



BARK OF THE **BOXER** AMERICA'S GOLDEN GATOR



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Boxer Chiefs Train Their Replacements

By MCI(SW) Donald Walton

The Chiefs Mess on board the amphibious assault ship USS Boxer (LHD 4) began a new First Class Petty Officer Leadership Development Program earlier this month, designed to begin the process of training their replacements.

The weekly training program began March 4 and the course organizers expect to continue the classes year round rather than waiting for the five-week induction period to train newly-promoted chiefs.

“Because it is weekly instead of waiting for the Chief Petty Officer (CPO) selection board results and cramming for five weeks, we get an opportunity to train all our future CPOs throughout the year,” said Boxer’s Command Master Chief Douglas Latimer. “The ideal result is that the stuff they hear in August will not be the first time they hear it.”

“The purpose is two-fold: one, to provide training to the First Class Petty Officers (FCPO); the other is to facilitate direct interaction and positive communication between the CPOs and First Class Mess,” he added. “Although this training is geared toward the first class, the feedback from the CPO Mess has been very positive. They are getting as much out of it as the FCPOs are.”

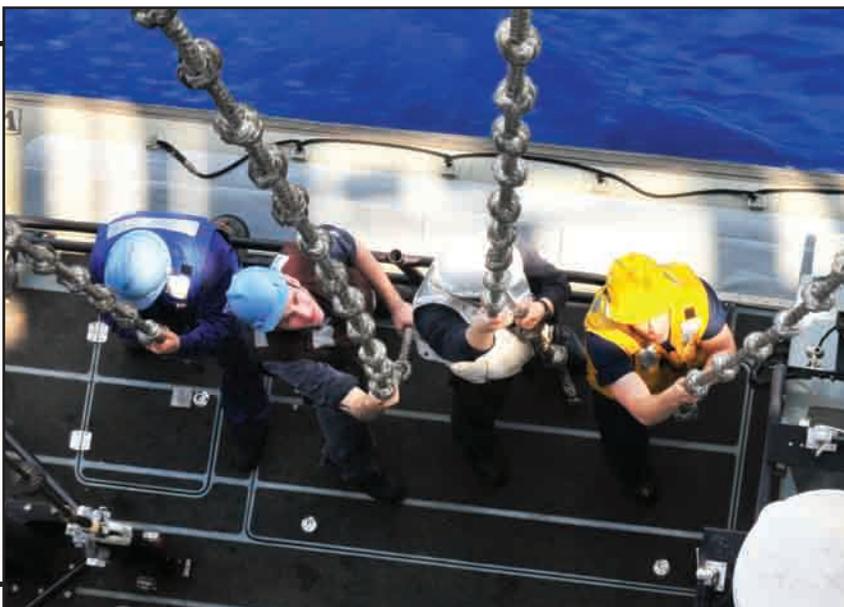
Current and future chiefs aren’t the only people benefiting from the training. The lessons learned here are not exclusive to just the enlisted ranks or even limited to the military.

“This kind of training, this kind of leadership skill, is ben-



Chief Aviation Electrician's Mate Kaiser Reinhart shares his expectations of a first class petty officer to the assembled First Class Mess during a session of the First Class Petty Officer Leadership Development Program. Photo by MCI(SW) Donald Walton.

eficial no matter what your pathway is, whether it is in the Navy or life in general, because we’re always going to have leadership ahead of us, and we’re always going to have subordinates below us,” said Chief Navy Counselor Jayne Epaloose, one of the in-
See ‘LEADERS’ pg 3



MCSN Brian Jeffries

Hauling Aboard

A boat team mans the monkey lines in a landing craft as it’s hoisted into its davit during small boat operation aboard USS Boxer. Completing a davit check is essential to making sure the 11 meter RHIB is operational. When hoisting the small boat up or down, these four men are carrying 75% of the boat’s weight.

BONUS ESWs FACT

The davit for the 11m RHIB is also called the Welin Lambie





Bark of the Boxer Editorial Staff

Public Affairs Officer
MCC(AW/SW) Mike Lorey

Editor
MC1(SW) Fletcher Gibson

Media Staff
MC1(SW) Donald Walton
MC2(AW) Oscar Espinoza
MC3 Anna Kiner
MC3(SW) Trevor Welsh
MCSN Brian Jeffries

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FIND GATOR!



We've hidden GATOR somewhere in this issue. The first three readers who find him and send an e-mail to the editor with the page number and location win a prize from MWR.

Understanding Perform to Serve

By MCSN Brian Jeffries

Today's Navy is highly competitive, with high numbers of qualified sailors competing for shrinking numbers of available billets. Perform to Serve is a program which demonstrates that simply clocking in and clocking out just isn't going to cut it.

"Manning control is the main reason for PTS," said Navy Counselor 1st Class Michael Cambell, one of the career counselors on board Boxer. "A lot of rates are extremely over-manned and advancement quotas are urging for relief."

Downsizing is the solution, but sailors aren't just being cut loose with no say in the matter. Not only does every sailor have the opportunity to excel in his current field, and thus be more competitive, but PTS allows for you to cross rate into an under-manned field to help even everything out.

The PTS process is spelled out right in the name: you have to perform to serve. All sailors from E-1 to E-6 and with less than 14 years of service get evaluated whenever they come up on their reenlistment or rotation to another command. Their performance evaluations combined with a statement from the sailor of his goals and wishes are used to find the best person to keep.

"You are essentially submitting your resume to big Navy asking to keep your job," Campbell said.

So how do you stay ahead of the curve?

The best way to stay within the good graces of the navy just involves sailors going above and beyond and exceeding expectations. That is the easiest way to ensure that you remain competitive.

"Just stay motivated, prepare for the future and even from the beginning take your ASVAB seriously," Cambell said. "These are just a few things that will help new sailors never have to worry about PTS."

"Sailors compete against peers in their same year group (the year they came into the Navy) for reenlistment quotas," explained Boxer Command Master Chief

Douglas Lattimer. "So if they want to ensure themselves a quota they need to be very competitive, advance on time and meet all in-rate and warfare qualification requirements."

He added that non-judicial punishments and physical fitness failures also impact the sailor's chances.

All these factors are a very big deal to sailors and are just another step in the direction of a new face for the Navy. It used to be a pretty easy to stay in the Navy and people 20 years ago could never have pictured such a plan going into effect as radical as PTS.

But in a field where excellence is rewarded, Perform to Serve is not necessarily about kicking sailors out, but merely a way to ask more of them. The ultimate goal is to have the most mission-capable and battle-ready fleet the Navy can.

- ❖ PTS quotas expire after 13 months have passed. If you activate an extension, you'll need to reapply.
- ❖ A PTS quota is only good for one retention transaction: extension OR reenlistment.
- ❖ Putting "Intend to Separate" on a PTS application is a one time, irrevocable decision.
- ❖ You need PTS approval to negotiate for PCS orders if you have less than three years left at time of transfer.
- ❖ PTS is EVERYONE's responsibility; know when you are due (15 months before end of enlistment or end of current orders, whichever is first).



Finding Time to Stay Fit

By MC3 Anna Kiner

Talk about bulking up (or slimming down) is on nearly everyone’s lips as Boxer crewmembers find ways to relieve stress and lose themselves for a little bit in the abandon of physical exertion.

“Being on deployment, there is so much more time, as opposed to being on shore, so everyone is a lot more motivated to better themselves for their significant others, or just improve what they already do,” said Boxer’s Fit Boss Ryan Guffey.

Guffey offers one-on-one training sessions and nutrition counseling as well as leading a grappling class, but there are many more classes being lead by Boxer crew members such as zumba, cycling, and kickboxing. The Marines on board even offer the Marine Corps Martial Arts Program for those wanting to experience something a little more extreme.

“We do all different kinds of conditioning exercises,” said Staff Sgt. Anthony Edwards, one of the MCMAP instructors. “You have to be in pretty good shape already, and if you’re not it really wears on you.”

For those that need more incentive to work out, competitions such as “The Biggest Loser,” “Push-Up Olympics,” and monthly basketball challenges are held on board, usually with prizes awarded to top winners—along with bragging rights.

“It’s something to boost morale for people who have different goals than others,” said Guffey. “It helps motivate them to lose weight and maybe win some prizes doing so. For example, last deployment we



Senior Chief Aviation Ordnanceman Lenny Avent leads a daily body-toning workout in the hangerbay. The class is open to all hands and is just one of the many places crewmembers have found the motivation to keep in shape. Photo by MCSN Brian Jeffries.

had one man lose about 35 lbs. of body fat and gain 5-10 lbs. of muscle during our first rendition of The Biggest Loser.”

Outside of these classes, crewmembers have been very imaginative in where and how they get their work out on. For example, one group meets almost every evening in the ship’s laundry for a hardcore, sweat-dripping P90x course in one of the hottest spaces on the ship.

“If you’re going to join us, just make

sure you drink a lot of water so you don’t pass out,” said Ship’s Serviceman Seaman Recruit Edrick Crawford, a regular member of the P90x group.

Between all the classes and work out groups that can be found on board Boxer, anyone can find something to suit their shape-up goals and have fun doing so. Enjoying a good work out benefits not only you, but the special people in your life will be sure to appreciate it; so everybody wins.

‘LEADERS’ cont. from pg 1

structors for the training. “So these are life lessons, not just Navy lessons.”

Some of the topics discussed have been on how to prepare a package for the chief’s selection board for promotion, the Perform to Serve reenlistment program, and expectations of an FCPO. Future classes will include subordinate development, effective communication with your chain of command and writing evaluations of junior sailors.

The turnout for each class has been very good and not just consisting of FCPOs up for promotion. A few chiefs have also attended to both support the class and learn a thing or two.

“I think the training is good and it offers vast amounts of knowledge from the chiefs,” said Hospital Corpsman 1st Class

David Toston, the president of the ship’s FCPO Association. “They can share their experience with us so we can use it as a tool for when we face any type of challenge or any situation, and it will offer us that guidance and experience on how to handle those situations.”

Toston stated that all FCPOs should attend because that’s where they belong.

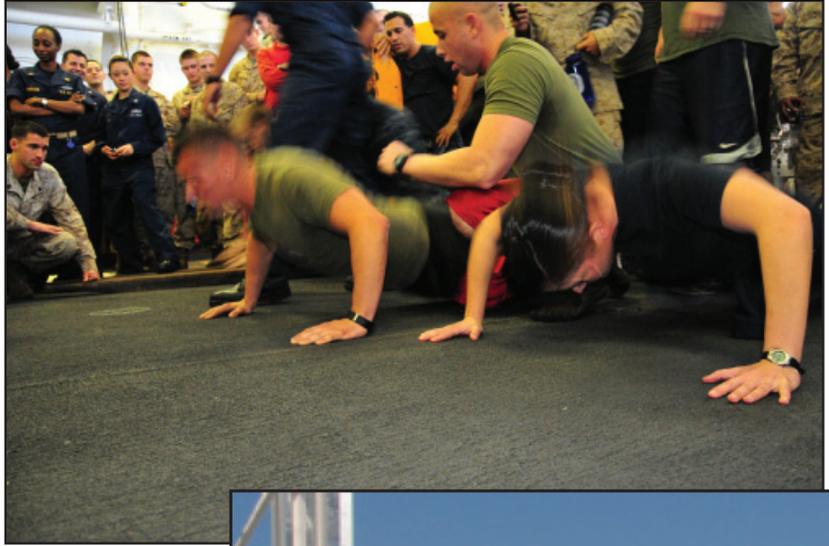
“That is where your brothers and sisters are,” he said. “It shows unity and it shows that we are all on the same page. That is what you deserve, what you rate as a First Class Petty Officer.”

After all, although it wasn’t a specific class, coming together as a single, supportive group was the first lesson the Chiefs Mess taught their first class leaders.

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MCSN Brian Jeffries



MC3(SW) Trevor Welsh



MC3 Anna Kiner



MC3 Anna Kiner



MC3(SW) Trevor Welsh