



# Happening Now



Lt.j.g. Joseph Tobias, Ship's Assistant Supply Officer, observes the off loading of ammunition during a vertical replenishment on the ship's forecastle.



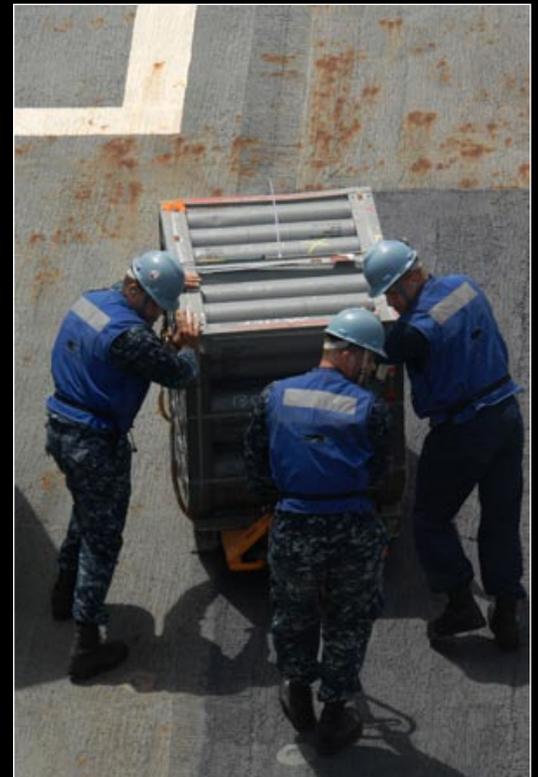
Sailors look off the port side of USS Bunker Hill (CG 52) at USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70) before conducting a replenishment at sea.



Bunker Hill Chief Petty Officer's congregating in the ship's Chief's Mess during a formal celebration of the Chief Petty Officer Birthday.



An Explosive, Ordnance and Disposal team attached to USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70) fast ropes on the ship's flight deck.



Sailors move ordnance off the forecastle of USS Bunker Hill (CG 52) during a vertical replenishment at sea.



Damage Controlmen on board USS Bunker Hill (CG 52) wait to unload ammunition on the ship's fantail during a vertical replenishment of ammunition.



Damage Controlman Fireman Ethan Retland is OC sprayed on the ship's fore-castle during an SRF Bravo Training Class.



The underway replenishment detail waits near the ship's port boat deck before conducting a replenishment at sea.



Sailors look on during the ship's Damage Control Olympics event.



Chief Gunner's Mate (SW) Robert Stearns talks to the crew through the ship's general announcement system after receiving a custom made coffee mug on the ship's bridge.



Cryptologic Technician (Collections) 2nd Class (IDW) Molly Carpenter relaxes in the Command Master Chiefs office after assuming temporary CMC for a day duties, as part of a Navy Marine Corps Relief Society Fund Raiser.



Sailors on board USS Bunker Hill (CG 52) design shirts on sexual assault prevention in commemoration of the Navy's Sexual Assault Awareness Month.



A 5-inch training round is fired from the forecastle on board USS Bunker Hill (CG 52) during a live firing exercise.



Seaman Anthony Rowe stands starboard bridge wing look out while USS Bunker Hill (CG 52) manuevars into plane guard position.



A boat crew from USS Bunker Hill (CG 52) participates in a strafing exercise with aircraft attached to USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70).

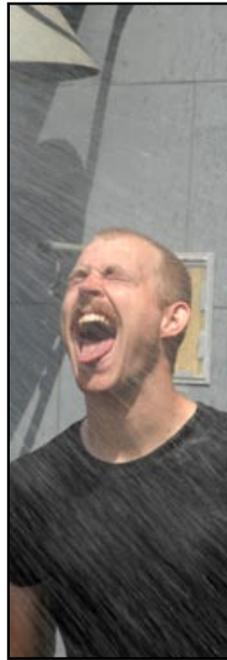
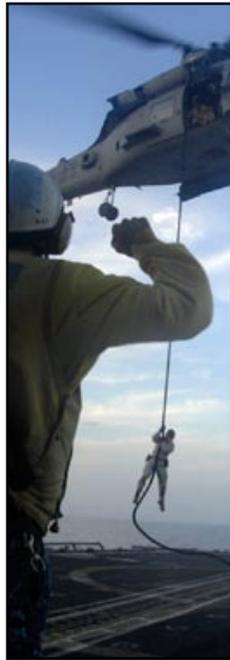
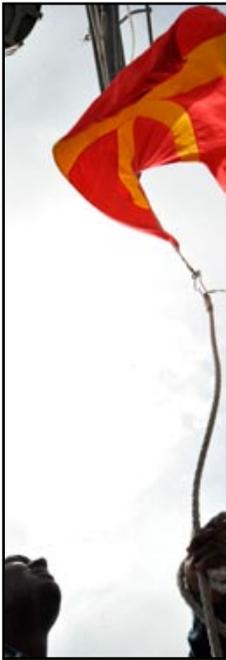


Sailors congregate on the ship's flight deck for Sunday morning Easter Services.



Sailors square off at a tug of war event during the Bunker Hill 2011 Damage Control Olympics.

# Getting Started



*USS Bunker Hill is one step closer to home as the month of April closes and the beginning of May nears. During the busy month of April, the crew participated in many shipboard and strike group events and exercises; welcoming a few visitors along the way. Their training, teamwork and vigilance strengthens as the crew continues to support USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70) and the Carrier Strike Group ONE mission.*

**Publisher:**

Captain D. DeScisciolo

**Executive Publisher:**

LCDR Brian Connolly

**Editors in Charge:**

CMDCM (SW/AW) Everett Mays

ENS Matthew Graham

**Photographers/Writers:**

LCDR Michael Stoker

MC3 Aaron Shelley

AM3 Ericson Sagun



# Commanding Officers Call

**D**ear Families, Friends, and Loved Ones of BUNKER HILL, It is hard to believe that the month of May has finally arrived! It is also hard to believe that after 21 months in command of the mightiest cruiser afloat that I will be leaving this month for my next assignment and turning this proud warship over to my relief, Captain Mike Ford. As always, however, it is not the captain alone, but the 342 incredible Sailors who continue to propel BUNKER HILL forward from success to success. And this past month was no exception.

April began with us inside the Arabian Gulf conducting our important mission of supporting Operation NEW DAWN, the follow-on operation to IRAQI FREEDOM designed to secure Iraq's future. Additionally, we were performing our very important mission of maritime security and presence in one of the world's most economically critical waterways. Operating and navigating in this busy place (with the added challenge of poor visibility due to all the blowing dust and sand) made for long hours of some pretty intense watch standing.

Before too long however, we safely transited the famous Strait of Hormuz and resumed our operations in the Northern Arabian Sea in our final phase of supporting Operation ENDURING FREEDOM. We were fortunate to enjoy a Palm Sunday visit from RADM Tidd, the Navy Chief of Chaplains, who helped us celebrate the Easter season.

We also took some time out from our constant training and maintaining to recognize both the National Holocaust Remembrance and Sexual Assault Awareness Months with impressive and thought-provoking presentations provided by our Diversity Committee. As the month drew to a close we paused to have some fun with a Commanding Officer-, Executive Officer-, and Command Master Chief-for-a-Day fundraising raffle. The winners got to 'wear the star' and catch a glimpse of life at the top for a day. In doing so we raised over \$1,300 for the Navy and Marine Corps Relief Society. Finally, Combat Systems Department claimed bragging rights for winning our first Damage Control Olympics in some spirited (and wet) competition while sharpening their critical ship-saving skills.

I reluctantly close with one last farewell to you all along with my deep appreciation for the patient love and support you've given to your Sailor over these many months of deployment. The greatest ship in the Navy is nothing without her crew, and this crew is surely the finest group of fighting men and women ever to put to sea. I cannot fully convey how proud I am of them and their many accomplishments, and how deeply honored I feel to have been their commanding officer. They are simply the best.

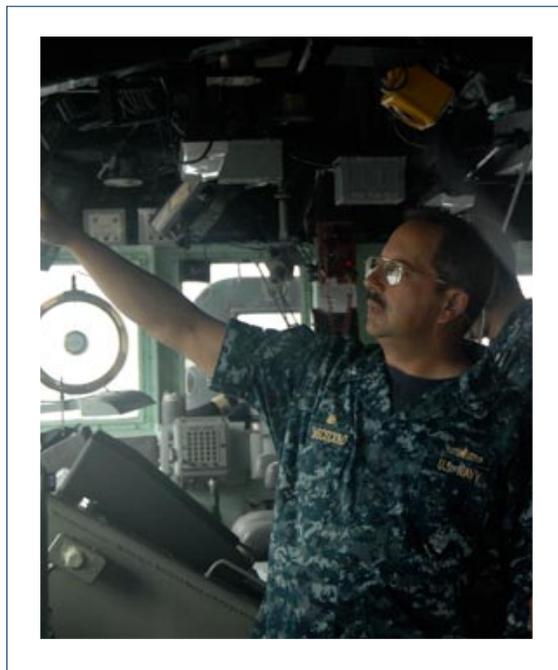
May God bless you all, and may God continue to bless BUNKER HILL and her crew.

Sincerely,

D. DeScisciolo

Captain, U.S. Navy

Commanding Officer, USS BUNKER HILL (CG 52)



# Executive Officer's Call

BUNKER HILL Family,

Greetings from the Gulf...again!

April was another very busy month for BKH sailors...in sitting down to write this I find myself looking back at last months letter and thinking "yup, we did that again!" I don't think I'm allowed to cheat and run the same letter twice, so I'll take a few minutes to tell you a bit about what the BUNKER HILL team did in addition to everything they also did last month!

We started out the month operating in the Persian Gulf. That's a very busy area of the world to operate in – our watch teams faced the somewhat unique challenge of trying to drive through congested waters while sandstorms reduced visibility and made it unpleasant to be outside trying to see other ships. We quickly managed to finish up our business and headed back out the Strait of Hormuz to continue support to Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF).

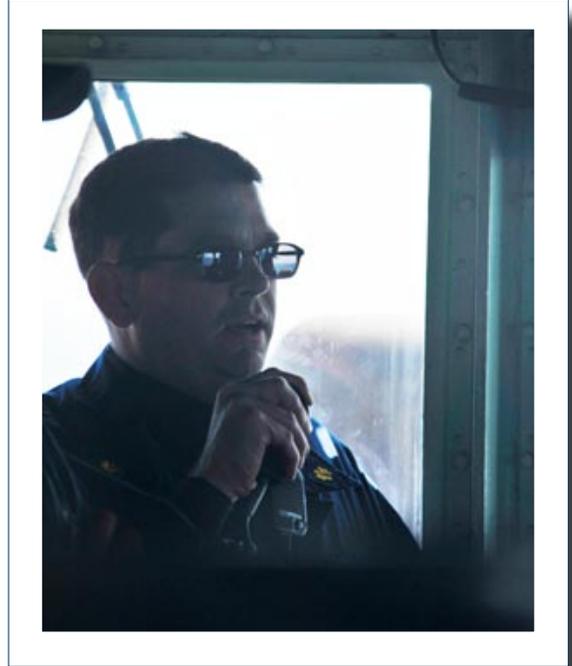
Supporting OEF is a 24/7 job, but we still managed to sneak in some events to keep up morale. We took an afternoon off and had a picnic on our fantail, Admiral Tidd (the Navy's Chief of Chaplains) came onboard one day to kick off the beginning of Holy Week; we held a sunrise service on Easter and the Commanding Officer, Command Master Chief and I raffled off our jobs for a day (as a charity fundraiser).

The leader-for-a-day event was a lot of fun, and a good opportunity for a few of our sailors to examine shipboard life from a different aspect. Not surprisingly they all performed the duties exceedingly well (except that I tried to get the XO-for-a-day to do all of my monthly paperwork and he didn't fall for it). Just below you'll see a letter from him with his thoughts.

That about wraps up the month of April! We are all still focused, still safe, and all working very diligently to complete our missions so we can return home to you.

Sincerely,

Brian D. Connolly  
LCDR USN  
Executive Officer



# Command Master Chief's Call

BUNKER HILL Family and Friends,

One month closer to home. April was a very busy month. Our Sailors were at sea the whole month conducting routine patrol in support of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). We found a way to take sometime to relax a little this as a crew by enjoying a Steel beach picnic halfway through the month and conducting our very first DC Olympics. The competition among the different departments built camaraderie and esprit de corp amongst the Sailors and was enjoyed by all.

The BUNKER HILL Diversity committee took time this month to bring the crew together for a very moving Holocaust remembrance program. Also, the Sexual Assault Prevention Response Team (SAPR) put on a powerful presentation and training for the BUNKER HILL crew in recognition of April being Sexual Assault Awareness month.

BUNKER HILL was very blessed to have a distinguishing visitor as well. Admiral Mark Tidd, Chief of Navy Chaplains, graced us with his presence. He held Protestant Service for several crew members and he also engaged them in a focus group on the Crew's Mess Deck in a question and answering session concerning deployment and Navy life.

As always, it has been a very productive month for the Sailors of BUNKER HILL. Their continued motivation and dedication has set high marks for our War Ship. I only have your Sailors to thank for that. I always, I want to thank the families and love ones that continue to support what we do on a daily basis. Your love and growing support from home is needed everyday. Hold us in your prayers and we do will do the same. See you soon.



Sincerely,

CMDCM (SW/AW) Everett M. Mays

# Chaplain's Call

Greetings Family, Friends and Crew of USS Bunker Hill,

What a month it has been for the crew of the Bunker Hill. We have been underway the entire month but we have had some great events to bolster morale. One of those events was a visit by the Navy Chief of Chaplains, RADM Tidd. Chaplain Tidd was aboard for Palm Sunday and preached for the Protestant congregation. He was very impressed by the work and dedication your sailor contributes each day. We also had a great turnout for the Easter Sunrise service and we were treated with an Easter feast by our culinary specialists.

The anticipation of getting home is so great. Sailors are busy making plans for their leave periods and others have some anxiety about what it will be like to get home. Now is the time to communicate about homecoming expectations. For example, you may want to throw that big party for your loved one, but they may just want to sit on the couch with you and relax. So be sure to talk about those desires, because conflict often arises when there are unmet expectations. If I can assist with anything please do not hesitate to email me.

Have a great May and know that we look forward to seeing you soon. God's blessings on you and your family.



Chaplain Jim Dewey  
LT, CHC, USN  
deweyj@cg52.navy.mil

# CO, XO, CMC for a Day Call

## **FC2 Degraff --**

What can one say about being given the chance to be the CO for a day? The day started off with a meeting between the actually CO/XO/CMC and us the CO/XO/CMC for a day. It was an amazing feeling to walk up to the COs at sea cabin and be invited in by the CO as an equal. Everyone “played” along for the day and treated me just as they would the regular CO. Spending time in the Pilot House and taking the CON was an exciting but nervous experience. To know that I controlled where the ship was headed and having the whole crews’ life in my hands was not as an unbearable task as I thought. Talking with the CO throughout the day showed me just how much he goes through on a daily basis. He is like the “Older Brother” given charge of his siblings while dad is

away on business. He still has to follow dad's rules but every once in awhile he can make some changes that he feels are right. Khaki Sweepers was a real big hit. Everyone enjoyed switching roles with their superiors for just that 15 mins. With being the CO for a day there were some benefits that I indulged in. I spent quite a bit of my day sitting in one of the many CO chairs on the Bridge and even took a nap on the starboard bridge wing. I made routine stops to CIC to see what if anything was going on. Thankfully it was a quite relaxing day. One of the major highlights from the day was that I was able to eat in the wardroom with all the officers. The closest I have ever been to the wardroom before was either FSA or for a brief of some kind. I found out courtesies that I didn't know about before, such as officers asking the CO permission to eat. It took me a lot less to get relaxed in there than I thought it would. With in a few officers entering I got the hang of being “CO” in the wardroom. I even answered the CO's phone, after the actual CO had answered the last three or four calls, and told the CO as he made a move for the phone that “Don't worry I got this one sir” after responding with a few yes and no then hanging up the phone the actual CO seemed curious to know what the call was about; all I told him at first was that it was taken care of. It turned out to be a call about one of the rules I had allowed on the bridge. Nothing seems complicated till we are put in a higher position and realize just how much goes in to the actual running of a ship and what it takes to keep it afloat. I stayed in the UCC for the night after a long eventful day. That was like staying in a four or five star hotel room while underway. The last thing I did as CO was get woke up before sunrise and went and saw the sunrise from the CO's Starboard Bridge wing Chair while smoking a Cuban. It was very peaceful and I was able to soak in everything that had happened from the previous day. I would like to think eventually I could be an officer, but who knows what the future holds. Anything is possible as long as there is hope, faith and perseverance.



## **FC2 Torres --**

Being THE Executive Officer for a day is, and will be, one of the more memorable times I'll have on USS Bunker Hill. From Departmental meetings, an Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialist (ESWS) Pinning Ceremony, to just eating among the “Higher Ups,” I got to know both worlds of the ship; the “Blue Shirt,” Enlisted world that I already know love, and the Khaki Officer world that I soon want to be in ranks with. This was an opportunity only a handful of people can brag about to their friends and family, and I was lucky enough to experience it!



***CTR2 Carpenter --***

I thought it was an amazing experience! When we won I think we all had the impression that we would be able to pretty much do whatever we wanted. Holiday routine, PT gear all day, things like that. I am glad it went the way it did though. It was nice to get a glimpse and see what happens “behind the curtain”, and all the planning that goes into the day to day operations. It isn’t always as easy as the crew may think for the CO to give us a “fun day”. The two highlights of the day for me were khaki sweepers and the moonlight cigar lamp. When I was walking around the ship during sweepers I had so many junior Sailors come up to me and tell me that that was the best day ever for them, and that’s what I wanted. It was good to see the crew have fun with it.

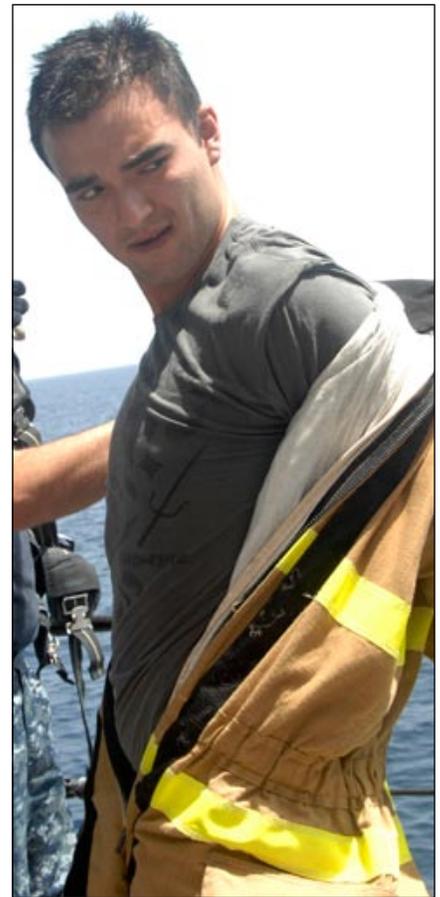
Lastly, I just want to thank you, the XO, and CO for allowing us to have that day. It was a lot of fun and I hope that we could do it again in the future.



# DAMAGE CONTROL



# OLYMPICS



The knowledge, skills and training of Sailors on board USS Bunker Hill (CG 52) were tested April 18, 2011 during the ship's 2011 Damage Control (DC) Olympics.

The ship's departments were broken down into teams of five as they competed for honor, bragging rights and the chance to raise the DC Olympics trophy in the air. These teams raced competitively from event to event, putting their DC talents to the test against various challenges. The pipe patching area saw much frustration as Sailors tugged, pulled, twisted and hammered patches in place to prevent the flow of water from escaping. The fire hose relay was filled with shouting, running and laughter as teams unreeled fire hoses in a speedy attempt to man and control their hoses.

The fire fighting dressing station left teams depending on one another in an attempt to help their shipmates fully dress themselves in fire fighting gear as quickly as possible. This took the concentration and keen observation from everyone as the hot sun bared down above.

Teams were soaked at the DC knowledge hose down event. Sailors racked their brains in an attempt to answer many of the DC questions and avoid being soaked. Each team was timed during their evolutions and penalties were applied for improper technique and uncompleted steps.

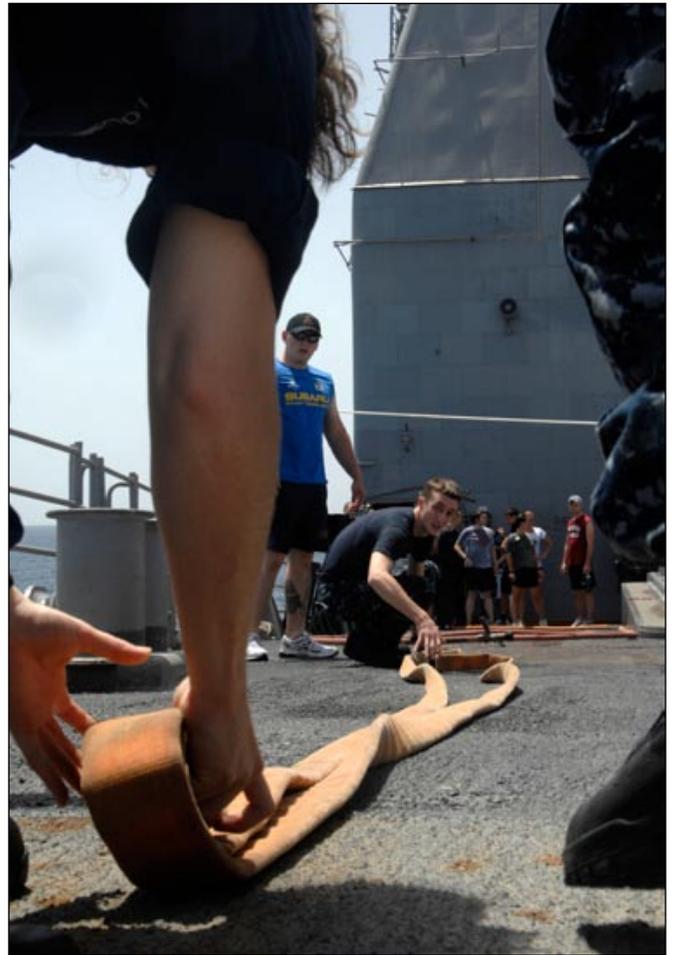
Some raced to complete first, while others applied care to reduce the number of penalties given at the end of their performance. Staying dry was impossible as water sprayed from fire hoses and rained back on the crew. For the tug of war event, departments squared off firing fire hoses at an empty

See DC, Page 15

DC, From Page 14

canister in an attempt to push the it past the opponent's side.

Each team competed strongly and all departments fought valiantly, but at the end of the day only one stood above the rest. Loud cheers were given as Combat Systems Department was announced the as the 2011 DC Olympians.





## Chief of Navy Chaplains Visits USS Bunker Hill



Rear Admiral Mark Tidd leads church services in the ship's classroom.

The Chief of Navy Chaplains, Rear Admiral Mark Tidd, paid a visit to the Ticonderoga-class Cruiser USS Bunker Hill (CG 52) April 17, 2011. Honors were rendered as he stepped into the ship's hangar bay to be greeted warmly by the ship's Commanding Officer, Command Master Chief, Air Boss, and Chief Engineer.

His trip served as a means of learning from the crew of Bunker Hill by talking to Sailors first hand and better understanding their challenges.

During his brief stay, he led the ship's congregation in church services by speaking on the subjects of triumph and perseverance in relation to service at sea. This Palm Sunday, praise was abound for Bunker Hill Sailors as a passionate song and prayer were exchanged among all.

"It's great to be with you, I know you are a long way from anything that is as familiar as your friends, family and home," said Tidd. "As you deploy around the world, god's word goes with you."

At the conclusion of services, smiles and handshakes were exchanged, as he thanked each Sailor for giving him their time and the chance to lead them in services.

"Thank you all for what you are doing, it has been my honor serving you as Chief of Chaplains," said Tidd.

After church, He then took the opportunity to tour the ship's many spaces, greeting the crew along the way. Among the stops were the ship's Supply Support Center where he spoke with the Logistic Specialist's and Ship Servicemen. The ship's Medical facilities, personnel office, engineering spaces and bridge were also stops during his tour.

See **CHAPLAIN**, Page 17



Ship Serviceman Seaman (SW) Graylon Keeton Speaks with Rear Admiral Mark Tidd in the ship's barber shop.

In that time, he engaged with Sailors by opening himself up for questions and asking a few of his own. Tidd spoke with a focus group comprised of different Sailors from many of the ship's departments. He asked them to reveal their opinions and concerns that touched on many of the stresses that service members face while deployed. Of these topics, deployment time away from home filled most of the discussion.

"There is a cost of your commitment, and that is the separation from your family and friends," said Tidd. Your willingness to do that is a tremendous commitment and I appreciate that."

*"As you deploy  
around the world,  
god's word goes  
with you."*



## ESWS WARRIORS

- LS2 (SW/AW) Lunod
- SN (SW) Stephen Segerson
- HM3 (SW) Monica Valdez
- CS3 (SW) Ruth Dobson
- CS2 (SW) Luis Sanchez
- GM3 (SW) Kristin Hanson
- OS3 (SW) Jane Drury
- MC3 (SW) Aaron Shelley

## RE-ENLISTMENTS

- FC2 (SW) Erin O'Kane
- GM2 (SW) Henry Valdez
- DC2 (SW) Michael Johnson
- FC2 (SW) Degraff



Rear Admiral Mark Tidd is greeted by Bunker Hill Commanding Officer Capt. D. DeScisciolo in the ship's hangar bay.



## OUT WITH THE OLD, IN WITH THE NEW

Powering a naval ship for a crew of 300 plus Sailors requires a vast amount of electricity. On April 02, 2011, the number one gas turbine generator on board USS Bunker Hill (CG 52) was shut down temporarily, due to an emergency fault with the generators equipment.

After the generators lube oil alarm sounded, the engine room operators investigated further and confirmed their suspicions. The generators lube oil pump shaft couplings had completely shattered, leaving the generator out of commission and the ship in a very compromising position. Weeks away from a replacement part and with no spares on board, it looked as if the generator was going to remain shut down.

In comes Machinery Repairman 2nd Class (SW/SCW) Eddie Pastoral. Pastoral, a Sailor attached to Engineering Departments Repair Division said there was a knock on his shop's door. On the other side of the door was Chief Gas Turbine System Mechanic (SW) Daniel Collins, beckoning Pastoral down to the ship's main engine room. "I was taken to the generator and that's when I saw the shattered couplings," said Pastoral.

Collins stressed the importance of the couplings to Pastoral in regards to the ship's limited power supply without a replacement.

"We (Gas Turbine Mechanics) don't like when things break down," said Collins. "Those guys (Repair Division

Sailors) strive under pressure when things break." Pastoral began his work. Using a band saw he cut metal to a workable length. From there he used a machine lathe to diametrically trim the metal according to previous measurements. He finally cleaned up and defined the edges of the couplings using various files to rid them of any excess metal and burs.

Working through the night, Pastoral completed the project in less than two days. His initial start fabricating the couplings was slower going than the second go around due to the lack of detailed schematics, but with a little measuring, math and ingenuity, Pastoral was able to match the original coupling pieces to technical specification and measurements, successfully completing what no other Sailor might have been able to.

"It sounds complicated, but it's not," said Pastoral. "It's just a little math."

According to Collins, Pastoral matched the weight, size and dimensions of the couplings perfectly resulting in a satisfactory operational test bringing the generator back to life and allowing USS Bunker Hill to continue her critical mission unabated.

"He's the reason why the ship's number one generator is still running," said Collins. "It's the most amazing thing I've seen a Machinery Repairman do in my entire naval career."

# OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT PLANS AHEAD

**B**lue lights hang high above watch standers in the combat information center (CIC) on board USS Bunker Hill (CG 52). Eyes are trained on display consoles and ears are connected to communication head sets. Chatter is low but always audible as watch standers speak amongst one another.

The clicking of keyboards is distinct, as fingers find their mark in response to incoming message traffic. Grease pencils and markers are scribbling vibrant coded information on status boards, giving watch standers up to date recognition on vital mission information.

Because of the changes in the ship's day to day plan, the blue lights shining above watch standers often symbolize the end of their rest period and the beginning of a long watch ahead. For Operations Department, their Sailors know this all too well.

The Operation Specialists (OS) in Operations Department OI Division have a broad range of skill sets and fundamentals that support all areas of naval combat. As Operation Specialists, the ship depends on their ability to interface in a Surface, Air, Underwater, and Sub-Surface combat environment.

"We're multi-purpose special players," said Operation Specialist 1st Class (SW/AW) Charles Baskerville. "There's a large work load for us, but there are also a lot of opportunities that arise from this job." For example, during land based fire support engagements, the Operation Specialists work side by side with Fire Controlmen to coordinate shore bombardments. While this is taking place other Operation Specialists are monitoring the air side of combat, keeping constant communication with aircraft. This Communication is crucial for pilots who rely on strategic information that can give them an upper hand during air-to-air engagements.

Back on the surface side, Operation Specialists are coordinating with the Quartermasters in the ship's bridge to navigate evasively away or directly toward a surface combatant. For this type of navigation a maneuvering board is used to obtain the ship's closest point of approach to the designated contact. This is done by figuring the range, speed and course of the contact and its relative



Operation Specialist 1st Class (SW/AW) Charles Baskerville stands watch in the ship's Combat Information Center

bearing to the ship.

These are all real life scenarios, which is why Operations Department Leading Chief Petty Officer, Chief Operation Specialist (SW/AW) Daryl Hickman touched on the mission of Operations Sailors and how their vigilance helps pave the success of other departments onboard.

"If Operation Sailors aren't performing up to par, then were hindering the success of other departments," said Hickman. "Operation Department has exceptional Sailors though, and by doing our job we allow others to concentrate more effectively on their jobs."

The Cryptologic Technicians in Operations Department OT Division are also key players in paving the ship's road to success. They are the electronic warfare specialist using electronic means of anti-ship missile defense. They put pieces



Operation Specialist 2nd Class (SW/AW) Jeremy D. Jones stands watch in the ship's bridge.

See **OPERATIONS**, Page 20

## OPERATIONS , From Page 19

of information together to give the ship early indicators and warnings. By doing so, they prevent possible attacks and help the ship prepare for necessary actions.

When they're not standing watch in CIC, maintenance on their counter measure launchers fills their time. They break down, inspect and clean each launcher, before reassembling and performing system tests. This attention to detail is crucial for the ship's defensive capabilities.

The Cryptologic Technicians (Collection) are the

# CLASSIFIED

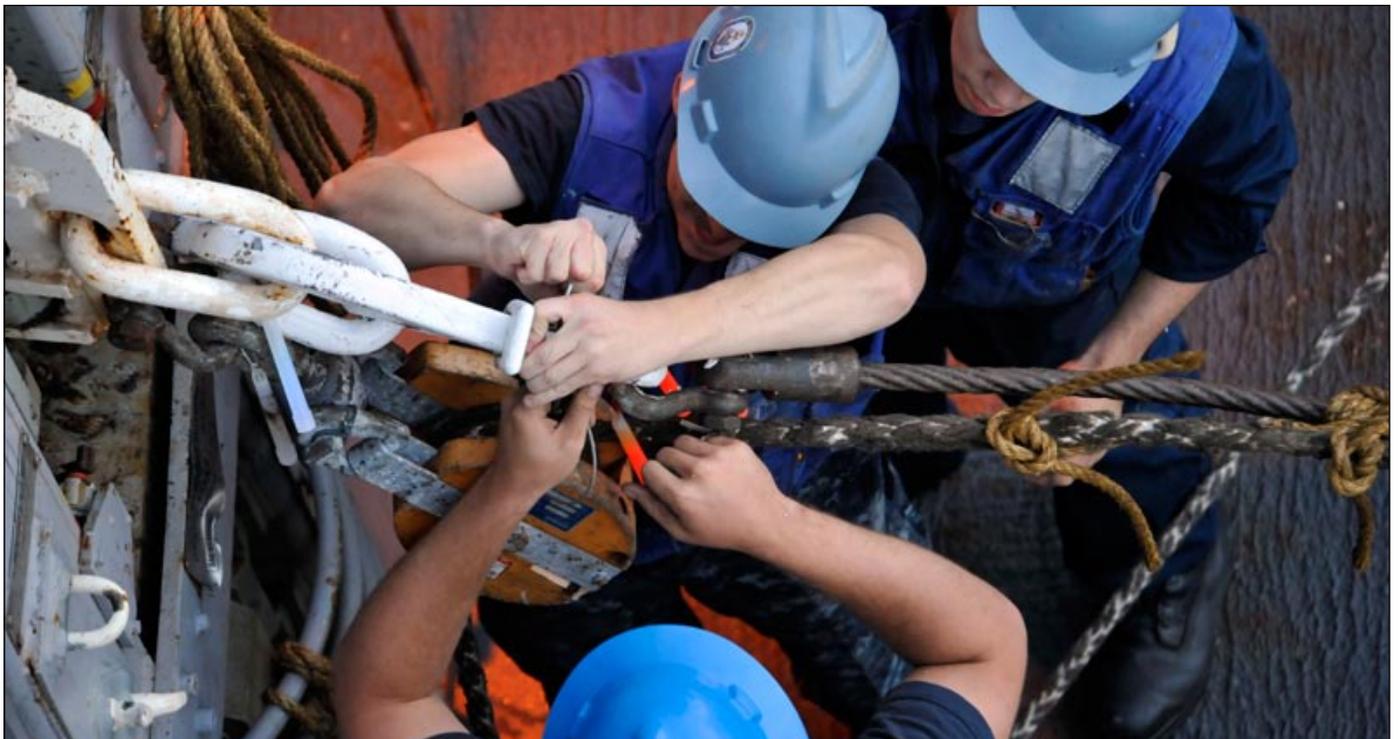
Taking a step outside to the exterior of the ship, we see a group Sailors unlike any other. When the first of the sun's rays breaks over the ocean horizon, the OD Division (Deck) Sailors have long begun rubbing sleep from their eyes. These Sailors are some of the hardest working on the ship, and for good reason.

They're in charge of maintaining and preserving a vast amount of the ship's weather decks. Their coveralls are testaments to their work, reflecting the unavoidable grease, paint and rips of yesterday. Non-skid, the ship's rough outer deck covering, is applied almost as fast as it's removed, and along with the non-stop painting, chipping and maintenance, these Sailors have more than enough work to keep them busy.

"I've already got three layers of tan on me," said Boatswain's Mate 3rd Class Anthony Orduna. When they're done with the day's preservation, they have long hours of watch to look forward to. By posting as the aft, forward and bridge wing look outs, some Sailors work continues well into the night. "Come left steer course three-four-zero, Aye!" "Conning Officer my rudder is left 5 degree's, coming to course three-four-zero sir!" The ship is steered into restricted maneuvering by the Helmsman on watch as the Boatswain's Mate of the Watch pipes away flight quarters.



Boatswain's Mate Seaman Michael Gomez and Seaman Blaze Gottfried wait in the ship's hangar bay during flight quarters.



## OPERATIONS , From Page 20



“Flight quarters, flight quarters, all hands man your flight quarters stations!”

Due to the frequent and unpredictable nature of flight quarters, some Sailors finding refuge with a few hours of sleep are uprooted from their dozing by the Boatswain’s pipe and proceed hastily to the ship’s flight deck.

Directing a helicopter to land on a ship at sea is always a challenge, but directing one at night can be hectic. Accounting for the many variables that affect its landing day or night requires the team work of both OI and OD Division.



A fueling hose is brought across to USS Bunker Hill (CG 52) during a re-fueling at sea.

Wind speed and direction, course of the ship, state of the sea and weather all influence the outcome of each landing; that and the knowledge of the flight deck crew.

Those skills are also put to use during one the ship’s most dangerous evolutions; Replenishments-at-sea.

Every week, hard hats and floats coats are donned by OD Sailors and the Bunker Hill crew as the ship maneuvers alongside a naval supply ship in preparation to re-fuel and re-supply.

When whistles are blown and lines are shot across by the ship’s Gunners Mates, the crew begins the process of heaving rope and bringing the fueling lines across. Simultaneously, a connective replenishment is taking

place. Lines are heaved once again, erecting a span wire and connecting both the supply ship and Bunker Hill in order to carry pallets of food,

parts and mail on board.

As replenishment lines are broken, and the ship’s part ways, Bunker Hill will have taken over 40 pallets of supplies and close to a half a million gallons of fuel. These extraordinary operations are accomplished due to the crew’s knowledge, skills and tools that are built on a foundation of team work and trust.

“They work hard, sweat hard and play hard; sometimes they don’t know when to quit,” said Lt. Chad Bibler, the ship’s Operations Officer. “They’re awesome!”



Seaman Dustin Jackson prepares to chalk a chain a helicopter on the flight deck of USS Bunker Hill (CG 52).

# AIR DEPARTMENT SAILORS PLAY DIRTY



Air Department Sailors pose for a photo on the flight deck of USS Bunker Hill (CG 52) during a fresh water washdown.

On board USS Bunker Hill (CG 52), music playing from a stereo competes with the clanking of wrenches and other tools in the ship's hangar bay. Float coats adorned one in front of the other and numbered cranials rest on hooks. The ship's flight schedule is slow today, so maintenance is in full effect. The Air Department Sailors of "Dirty Birds" Detachment Four are the ship's expert helicopter maintainers for "Scorpions" Helicopter Anti-submarine Squadron Light (HSL-49). Each maintainer has individual rate specific knowledge of their aircraft, and when used collectively their teamwork comes together to repair, maintain and keep both of the ship's helicopters flying.

Their day starts as the night shift passes down maintenance and troubleshooting issues. From there, each maintainer runs through a series of daily checks to certify the aircraft is sound and ready to perform. This gives them an opportunity to look at previous checks and ensure that small details weren't overlooked in the process.

Occasionally, the ship's flight schedule is light; providing a much needed breather to the maintainers and allowing them to catch up on work; but due to the ever changing mission of the ship, those breathes are often shortened when countless hours of last minute flight time

means countless hours of maintenance later.

"If they're flying all day then there's maintenance all night, and if there's flying all night then there's maintenance all day," said Aviation Structural Mechanic 3rd Class Jose Trevino

The ship's pilots depend on the maintainer's precision and knowledge in and out of the aircraft. Before take-off, the detachments maintainers stand by on the flight deck for any signs of trouble. If the pilots motion specific hand signals, the signaled maintainer inspects the aircraft to see if troubleshooting the error is possible. If the problem can't be solved while rotors are running, the helicopter is grounded until further inspections are completed.

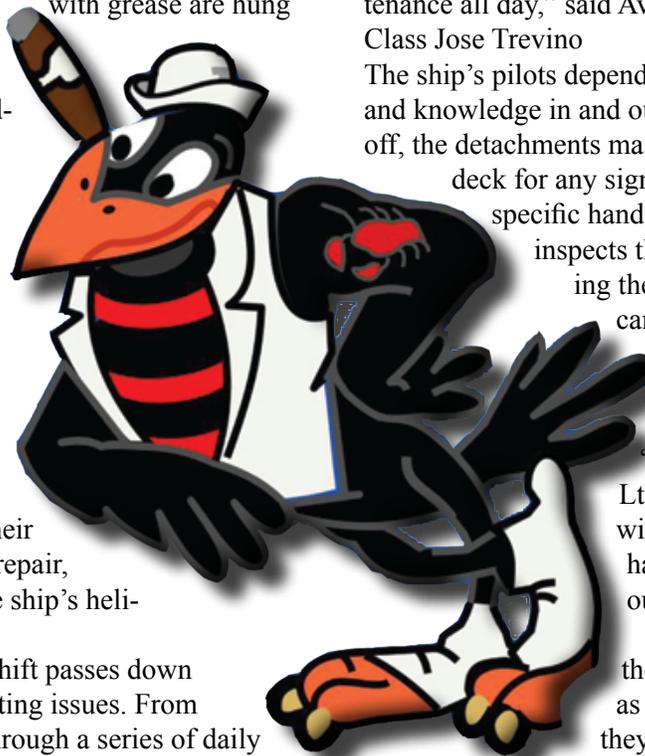
"Our guys do a great job," said Lt.j.g Dan Holian, a second pilot with (HSL-49). "They always work hard and do what they can to keep our birds up."

For a few of the pilots, this is their first deployment and serves as a testing of their abilities while they strive to earn their aircraft commander qualifications. Not only are they learning about flying, and the demands placed on being a pilot at sea, but their learning more about the aircraft through the maintainers themselves.

"They (maintainers) have a lot of expertise," said Holian, "We tap into their knowledge as much as possible; we're a detachment, we have to be self sufficient."

The passing of the maintainer's knowledge to the pilots

See AIR, Page 23



## AIR, From Page 22



pay off when emergencies arise during flight. If an emergency occurs, pilots go through various check lists, troubleshooting errors before arriving at the source of the problem. When the emergency is communicated back to the ship, the maintainers are standing by.

Keeping the helicopters up and running is a key priority of the ship. The aircraft are deployed extensively, broadening the ship's radar capabilities by providing over the horizon eyes and ears. The employing of infrared imaging is also used, giving the ship the ability to see at night and visually identify surface contacts. Without the use of the ship's helicopters, medical evacuations, search and rescue missions, personnel transfers and many other time critical evolutions would be less efficient.

During each flight the helicopters are accompanied by Naval Aircrewmembers who operate radar and electronic equipment used in detecting, locating and tracking submarines. They're also rescue swimmers.

Throughout the deployment, the Air Department has seen Sailors come and go. Some were due for transfer while others were called away on emergency leave. This hasn't hindered the group though, as they've adjusted and welcomed new Sailors to the detachment and continued to press through many challenging obstacles.

Whether it's the mechanics of the helicopters engine, electrical wiring of the cockpit, hydraulic control of the rotors or the weapons systems inside, the "Dirty Birds" use their coordinated skills to bring every asset of their helicopters alive. Their diverse personalities and non-stop attitude has added up to bringing out the best qualities in the departments teamwork.

"I think their outstanding Sailors," said Aviation Electronics Technician 1st

Class (AW) Seth Oberg, Air Department Leading Petty Officer, "I couldn't have asked for a better detachment."

