gun shoots, General Quarters, RHIB operations, underway replenishment, anchoring, and mass casualty drills; all safely and with precision.

I'd like to congratulate all of our newly-pinned warfare specialists. More than 200 Sailors received either their ESWS or EAWS pins during Tuesday's pinning ceremony, and for many of them it was their second pin. I cannot stress how important it is to earn these warfare qualifications. They give credibility to a motivated and professional team and are the marks of true subject matter experts. It is the goal of USS GEORGE H.W. BUSH (CVN 77) to have every member of this crew dual warfare-qualified.

Among other notable firsts for the command was our highly successful Bingo night and Captain's Call, both of which were met with enormously positive reception. Thank you to MWR and the Media Department for all of your efforts in those evolutions.



Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Brent Thacker

Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Handling) 1st Class (AW/SW) Jamorn Driver pins Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Handling) Airman (AW) Richard Martinez

All of these tremendous accomplishments are getting us that much closer to and prepared for this aircraft carrier's maiden combat deployment next spring.

I'd also like to thank all of our friends and family for their continuous support. Our Ombudsmen and Family Readiness Group are without equal. Without them none of our achievements would be possible. That being said, as you enjoy well deserved liberty, please take the opportunity to show your appreciation to your loved ones by ensuring that all aspects of your family and home life are squared away. Family readiness is a cornerstone for operational and personal success.

On the subject of taking time off, I encourage you to have an enjoyable, but most importantly a safe Fourth of July. This patriotic holiday is one to be enjoyed with fun, friends and family, not mistakes and fool-hardy danger. Keep in mind we are now in the midst of the 100 deadliest days of summer and we cannot afford to lose a shipmate because of an accident that could be easily avoided. Remember to ORM your activities and that one drink equals do not drive!

Thank you again for your outstanding efforts that make USS GEORGE H.W. BUSH (CVN 77) the greatest team and warship ever assembled. It is truly inspiring to think about our accomplishments and exciting to prepare for the challenges and opportunities that await.

Sincerely,  
Capt. Chip Miller  
Commanding Officer

# Sailor bids final farewell to father, shipmate

Story by MCSN Sandi Grimnes  
Photo by MC3 Brent Thacker

**A** Sailor aboard USS GEORGE H.W. BUSH (CVN 77) stood at attention and watched the chaplain commit the ashes of a Navy veteran into the Atlantic Ocean, June 9. A burial at sea is a somber ceremony, but for Machinist's Mate 1<sup>st</sup> Class (SW/AW) Wesley Hatley, this was more than just honoring a fellow shipmate; he was honoring his father.

Engineman Fireman Carl Dean Hatley Jr., Hatley's father, joined the U.S. Navy in 1965 and served on the minesweeper USS PERSISTENT (MSO 491) during the Vietnam War. During his service Hatley Jr. was awarded many medals, including three Bronze Stars for Valor.

Hatley, the leading petty officer of the air conditioning and refrigeration (AC/R) shop, followed in his father's footsteps and joined the Navy in 1986. When he took over the AC/R



shop, he essentially continued his father's legacy, which he said made his father very proud.

Hatley Jr. passed away Nov. 6, 2009, in Hubbard, Texas. His family had a memorial service for him on Veteran's Day, then placed his remains in the places they thought would mean the most to him, Hatley said. Part of his ashes were buried in the family plot in Texas; around his deer hunting stand and campfire; in his back yard around his car collection; and the rest were buried at sea.

"I thought it was the highest honor I could bestow on him as a shipmate, as a Sailor and as a son," Hatley said. "He was very proud of his naval service. He served four years. He did two tours in Vietnam and was extremely proud of it."

The urn that held his remains for the burial at sea was a 40 mm shell casing used on board PERSISTENT during the Vietnam War.

In line with naval tradition, 21 shots were fired rendering honors to the deceased, said Command Chaplain Cmdr. Cameron Fish. After honors were rendered, three shell casings representing each volley were placed in a folded flag, which was then presented to Commanding Officer Capt. Chip Miller.

It is rare for a family member to be on board during a committal, which is why this ceremony was so special and why the Captain wanted to present the flag directly to Hatley, Fish said.

A burial at sea is a service the Navy offers all Sailors who serve honorably, when it does

not interfere with the operational schedule of the carrier, Fish said. On behalf of the Navy and the President, the ship is honoring the service of those who have gone before. The Navy tries to communicate through a dignified ceremony and time-honored traditions respect, and offer thanksgiving to those who have served, he said.

When Hatley's family found out that there was to be a burial-at-sea ceremony that would be documented with a video and pictures along with a chart with the coordinates of the committal, they were astounded and proud of what the Navy was going to do, Hatley said.

"It was the best thing we could have done in honoring not only his service, but every Sailor's service throughout the Navy," Hatley said. "We may be casting his ashes, but really we are casting all our ashes because we all become tied together as one for that one instance."†



# PAINTING

Story by MCSA  
Michael Smevog  
Layout by Avenger Staff

Just like the Navy's diverse mix of culture and ethnic backgrounds, murals painted throughout USS GEORGE H.W. BUSH (CVN 77) provide a vibrant and colorful work place.

Though each of the paintings could be worth hundreds of dollars, Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Handling) 2nd Class (AW) Eli Granado, of GEORGE H.W. BUSH Air Department, doesn't ask for much more than a couple of energy drinks to share his gift with his shipmates.

"It gives me pride to be able to leave something behind when I leave in about three years," Granado said.

Granado has spent more than 200 hours painting doors, walls, equipment lockers, and jerseys in almost every department around

the ship. He spends several hours on larger doors, and one or two hours on smaller projects.

Before joining the Navy in November of 2001, Granado attended an art school in Minnesota, but was unable to complete the course. He is now enrolled in drafting and design courses through ITT Technical Institute, he said.

A senior Air Department Sailor saw Granado's work at a previous command, and encouraged the San

Antonio native to bring his talents to the pre-commissioning unit.

"It's always a good thing to raise morale around the ship," Granado said.

Granado explained that his paintings raise work ethic and morale by helping Sailors to take pride in their spaces. The Sailors show more appreciation and see it as more than "just a regular door," he added.

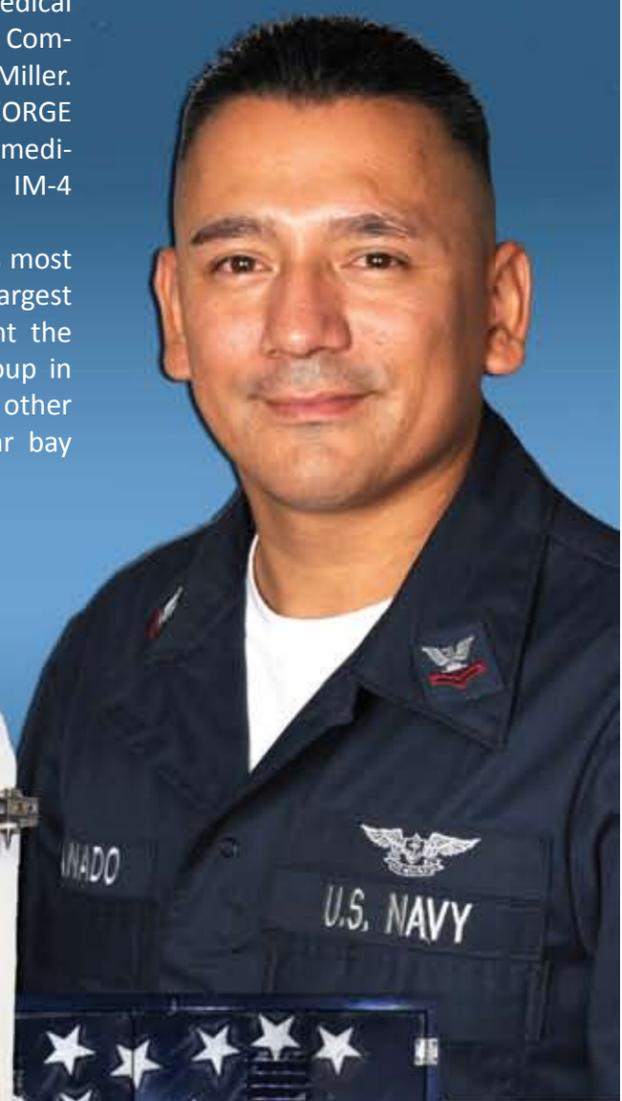
Some of his paintings are based off pictures provided to him, he said.

"When I actually have to come up with some ideas, I do my research and try to present a plan with a couple of sketches that they like, and we go from there," he said.

Granado said that he is waiting for approval to begin painting hangar bay doors, and is also working on three other projects. Those include conflagration stations, jerseys for Medical Department, and jerseys for Commanding Officer Capt. "Chip" Miller. His favorite project aboard GEORGE H.W. BUSH is the Aircraft Intermediate Maintenance Department IM-4 divisional doors.

Granado explained that he is most excited about his next and largest project yet. He plans to paint the GEORGE H.W. BUSH Strike Group in formation, along with a few other aircraft carriers, on the hangar bay doors.

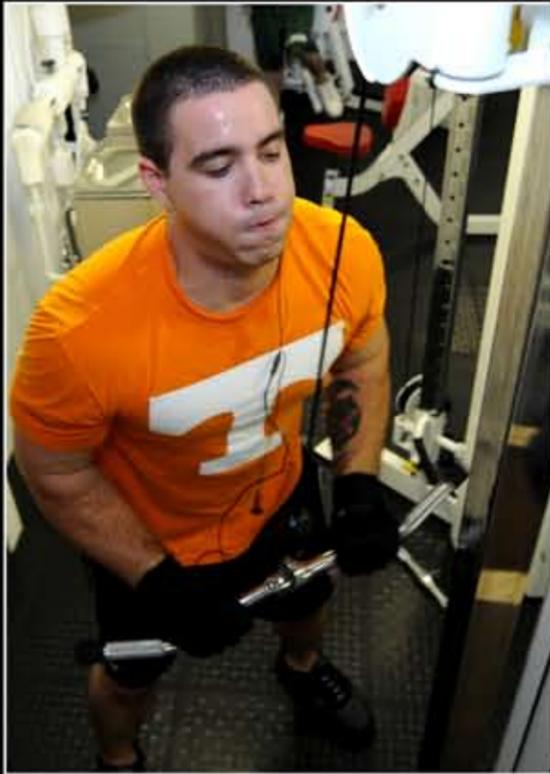
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# Morale, Welfare and Recreation

MWR sponsors multiple activities while USS George H.W. Bush is underway and pier side.

Photos and  
Layout By  
MCSN Kevin  
J. Steinberg



# The Art of Father's Day

Story and layout by MCSN J. Scott St. Clair



The child of a USS GEORGE H.W. BUSH (CVN 77) Sailor recently won the Newport News/Williamsburg International Airport/USO Wall Wrap Art contest, May 20.

Master-at-Arms 2<sup>nd</sup> Class (SW/AW) Brian Wright's daughter, Gabrielle, a fourth-grader at Yorktown Elementary Math and Science Magnet School, was selected over more than 150 other competitors, grades kindergarten through 12, from York and surrounding counties, with a painting of the aircraft carrier on which her father serves.

Gabrielle's artwork will be digitally reproduced and enlarged to be displayed on the walls of the newly-renovated USO center in the airport, and will be presented in an unveiling ceremony at the grand opening, June 16.

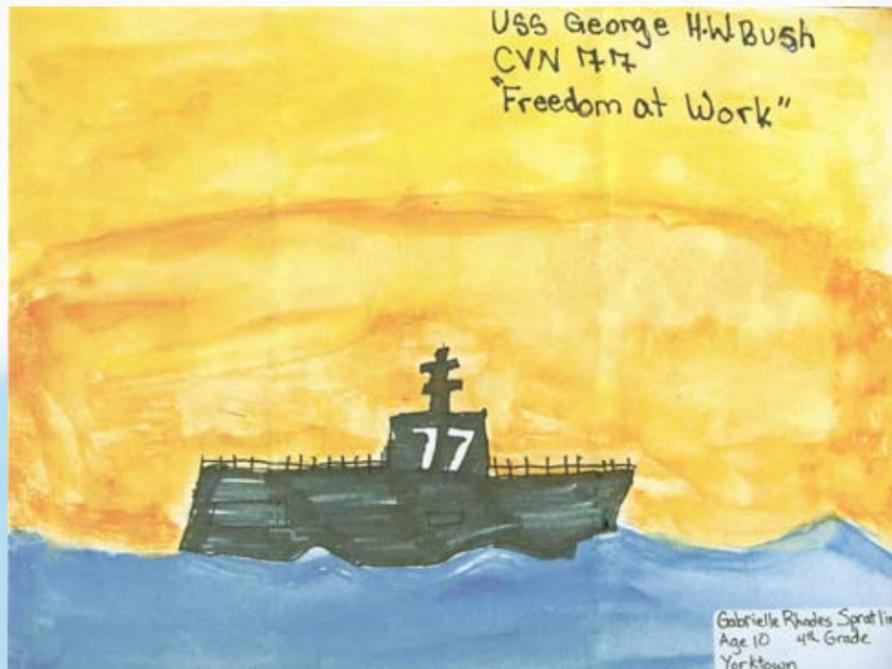
According to Wright, a security force instructor, the painting was originally intended to be surprise Father's Day gift.

"She was actually disappointed that she won, because it ruined the surprise," he laughed.

Although Wright is extremely

proud of his daughter's achievement, he said the true gift was the thought that went into the artwork.

"I'm very surprised and proud of her thought and hard work," he said. "I'm overwhelmed with joy. It makes me proud like no other gift could,



but having her win the contest is just a plus. The best part is the meaning behind a homemade gift to a dad."

In addition to the pride he has in his daughter, Wright also acknowledged the inspiration that went along with having a symbol of the aircraft carrier on display for so many to see.

"Our 90,000 tons of diplomacy will hang in this airport for quite some time," he said. "I'm proud, not only that it's my daughter's artwork, but that it will show a Navy ship at sea,

symbolizing our motto of 'Freedom at Work' for so many civilians to see. Such a display in an international airport will be seen by the thousands that fly every day and could inspire others artistically or even inspire them to serve their country."

Senior Chief Master-at-Arms (SW/AW) Kevin M. Curtis, command assistant security officer and Wright's leading chief petty officer, offered his congratulations to Wright, Gabrielle and their family.

"We are so proud of Gabrielle," he said. "She and her family represent the best of the USS GEORGE H.W. BUSH and Security Division family. Their accomplishment

brings us great pride and honor, courage, and commitment to continue to protect our great country and all her assets around the world."

According to Wright, Gabrielle's recent visit on board the aircraft carrier left quite an impression on her, inspiring her to set goals to one day become a doctor in the military.

"It's been an overwhelming experience," he said. "It inspires me that she was so inspired." †

# George H.W. Bush begins United Through Reading program

By MC3 (SW/AW) Dominique Moore

To participate in the United Through Reading program on board CVN 77, contact Religious Program Specialist 3rd Class Liza Riojas at J-Dial 5431. DVDs are provided and a collection of more than 500 children's books are available to pick from. †

Sailors stationed aboard USS GEORGE H.W. BUSH (CVN 77) expecting to deploy in the near future are now able to communicate with family back home with the ship's United Through Reading program, which officially began May 17.

The United Through Reading Military Program is a public benefit organization that was founded in 1989 to help ease the stress of separation for military families by providing deployed service members the opportunity to read children's books aloud via DVD for their children, nieces and nephews or other relatives to watch at home.

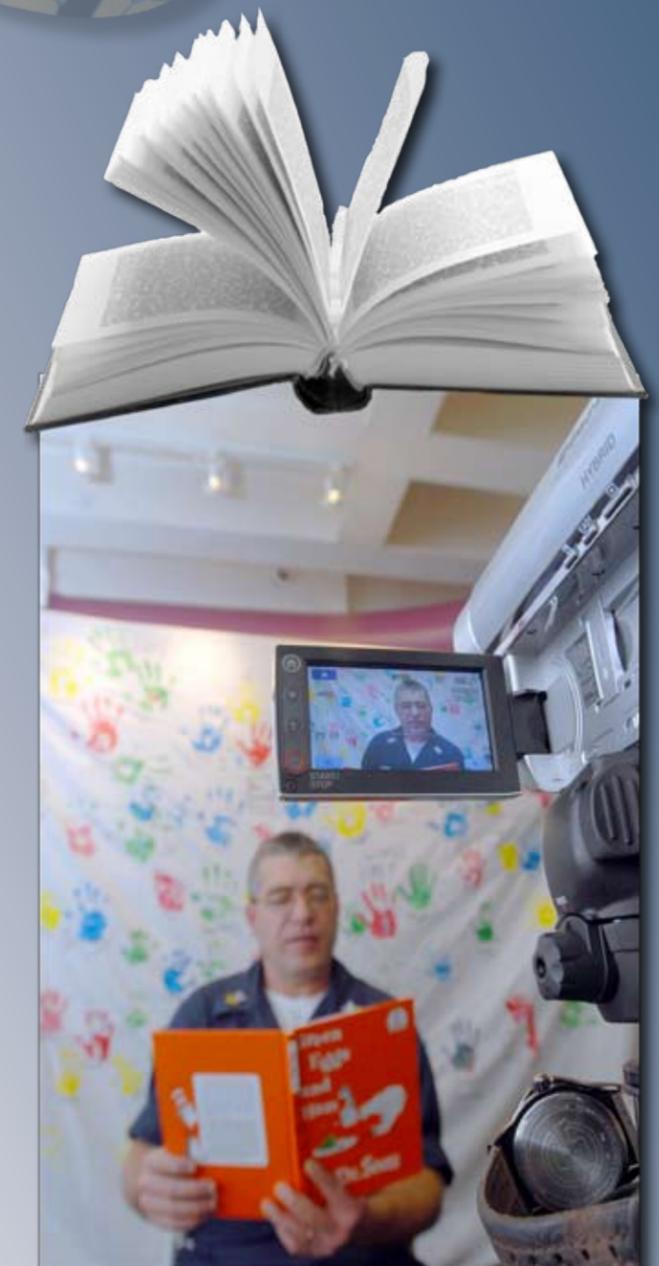
The mission of the United Through Reading program, run by the Command Religious Ministries Department on board, is to unite families facing physical separation by facilitating the bonding experience of reading aloud together.

"One of the drawbacks of being in the military is that we are constantly away from our families," said GEORGE H.W. BUSH Command Chaplain, Cmdr. Cameron Fish. "But programs such as United Through Reading allow service members to stay connected with their families."

The program is set up in the library. The service member is recorded reading a book on video and sends the DVD home to the child. The child at home then watches the DVD and follows along with the book if available. An optional step is for the parent or guardian at home to capture the child's reaction to the DVD in a photo or e-mail and send it to the service member. The goal is not only that the service member's morale is boosted by the feedback, but that he or she will want to take part in the program again.

"This is a very beneficial program because it's important for Sailors to still be able to communicate with their families when deployed," said Chief Religious Programs Specialist (SW/AW) Eddie Williams. "But it's just as important that the family be able to stay in contact with the Sailor, it helps put their mind at ease knowing their loved one is safe."

This program is available to all deploying military units and at select USO locations.





# CVN 77's first missile launch is a hit

Photo by MC3 (SW) Class Nicholas Hall

A NATO Sea Sparrow missile launches, completing Combat Systems Ship Qualification Trials June 23.

By MCSN J. Scott St.Clair

**U**SS GEORGE H.W. BUSH (CVN 77) successfully fired two Evolved NATO Sea Sparrow missiles and two Rolling Airframe Missiles (RAM) for the first time, to conclude its first Combat Systems Ship's Qualification Trials (CSSQT), June 23.

CSSQT is part of the series of qualifications and certifications the aircraft carrier must undergo in preparation for her upcoming maiden deployment.

According to Combat Systems Officer Cmdr. John B. Vliet, CSSQT is a combined effort between the Combat Systems, Operations and Weapons Departments to test the aircraft carrier's self-defense systems.

"It's an end-to-end testing of the Combat Systems Suite, to include tactics, techniques, and procedures," Vliet said. "It's an operational verification of the ship's warfighting and self-defense capabilities. Combat Systems with

Operations Department has worked around the clock for the last six months, grooming equipment and training for this exercise. More than 200 personnel have directly or indirectly supported this evolution."

Of those 200-plus personnel, two of the most directly involved were Fire Controlman 2nd Class (SW/AW) Ezekiel S. Ramirez, work center supervisor for the Evolved NATO Sea Sparrow Surface Missile System, and Fire Controlman 2nd Class (SW/AW) Ryan P. McWilliams, work center supervisor for the RAM system.

The Evolved NATO Sea Sparrow missile is a semi-active missile that requires feed from directors to locate its target, and the RAM is a passive missile, meaning the missile uses built-in sensors to home in on targets. All of the missiles used during the launch were telemetry missiles, which are live missiles that

have the warheads replaced with data recovery technology used to gauge accuracy.

Ramirez and McWilliams, on board experts for the missile systems, said that the launch was the culmination of months of hard work and preparation that included more than 40 maintenance checks, going aloft to fix radar, multiple pre-fire checks, and 21 "detect-to-engage" pre-fire drills.

"We've been preparing for this evolution ever since the ship left the shipyard and we took ownership of the system, getting it ready for this shoot," said McWilliams. "This was one of the hardest evolutions Combat Systems Department will have to do during the existence of this aircraft carrier."

Prior to the launch Ramirez and McWilliams were responsible for loading the two launchers for each system, a task all on its own.

"The NATO Sea Sparrow Missile system holds eight missiles in each launcher and the RAM uses 21 missiles in each launcher," said Ramirez. "It's a lot of work for one launch, but when we deploy we will have to load a total of 58 missiles."

Ramirez stressed the significance of the successful missile fire, what it meant for the entire command, and for the small group of 14 Sailors directly involved with operation of the missile systems.

"It's a pretty big accomplishment," he said. "We are the aircraft carrier's first and last line of defense. This test is the way we prove that the self-defense systems work. We're finally doing our job."

Directing the crew in the Combat Direction Center (CDC) were the Blue and Gold team Tactical Action Officers (TAO), Lt. Chris Caton and Lt. Jeff Moen of the Operations Department. The CDC Officer, Cmdr. Les Spanheimer, credits proactive tactical leadership and outstanding teamwork with the successful missile test.

"Lt. Caton began training our tactical watch standers with live aircraft while the ship was still being outfitted in the shipyards," said Spanheimer. "That proactive tactical development combined with a perfectly-groomed weapons system helped us demonstrate today how very capable this ship is."

"The test involved two watch teams made up of 13 to 15 people," Caton said. "During the exercise the watch teams are responsible for communicating with Range Control, tracking and data-linking the targets and engaging those threats when they enter our engagement envelope. We've been preparing for this for well over a year, putting in long hours."

The two watch teams that tracked the missiles and targets during the launch were the Gold Team and Blue Team. Fire Controlman 1st Class (SW/AW) John L. Rodriguez-Hardy and Fire Controlman 2nd Class (SW) Jason E. Pugh, members of the Gold Team, said

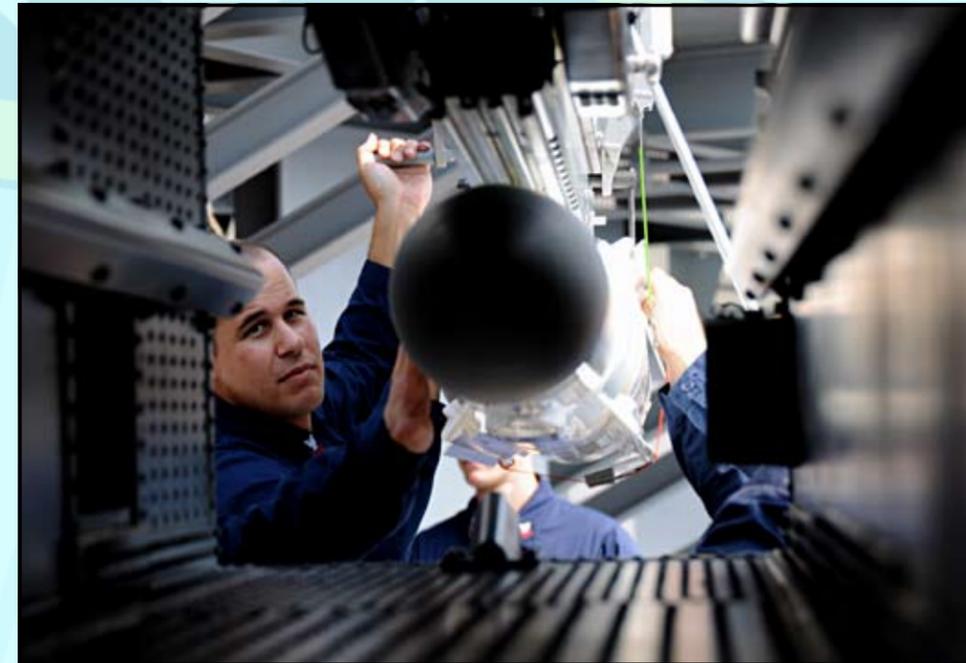


Photo by MC3 (SW) Nicholas Hall

Fire Controlman 1st Class (SW/AW) John Rodriguez-Hardy, assigned to Combat Systems Department, loads a NATO Sea Sparrow missile into one of the ship's launchers June 22.

the reason for two watch teams was to create two unique scenarios for each missile system. They said that the watch teams acted as the communications link between Combat Systems and the weapons systems.

Rodriguez-Hardy and Pugh described the long hours of preparation that went into their pivotal roles in the evolution.

"We've performed more than 80 hours of pre-fire maintenance on all weapons systems, 40 hours of system testing and 20 hours in briefs and debriefs," said Rodriguez-Hardy, the Defense Weapons Coordinator for the Gold Team. "It's a big stress relief to know that we're capable of defense," he added.

Pugh, the Gold Team NATO Supervisor's Console Operator, noted that the success also had an impact on the morale of the operators and crew.

"This test makes or breaks the defense mentality of the entire ship," he said. "It's the first step in a trust-building foundation, between the systems operators and the rest of the crew."

The lengthy systems certification process, which involved weapons on-load and system approval from Carrier Strike Group TWO and the Board of In-

spection and Survey (INSURV), directly involved the aircraft carrier's Weapons Department.

According to Aviation Ordnanceman 1st Class (AW/SW) Chris J. Morrison of Weapons Department, the certification involved every member of the Weapons Inventory Control.

"We had to verify and requisition the exact missiles being used in the launch," he said. "Once missiles were on board we were responsible for turning them over to Combat Systems personnel. From there we inspected, stowed and moved the missiles to the launchers."

In addition to all the preparation that went into the test, Vliet described how the systems operators had to be fully prepared to handle any situation.

"The operators and technical experts have got to be ready and fully understand all of the dud and misfire procedures in the event of an equipment or missile casualty," he said.

Ramirez reaffirmed the team's readiness with confidence.

"We're fully trained and capable to handle misfires," he said. "We're ready no matter what happens. We here to defend the ship. We're ready and willing to do our job." †



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USS GEORGE H.W. BUSH (CVN 77) found its way into space with NASA Astronaut Capt. Kay Hire, U.S. Navy, Feb. 16. While serving on board the International Space Station, Hire posed with the ship's logo, which was presented to her by the Commanding Officer of USS GEORGE H.W. BUSH, Capt. Chip Miller. Miller, a classmate of Hire's at the United States Naval Academy Class of 1981, presented Hire with the logo during Houston Navy week at NASA's Johnson Space Center, October 2009.

# July 2010 Fleet and Family Support Center Calendar

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

			<b>1</b> Home Ownership 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Norfolk	<b>2</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> Stress Management 1-3 p.m. Norfolk	<b>7</b> Consumer Awareness 8:30-10 a.m. Norfolk	<b>8</b> Career Planning 9 a.m.- Noon Little Creek	<b>9</b> New Parent Resource Awareness Workshop 8 a.m.-Noon
<b>12</b> Parenting in the Military 9-11:30 a.m. Oceana	<b>13</b> CFS Refresher Training Course 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Oceana	<b>14</b> Children and Divorce 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Oceana	<b>15</b> Effective Resume Writing 8:30-11:30 a.m. Norfolk	<b>16</b> Don't Bet on Your Life 8:30-9:30 a.m. Little Creek
<b>19</b> Career Planning 9 a.m.- Noon Oceana	<b>20</b> Couples Workshop 4-6:30 p.m. Yorktown	<b>21</b> Retirement Planning 1-2:30 p.m. Norfolk	<b>22</b> Interview Techniques 9 a.m.-Noon Little Creek	<b>23</b> Art of Money Management 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Little Creek
<b>26</b> Financial Responsibility in the Military 10-11:30 a.m. Oceana	<b>27</b> CFS Forum and Financial Town Hall Meeting 10-11:30 a.m. Oceana	<b>28</b> Car Buying Strategies 1-2:30 p.m. Norfolk	<b>29</b> Art of Money Management 7:30 a.m-4 p.m. Oceana	<b>30</b> Retirement Planning 1-2:30 p.m. Little Creek

To Register, contact: FFSC Oceana: 443-2923, FFSC Norfolk: 444-2102,  
FFSC Yorktown: 887-4606, FFSC Northwest: 421-8770, FFSC Little Creek: 462-7563