



BARK OF THE BOXER

AMERICA'S GOLDEN GATOR



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Chef instructor converts culinary specialists to culinary artists

By MC3 Anna Kiner

Culinary specialists aboard USS BOXER (LHD 4) garnered a new perspective of the culinary industry as Chef Michael Roddey took the galley staff under his wing from August 1-12 through the Navy's Adopt-A-Ship program.

Roddey is currently a culinary arts professor at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, with five years of experience as a culinary educator and 20 years in various aspects of the food industry.

Since being on board Boxer, Roddey has given presentations on knife handling, seasoning and refresher courses on basic kitchen cookery in order to help improve the presentation and quality of the food for Sailors here.

"I'm not here to make Earth-shattering changes or rebuild



Chef Michael Roddey demonstrates how even a simple salad can benefit from a few of the tips he'd brought with him to improve its flavor and presentation. Photo by MC1(SW) Fletcher Gibson.

cook for the chief petty officer dining hall. "He knows so much, and it makes me curious to learn more."

their operation," said Roddey. "I'm just here to lend my expertise and try to enhance what they're already doing. They really do a great job; they put out a good product."

In addition to providing tips to improve food quality, Roddey has also been a fount of knowledge for the culinary specialists and food service assistants interested in pursuing careers in the food industry.

"I never went to CS 'A' school, and he has helped me so much with cooking, sanitation, how to cut certain ways, seasoning..." said Culinary Specialist Seaman Nastassja Valerio, a

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A Message from the Commanding Officer

Hopefully I haven't been too shy with my appreciation for all the hard work the Boxer crew has been doing to prepare for our upcoming INSURV. The high marks the ship received in the recent ULTRA-C, LOA, 3M Certification and other inspections reflect directly on the time and effort you all are spending on making Boxer the best ship on the waterfront.

But while I'm recognizing all of you for your hard work, I wanted to make sure I took the time to recognize those whose efforts have been just as instrumental in the ship's recent accomplishments: our Boxer families.

To all the wives, husbands, children, parents, boyfriends, girlfriends and anyone else you include in your family, I

would like to extend my warmest thanks for the support they've given. It could be the extra trip they take to get the kids to school when you're already at work or simply being a receptive listener while you vent your frustrations. Gestures such as these can be the difference between a job well done and a job not accomplished.

I saw a lot of family members with their Sailors at our recent command picnic at Seaworld. Our MWR team did a great job setting that up, and seeing so many spouses and children enjoying themselves told me it was worth the effort. For as many hours as the crew puts in to getting the ship in shape, it was nice to be able to give back some hours and see our Boxer families enjoying some time together.

Another way we show our appreciation is through the Boxer's Family Readiness Group. If your significant other hasn't been introduced to this group yet, please point the way. The FRG provides mutual support for our families, hosting social events and gatherings so our wives, husbands, boyfriends, girlfriends, and even close friends have somebody they can turn to when their Sailors aren't available.

If you haven't taken the time recently to thank your family for supporting you through this demanding time, you should do so now. And while you're at it, please pass along my thanks as well.

Captain Frank J. Michael
Commanding Officer



Patience

By Chaplain Kevin Deeley

One of the great things I like about San Diego is the climate which really lends itself to outdoor activities. Being so close to the sea here, one of the activities that one notices is fishing. I would gather that this is a great area for fishing, either for business or sport.

What strikes me about fishing is that it is an endeavor that calls for real patience. In observing those fishing for sport these days around the Embarcadero, one will see people who are very relaxed. They do not seem in a hurry to get anywhere. They are just waiting for a catch. Certainly they are ready to spring into action if they have a catch. For the most part, though, they stand or sit and wait. Some are alone. Some come with their families or a group of friends. They enjoy the fishing and they enjoy the company of one another.

Perhaps we can learn a wonderful spiritual lesson from those who fish. We need patience in our own lives. So often we are caught up in 'doing' things that we don't take the time to appreciate the beauty of nature or we take for granted our spouse or our children and family around us. Or in our stressful lives we don't take the time to communicate well with those closest to us. We describe patience as a virtue. It is clearly a quality that we all would like to have.

In my own faith group, I find it interesting that many of the first followers of Jesus were fishermen. They must have had great patience in their lives as they faced great challenges. Their example brought many people to share their faith. Perhaps our own success and happiness will come from striving to make patience a real part of our own lives.



I'm Just Sayin'....

By MCC(SW/AW) Beth Lloyd

Greetings Boxer Family,

Wow. The saying "proper planning prevents p*** poor performance" is so appropriate for our ship when talking about our preparations for INSURV. I have been amazed at how the ship is being transformed right before our eyes. This is not an accident; the XO or CMC didn't wave a magic wand and say POOF! and voila it happened. Nope, it has been through hard work and dedication up and down the chain of command. I'm just saying...

Today, my column is about proper preparation. The command set a goal to not only pass INSURV, but to do exceptionally well. The next step after setting the goal was to create a plan, a roadmap if you will, so they knew what they needed to do and when it needed to be done in order to meet their goal.

The point is, we didn't wait until August to get prepared for an event in September. I'm just saying... There are major milestones or personal "inspections" we all have to prepare for: advancement exam, PFA and life after the Navy.

Preparation is the key to success. There are reasons certain Sailors always get advanced the first time up or they score an outstanding on their PFT. It's not because they are lucky or that they are naturally athletic; it is because they work hard throughout the year. They set themselves up to do well by setting time aside to study. Maybe they use those extra minutes to look up a reference or an instruction instead of getting on facebook. Those "natural athletes" choose to hit the gym instead of taking a "nooner." It is important to know what you need to do in order to achieve a particular goal. Do you know how many pushups you need in order to pass? How about to get an Excellent? What expectations do you place on yourself?

Time does not wait for anyone. If you aren't looking ahead, you are going to be behind where you need to be to reach your goals. Take a moment to create a road map that you can use to achieve your immediate goals as well as accomplishing your long term goals. If you aren't sure how to do this, ask your mentor.

I'm just sayin'...



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USS Boxer shows midshipmen life at sea

By MC1(SW) Fletcher Gibson

The amphibious assault ship USS Boxer (LHD 4) played host to more than 100 midshipmen August 4-5, giving them a brief look at life at sea on a surface warship.

As part of their exploration of the different career paths available, the 114 future officers got an eyeful of shipboard activity such as anchor detail and amphibious landing craft operations.

The visit was part of the Career Oriented Training for Midshipmen that all ROTC students go through to help them decide which warfare area they're most interested in. During CORTRAMID, the freshman and sophomore students also visit submarine, aviation and Marine units.

"It's the first look these guys get in the Navy," said Ens. Jennifer Floyd, Boxer's Electrical Division officer who served as the midshipmen's training officer for this underway.

More important than participating in shipboard operations, though, the time on board Boxer gave the mids a chance to get a view of what life is like. Seeing how Naval officers interact with the enlisted crew and experiencing life on board a surface ship is a key factor in helping them make some decisions that could affect the rest of their lives.

"Quality of life is probably what they're thinking of most right now," said Floyd.

"That's one of the biggest questions, how the officers get along with the enlisted," said Midshipman Kevin Lees, one of the visiting midshipmen.

According to Floyd, the ultimate goal of the presentation was to convince the midshipmen that serving as a surface warfare of-



USS Boxer mini-boss, Lt. Cmdr. Nate Anderson, presents the ship's Primary Flight Control to a group of midshipmen who came aboard as part of their introduction to operations in the surface Navy. Photo by MC3 Anna Kiner

ficer would be a rewarding choice to make, and in that front there was some success.

"I came in thinking I wanted to be an aviator," said Midshipman Sarah Skelly, "but I'm really liking what I see."

Future summers for these students will see more in-depth exploration of their chosen warfare area, until they finally choose their field during their last year of study. All who go on to choose surface warfare will have Boxer to thank for their decision.

Meet the crew: AIMD

By CWO4 Michael Patek

The mission of the Aircraft Intermediate Maintenance Department is to inspect, test and check, calibrate, and repair aircraft components, as well as maintain Support and Material Handling Equipment.

Personnel-wise, AIMD consists of the Maintenance Officer, two chief warrant officers, five chief petty officers and 87 technicians of various aviation ratings. During deployments, AIMD is augmented by Marine Corps personnel with an additional 60 enlisted technicians.

AIMD is comprised of four divisions: IM01 (staff), IM02 (general aircraft maintenance), IM03 (avionics/armament) and IM04 (support equipment).

IM01 Division is the administrative arm of AIMD. It's the focal point for directing and managing the production efforts of the department. They maintain quality assurance on all jobs performed by AIMD as well as keep the central tech



pubs library.

IM02 Division provides a mixed bag of support services. They perform inspections and minor repair of aircraft engines and power train components. They test and repair hydraulic components, manufacture hoses, build and replace aircraft tires, repair metallic structures, and perform non-destructive inspections of components.

IM03, or Avionics/Armament Division, provides troubleshooting and repair

of communication, navigation and countermeasure support. They also test and support flight control systems, generators, relay assemblies, indicators and aircraft batteries. Maintenance on automatic machine guns, pylons, weapon racks and launchers for aviation warfare also fall under this division.

IM04, or Ground Support Equipment Division, services, tests and performs maintenance and repair of support equipment and weight handling equipment. They also provide structured training, on-the-job training and operator licences for these vehicles to all command and embarked personnel.

AIMD's four divisions provide an assortment of technical services and repair support to assist the Marine Expeditionary Unit, embarked Aviation Combat Element and Amphibious Ready Group air capable ships/escorts to perform all its missions when called upon.

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Roddey has even been an influence to the members on the higher end of the chain of command.

“The CSIs that are in charge here are coming to me for ways to help them manage their operation better,” said Roddey. “They have the experience, but they only have the military experience. I’m not saying that’s bad, but it can be narrow in its perspective.”

With his assistance, many people have noticed a marked improvement in the way the galley has been running and are impressed with the food output.

“Things used to be really chaotic before the meal was put out, but now that we’ve got some experience and learned

tips, things are more relaxed,” said Culinary Specialist Seaman Jacob Huron. “I’ve learned a lot of new things. More about time management, and he’s showed us garnishing tips-- how things like parsley or paprika can make a simple dish like fish look better.”

Valerio said “Before, I would just put vegetables in the copper and blanch them, put them in water and serve them, but he’s taught me it’s better to grill them and season them a little so they have more taste. Now when people see the vegetables they say ‘oh the vegetables look green today, not brown.’”

Roddey said his main motivator for participating in the Adopt-A-Ship program was to experience life on board a ship so

he could gather information on different areas of the food industry. He hopes to share his experiences with his students and give back as an educator—whatever and wherever that environment may be.

“We’re not getting a paycheck for being out here,” said Roddey. “What we get out of it is the satisfaction of continuing to give back.”

Roddey said he plans to bring what he has learned here and lend it to his students so they can take their culinary education and perhaps come to a ship like this.

He also said civilian chefs interested in receiving recertification points can obtain them through the American Culinary Federation by volunteering for programs like Adopt-A-Ship.

Flight Quarters! Flight Quarters!



Photos by MC2 Christopher Menzie