

Tropical Times

Serving the Footprint of Freedom



Volume 16, Number 16

U.S. Navy Support Facility, Diego Garcia, B.I.O.T.

April 21, 2006



MWR Photography Contest
1st Place - Underwater Category

Photo by Jon Schleyer

A Message from the Commanding Officer

Ladies and gentlemen of the Island Team,

It's Friday once again, and a much deserved weekend is upon us. The first full week back at the Island's water activities, whether it's been fishing, swimming, sailing, or snorkeling, has been safe, sound and fun.

Thanks to all for your patience.

I had the honor of presenting awards to the winners of the MWR Photography Contest last Friday evening at the Island Room. Thank you to MWR for another successful program. There are many talented photographers on Island which made the judging an extremely difficult task. All of the entries captured the life and beauty of Diego Garcia both above and below the waterline. Thanks to all who participated.

I want to thank Captain Wildgen and COMPSRON TWO for taking some of our tenant Sailors, Airmen and



British counterparts out over the weekend aboard the MV SGT William R. Button. Guests of the Button had the opportunity to learn what shipboard duty is all about. For many it was their first experience at sea, and they came away with a better understanding of the ship, its mission and the important part it plays in the global war on terrorism.

On a final note: Earth Day is April 22. To celebrate, we are holding a Beach Clean-up on April 28. If you can break away from the office, volunteer some time to participate in this worthwhile endeavor. The Public Works Environmental Office is spearheading the event to remove debris washed ashore at vital sea turtle nesting areas. Get out and enjoy the day while cleaning up the beach for a great cause.

Thanks again for all you do. Have a great weekend!

Sincerely and very respectfully,

Captain Birklund

Tropical Times

United States Navy Support Facility, Diego Garcia, British Indian Ocean Territory

Commanding Officer

Capt. Gil Birklund

Executive Officer

Cmdr. Mike Harber

Command Master Chief

CMDCM(SW) Brad Renollet

Public Affairs Officer/Reporter/Photographer

Journalist 1st Class Margallis

Editor

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Submissions are due to the editor by end of day every Wednesday. Inputs may be submitted via guard mail, in person, or e-mail at margallis@dg.navy.mil. All submissions are subject to editing for length, content and to conform to Associated Press and local style guidelines. Submission of information does not guarantee it will be published.

INFORMATION HIGHWAY

Island Color Guard Volunteers

The Island Color Guard is looking for volunteers. Anyone who is interested in becoming a member of the Color Guard team, please e-mail HM3 Maygra at maygram@nhyoko.med.navy.mil or call 370-4205.

Paintball Technicians

MWR is looking for paintball technicians. Individuals should have experience with officiating, marker and field maintenance. Anyone interested should contact Mr. Ed Pickens at 370-4333.

Diego Garcia Gospel Choir

DGGC Debut Sunday -- "On One Accord"

April 23, 1:30 p.m. at the Chapel in the Palms

with Guest Speaker: Air Force Chaplain Clyde Dyson

Flu-like Symptoms on the Rise

Submitted by Branch Health Clinic

Recently the Branch Health Clinic has seen an increased number of patients presenting with flu like symptoms. Because we live and work in such close quarters, it is imperative that we practice good hygiene to prevent the spreading of infectious germs.

The most important thing that you can do to keep from getting sick is to wash your hands. By frequently washing your hands you wash away germs that you have picked up from other people, or from contaminated surfaces, or from animals and animal waste.

What happens if you do not wash your hands frequently? You pick up germs from other sources and then you infect yourself when you

- Touch your eyes
- Or your nose
- Or your mouth

One of the most common ways people catch colds is by rubbing their nose or their eyes after their hands have been contaminated with the cold virus.

You can also spread germs directly to others or onto surfaces that other people touch. And before you know it, everybody around you is getting sick.

The important thing to remember is that, in addition to colds, some pretty serious diseases — like hepatitis A,

meningitis, and infectious diarrhea — can easily be prevented if people make a habit of washing their hands.

When should you wash your hands? You should wash your hands often. Probably more often than you do now because you can't see germs with the naked eye or smell them, so you do not really know where they are hiding.

It is especially important to wash your hands

- Before, during, and after you prepare food
- Before you eat, and after you use the bathroom
- After handling animals or animal waste
- When your hands are dirty, and
- More frequently when someone in your home is sick

What is the correct way to wash your hands? First wet your hands and apply liquid or clean bar soap. Place the bar soap on a rack and allow it to drain. Next, rub your hands vigorously together and scrub all surfaces. Continue for 10 - 15 seconds or about the length of a little tune. It is the soap combined with the scrubbing action that helps dislodge and remove germs. Rinse well and dry your hands.

It is estimated that one out of three people do not wash their hands after

using the restroom. So these tips are also important when you are out in public.

Washing your hands regularly can certainly save a lot on medical bills. Because it costs less than a penny, you could say that this penny's worth of prevention can save you a \$50 visit to the doctor.



**Next Meeting:
April 21 at 7 p.m.**

**Location:
Chapel in the Palms
Community Room.**

Everyone is invited to learn about what's out there in the night skies.

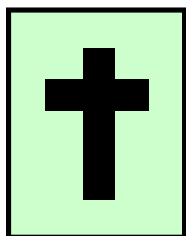
We will be setting up the telescopes (subject to clear skies) after the meeting.

GALLEY MENU *April 22 - 28*

Saturday	<u>Lunch</u>	<u>Dinner</u>	Wednesday	<u>Lunch</u>	<u>Dinner</u>
	Beef Rice Soup Sweet & Sour Pork Oven-fried Chicken	Turkey Vegetable Soup Baked Beans & Franks Steak with Onions		French Onion Soup Pepper Steak Herbed Baked Fish	<i>"Hawaiian Night"</i> Cream of Potato Soup Kalluah Pork Teriyaki Chicken
Sunday	<i>"Brunch"</i> Corn Chowder Minute Steak Fishwich with Cheese	Creole Soup Cranberry Chicken Breast Beef Stir Fry	Thursday	Split Pea Soup Assorted Pizza Chicken Alfredo	Velvet Corn Soup Broccoli Quiche Swiss Steak
Monday	Bean Soup w/Ham Hocks Hearty Beef Stew White Fish w/Mushrooms	Pepper Pot Soup Creole Pork Chop Beef & Corn Pie	Friday	Turkey Vegetable Soup Potato Bar Sukiyaki	Carrot Soup Lemon Baked Fish Baked Tandoori Chicken
Tuesday	Beef Rice Soup Lasagna Grilled Polish Sausage	Tomato Bouillon Shrimp Chop Suey Turkey Cutlet	<i>Due to unforeseen circumstances, it may be necessary to provide substitutions for food items not in stock, or to permit the timely use of perishable foods.</i>		

Transitions

Father Shuley
NSF Chapel of Faith



Transitions are a part of every person's life. We move from place to place, we pick up the next pay grade, or qualify for a warfare specialty. We phase in a new policy or phase out an old one.

These things are routine for us as military members, but as people of habit, we tend to settle in and adjust to the battle rhythm, or the operational tempo of our unit.

Saying goodbye to people is common here. With 52 weeks in a year, and almost everyone on a one year tour, 2% of the population changes each week. I have been here three and a half months, and already more than 25% of the folks I started with here are already gone.

At the same time, saying hello to new arrivals is also common here. The

challenge to us who have been here a while is to show the same warm welcome and courteous reception that we received to those who are newcomers.

In my staff corps, as a Chaplain, we tend to have a high rate of retention and high job satisfaction. There are several chaplains that I served as a Lay Leader under when I was in the Marine Corps, still on active duty, still enthusiastic about the job, and still beating the aging process. They are a great inspiration to me. Because having been out of the Marines for over 15 years now, I can guarantee you that in 15 years I will be long retired from the military, and back in civilian ministry.

That will be a difficult transition when it comes. But with every transition comes a new opportunity. I would like to recommend that you take a look at your upcoming transitions as a person, as a military member, as a member of a family, as a team member in your work area, etc. and look at the ways you can praise the Creator and take care of his people.

Continued success and happiness to those who depart our special community here in Diego Garcia! I pray for your future joy and fulfillment. I pray in thanksgiving for having the chance to be part of your lives, and to transition into new areas of my own life with your help and inspiration.



UNITED THROUGH READING

In coordination with the Naval Media Center, the United Through Reading program is offered every Tuesday, 10 a.m. at the Liberty Center.

Read a book to your child on tape and send it home. The VHS tape is provided free of charge.

Please contact the NSF Chapel for more information by calling 370-4601.

Diego Garcia Island Church Services

The Chapel in the Palms 370-4601

ROMAN CATHOLIC

Confession/Rosary/Novena

Saturday 7 p.m.
Sunday 7:30 a.m.

Catholic Mass

Saturday 7:30 p.m.
Sunday 8 a.m.
Monday-Friday 11:30 a.m.

Choir Rehearsal

Thursday 7 p.m.

Note: Confession is also done by appointment.

ISLAMIC

Jum'ha

CHURCH OF CHRIST

Sunday Worship
10 a.m.

The Chapel in the Palms 370-4601

PROTESTANT

Traditional Protestant Worship

Sunday 9 a.m.

Sunday Bible Study

9:30 a.m.

Contemporary Protestant Worship

Sunday 10:30 a.m.

Gospel Service

Sunday 1:30 p.m.

Bible Study

Tuesday 7 p.m.

Bible Study

Wednesday 7 p.m.

Iglesia ni Cristo

English Worship Service

Thursday 5 a.m.

Tagalog Worship Service

7:30 p.m.

English Worship Service

Saturday 7:30 p.m.

Camp Justice Chapel 370-4959

Bible Study

Tuesday and Thursday 7 p.m.

Chapel Movie Night

Monday 7 p.m.

General Protestant Service

Sunday 9 a.m.

Fellowship Time

Sunday 10 a.m.

CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST

OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

Sunday Worship

1 p.m.

Hindu Temple

Seabreeze Village

Fellowship Service

Thursday 7 p.m.

Sacred Heart of Jesus Chapel 370-2956

Daily Rosary

5:45 p.m.

Theological Formation

Weekdays 7 p.m.

Sacred Heart of Jesus Chapel 370-2956

Evening Mass

Weekdays 6 p.m.

Saturday Mass

5:30 a.m. and 7 p.m.

Sunday Mass

8 a.m. and 7 p.m.

Friday Bible Study

7 p.m.

*Confession After Mass

Palmsville Village Mass

Every First Friday 7:30 p.m.

Prayer Meeting

Wednesday 8 p.m.

Christian's Den

Band Practice

Tuesday and Saturday 8 p.m.

Tagalog Bible Study

Wednesday 7 p.m.

Tagalog Fellowship

Thursday 7 p.m.

Contemporary

Christian Service

Sunday 7 p.m.



Command Master Chief's DG Spotlight



The purpose of the DG Spotlight is to reach out and recognize outstanding enlisted military personnel of all commands who work on Diego Garcia in support of the island mission. This week's DG Spotlight is focused on personnel serving at the Mission Support Facility and Security Department. Bravo Zulu and keep up the great work!

Mission Support Facility



Name: CTM2 Canton Cole
Hometown: Grand Island, Nebraska
Job Title: Air Traffic Controller
Time in Service: 4 Years, 10 Months
Time on Island: 4 Months

What I like about my job: "I like the unique and challenging opportunities in a constantly evolving technical field. There is always something new to learn."

Security Department



Name: MASN Jessica Marquardt
Hometown: Canistota, South Dakota
Job Title: LPO, Preventive Maintenance
Time in Service: 3 Years, 9 Months
Time on Island: 3 Months

What I like about my job: "I like working with the different services and countries. There is so much responsibility and so many people count on you to do the right thing so that the mission is completed. My friends and family love the fact that I am a U.S. Navy Police Officer."

HQ USPACOM Force Protection (FP) Advisory Message

All DoD personnel must consider carefully the risks of traveling to the Philippines. The country has recently experienced an increased threat from extortionists by both kidnap for ransom and bombing operations as evidenced by the bus bombing in the southern Philippines. Terrorist groups, including Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), and New Peoples Army (NPA), are active in various areas throughout the Philippines.

Historically, the Philippines has experienced bombs exploding in shopping malls, on public transportation, at airports and port

facilities, in places of worship, and in other public areas resulting in numerous casualties, including several deaths. DoD personnel should be aware that terrorists could seek soft targets as most official facilities have increased security measures in place. Such soft targets could include but are not limited to places where Americans and other westerners live, congregate, shop or visit, including hotels, clubs, restaurants, shopping centers, identifiably western businesses, housing compounds, transportation systems, places of worship, schools, or public recreation events.

DoD personnel are advised to review their security posture, increase vigilance, and practice sound security procedures on a daily basis. A good random antiterrorism measure is to vary the time and route of movements to make your daily actions less predictable.

Earth Day



Tips for avoiding Spam

Submitted by NCTAMS
(Source: MacAfee's Website)

We recommend the following tips to reduce unwanted e-mail messages. Make these tips available to users to help them reduce the amount of spam they receive:

- Use a different email address or "public" email address when participating in news groups, joint contests, or responding to any third-party requests online.
- Avoid using a Reply or Remove option. Some senders remove the address, but others record the e-mail address and later send more spam, or sell the address to other spammers.
- Limit internet usage at work. When at work, do not access sites that are not business-related such as message boards, e-trade sites, internet auctions, and e-commerce sites.
- Don't post e-mail addresses online. Know whether your e-mail address will be displayed or used before posting an e-mail address online. Read the privacy policy on the web site before posting your address and opt out, if possible.
- Beware of purchasing products that are advertised by spam.

When you respond to this type of e-mail message, you often make more personal information such as your name, address, telephone number or credit card number available to spammers, which can lead to increased spam. Furthermore, in order to provide themselves with an income, spammers must issue large numbers of e-mail messages in order to get enough responses. By not responding at all, you can discourage this advertising technique by making it unprofitable.

Ship's Store Corner

AVAILABLE SOON

Remote Control Cars

SALE ITEMS

Various Lunch Meat

Hot dogs

Snicker's Cookies

Instant Noodles

Ruffles Potato Chips

Apple Cinnamon Pop Tarts

BIKE ORDERS

If you would like to special order a bike, you may do so at the Customer Service Desk. A bicycle catalog with prices is available to make your selection. Special order bikes take about 3 months for shipment to Diego Garcia.

SHOPPING CARTS

Customers are authorized to use carts to transport groceries from the Ship's Store to place of residence. We would greatly appreciate that you return them to the store.

SHIP'S STORE GIFT CERTIFICATES

They are offered in \$10 increments and can be purchased at the customer service counter.

Entertainment this Week

MWR Presents:

“Feedback Band”

Friday, April 21, Island Room, 8 p.m. - 1 a.m.

“DJ Jasper (Latino)”

Friday, April 21, Camp Justice, 8 p.m. - 12:30 a.m.

“Feedback Band”

Saturday, April 22, Island Room, 8 p.m. - 1 a.m.

MWR events this Week

Saturday, April 22

40K Bike Ride

Jake’s Place

Showtime: 8 a.m.

Starts: 8:30 a.m.

Sunday, April 23

Golf Tournament

Coral Sands Golf Course

Various Start Times

beginning at 7:30 a.m.

Monday, April 24

Off Road Bike Race

Jake’s Place

Showtime: 4:30 p.m.

Starts: 5 p.m.

Wednesday, April 26

UNO Tournament

Island Room

6 p.m.

Thursday, April 27

3 on 3 Basketball

Tournament

Fitness Center

5 p.m.

Friday, April 28

5K Fun Run

Fitness Center

6 p.m.

Main Outdoor Theater

Friday at 8 p.m. - **The Ringer**

Friday at 10 p.m. - **Aeon Flux**

Saturday at 8 p.m. - **Aeon Flux**

Saturday at 10 p.m. - **The Stone Family**

Sunday at 8 p.m. - **The Stone Family**

Monday at 8 p.m. - **Chronicles of Riddick**

Tuesday at 8 p.m. - **Check MOT Marquee**

Wednesday at 8 p.m. - **Check MOT Marquee**

Thursday at 8 p.m. - **Fantastic Four**

Officers Club

Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. - **The Cave**

Thursday at 7:30 p.m. - **Chronicles of Riddick**

CPO Club

Saturday at 7 p.m. - **The Fog**

Saturday at 9 p.m. - **History of the World: Part 1**

Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. - **Fantastic Four**

Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. - **Sleepwalkers**

Thursday at 7:30 p.m. - **The Cave**

Each movie that plays at the M.O.T. will be replayed the following morning at 11 a.m. in the Turner Club.
*Note: Movies are subject to change!

Liberty Center

Friday at 7 p.m. - **Exorcism of Emily Rose**

Saturday at 7 p.m. - **Nightmare on Elm Street**

Sunday at 7 p.m. - **History of the World: Part 1**

Monday at 7 p.m. - **Transporter 2**

Tuesday at 7 p.m. - **Land of the Dead**

Wednesday at 7 p.m. - **Fantastic Four**

Thursday at 7 p.m. - **Sleepwalkers**

NBA

NBA Playoffs

Sunday, April 23

Teams TBD (Live) 1 a.m. AFN SPORTS
Teams TBD (Live) 3:30 a.m. AFN SPORTS
Teams TBD (Live) 6 a.m. AFN SPORTS
Teams TBD (Live) 8:30 a.m. AFN SPORTS



Monday, April 24

Teams TBD (Live) 1:30 a.m. AFN SPORTS
Teams TBD (Tape) 1 p.m. AFN SPORTS
Teams TBD (Tape) 3:30 p.m. AFN SPORTS
Teams TBD (Tape) 6 p.m. AFN SPORTS

Tuesday, April 25

Teams TBD (Live) 5:30 a.m. AFN SPORTS
Teams TBD (Live) 8 a.m. AFN SPORTS

Wednesday, April 26

Teams TBD (Live) 5:30 a.m. AFN SPORTS
Teams TBD (Live) 8 a.m. AFN SPORTS
Teams TBD (Tape) 1 p.m. AFN SPORTS

Various Sports

All games are subject to change.
For more information log on to:
www.myafn.net.

NASCAR (April 22 & 23)

Busch Series: Bashas’ Supermarkets 200, (Tape) Saturday, 1 p.m. AFN SPORTS
Nextel Cup Series: Subway Fresh 500, (Tape) Sunday, 1 p.m. AFN SPORTS

MLB (April 22, 25 & 26)

Cubs at Cardinals, (Live) Saturday, 6 a.m. AFN PACIFIC
Marlins at Cubs, (Tape) Tuesday, 7 p.m. AFN SPORTS
Pirates at Cardinals, (Live) Wednesday, 11 p.m. AFN SPORTS

NHL (April 24)

NHL Playoffs: First Round, (Live) Monday, 5 a.m. AFN SPORTS
NHL Playoffs: First Round, (Live) Monday, 8 a.m. AFN SPORTS

Weekly Crossword

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14						15					16			
17						18				19				
20					21			22						
		23					24		25					
26	27						28	29						
30				31		32				33		34	35	36
37			38		39				40		41			
42				43		44				45		46		
			47		48				49		50			
51	52	53						54	55					
56							57		58				59	60
61								62			63			
64						65					66			
67						68					69			

Across

1 Ellington contemporary
6 "Cat on ___ Tin Roof"
10 Projecting rock
14 Warner ___, Charlie Chan portrayer
15 Church part
16 Angel's topper
17 Singer Ronstadt
18 Circus performer
20 Lord's land
22 Like a lion
23 Year-by-year accounts
25 Reverses
26 Whirlpool
28 Language of Sri

Lanka
30 Fitting
31 Part of a spur
33 Actor Romero
37 Hurt and disable
39 Mindless followers
41 Debtor's woe
42 ___ Penh
44 "___ my case"
46 Man, in old Rome
47 Mourning song
49 Unorthodox belief
51 "You ___ Love You"
54 More expensive
56 Casanova, for one
58 European tongue
61 Lively
63 "Cool!"

64 "Body Count" rapper
65 "Two Years Before The Mast" author
66 Law
67 Father
68 Christian Science founder
69 Abscond

Down

1 Fearless
2 "I cannot tell ___"
3 National hero of Argentina
4 Start right?
5 "The Mary Tyler Moore Show" co-star
6 Divine messenger

7 Shakespearean prince
8 Ellipsoid
9 Church hymn
10 "The Big Sleep" author
11 Proportion
12 Solo
13 Al et al.
19 Column style
21 Largest island of the Cyclades
24 Directed
26 Seductive woman
27 Colorful fish
29 Out of the wind
32 Tory rival
34 Golfer Ballesteros
35 Sacred bull of Egypt

36 Actor Calhoun
38 Restrain
40 "Fiddlesticks!"
43 Copy closely
45 Roman writer of comedies
48 Live
50 Give new hands
51 Song thrush
52 Friends in Firenze
53 English seaport
55 Attempt
57 Warty creature
59 Call it a day
60 Sharpen
62 Frankfurter link

Chagos Archipelago - A Sea Turtle Sanctuary

By Nestor Guzman
NSF Environmental

Before the establishment of the British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT) in 1814, man had stood upon this largest and most complex group of atolls in the world, the Chagos Archipelago. The Chagos Archipelago is a mixture of five islanded atolls; several submerged or drowned atolls and a collection of submerged banks known as the Great Chagos Bank. This un-spoiled chain of atolls provides a relatively undisturbed sanctuary for wildlife especially for the critically endangered hawksbill turtle *Eretmochelys imbricata* and the endangered green turtle *Chelonia mydas*.

Though Chagos Archipelago is available for defense and security purposes by both the U.S. and U.K., wildlife in the BIOT is protected under law and heavy penalties apply for infringement of the regulations.

Several studies have concluded that the migration of sea turtles in the Archipelago has gained international attention. In March 2002, U.K. became a signatory of the international Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of Marine Turtles and their Habitats of the Indian Ocean and South East Asia.

All seven species of the world's marine turtles are threatened with extinction due to over harvesting of eggs, destruction of habitat, widespread hunting for their flesh and shells and accidental captures in fishing nets worldwide. However, hawksbill and green turtles are known to nest abundantly on Diego Garcia. Immature green and hawksbills forage extensively in the lagoon waters. Crude estimates on the number of females that nest annually in Chagos are: 700 for hawksbill and 800 for green turtles while unknown number of leatherback and loggerhead turtles feed in the surrounding waters.



Photo by JOI Margallis

Several scientific studies have been done by both the Foreign Commonwealth Office and the United States Navy to identify critical nesting habitat and to assess the status of nesting population, population structure, growth rates, feeding ecology and patterns of migration. How turtles in the world are related is currently being studied thru DNA profiling. The most recent study is the survey of various nesting season and GPS mapping of nest locations for monitoring and continuing studies. Findings and recommendations were incorporated in the update of Diego Garcia's Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan.

EDUCATION AND AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS:

A strict Turtle Conservation Program is observed in Diego Garcia. Nature Reserves and Conservation Areas are established. November is designated Turtle Conservation Month with activities ranging from 22-mile beach clean up and fun run/ walk. Additionally, Wildlife Protection Regulations are emphasized during indoctrination to visitors and

island residents that violation to wildlife protection may result to prosecution. Likewise, conservation leaflets and campaign materials are posted in conspicuous places. The Naval Media Center plays an active role in advertising thru the radio and television.

One big problem that Chagos Archipelago faces is the amount of garbage washed to shore from trans-oceanic floating debris that pollute turtle habitats and nest sites. DG is not exempt, as debris is washed to shore by the strong MALABAR current from the direction of South East Asia. Approximately 28 truckloads of non-biodegradables are collected each year during the bi-annual beach cleanup to prepare the shoreline for the seasonal nesting of turtles.

Diego Garcia is also home to Turtle Cove where a large proportion of hawksbill and green turtles reside and feed. Two observation decks were constructed for enthusiasts to view foraging turtles, spectacular sea life and baby sharks. Considered as an area of worldwide significance, Turtle Cove may act as a protected refuge and a safe haven for sea turtles.

The **HAWKSBILL TURTLE** also called the tortoiseshell turtle is the most valuable of all marine turtles. The hawksbill turtle has a hooked upper jaw that resembles a hawk's beak and two pairs of large plates or shields on the top of the head, between the eyes. Natural, commercial tortoiseshell comes from these shields, which are black or dark brown and richly splashed with yellow. The shields are removed from the back of the turtle by applying heat, often while it is still alive. Hunted for its shell and eggs, this species is now facing extinction. The hawksbill turtle, as many other sea turtles is omnivorous, feeding mostly on invertebrates and can reach a maximum length of about 1 m (about 3 ft).

Continued, see Turtle Sanctuary on page 17.

Nautical Terms and Phrases... Their Meaning and Origin

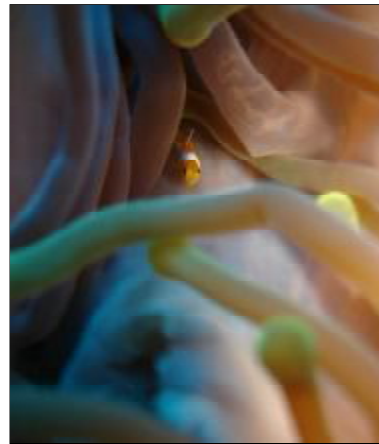
This week's phrase is:

Toe the line

The space between each pair of deck planks in a wooden ship was filled with a packing material called "oakum" and then sealed with a mixture of pitch and tar. The result, from afar, was a series of parallel lines a half-foot or so apart, running the length of the deck. Once a week, as a rule, usually on Sunday, a warship's crew was ordered to fall in at quarters — that is, each group of men into which the crew was divided would line up in formation in a given area of the deck. To insure a neat alignment of each row, the Sailors were directed to stand with their toes just touching a particular seam.

Another use for these seams was punitive. The youngsters in a ship, be they ship's boys or student officers, might be required to stand with their toes just touching a designated seam for a length of time as punishment for some minor infraction of discipline, such as talking or fidgeting at the wrong time. A tough captain might require the miscreant to stand there, not talking to anyone, in fair weather or foul, for hours at a time. Hopefully, he would learn it was easier and more pleasant to conduct himself in the required manner rather than suffer the punishment.

From these two uses of deck seams comes our cautionary word to obstreperous youngsters to "toe the line."



Jon Schleyer, British Training Officer, photographed this tiny Clown Fish peeking from within the safety of a sea anemone. The photograph was selected as First Place in the Underwater Category by the judges in the MWR Photography Contest. Check out pages 14 and 15 for more winning photos.

Want to share your favorite photo or two with the Island Team? Submit your photos with some information about the photo to JO1 Margallis at margallisd@dg.navy.mil. Photo credit will be given if published in the Tropical Times.

April 24, 1862 - Battle of New Orleans; Union Navy under David Farragut runs past forts into Mississippi River.

April 25, 1959 - USS Eversole rescues 14 Chinese Nationalist fishermen from their sinking fishing trawler in the Formosa Strait.

April 26, 1921 - U.S. Naval Detachment left Yugoslavia after administering area around Spalato for 2 years to guarantee transfer of area from Austria to new country.

April 27, 1861 - President Lincoln extended blockade of Confederacy to Virginia and North Carolina ports.

April 28, 1993 - SECDEF memo orders Armed Forces to train and assign women on combat aircraft and most combat ships, but not to ground combat positions.

This Week in Naval History

Source: Naval Historical Center

April 22, 1778 - Captain John Paul Jones of Ranger led landing party raid on Whitehaven, England.

April 23, 1934 - In first Navy movement through Panama Canal over 100 ships transited.



Tide Report

April 22 - 28

	High	Low	High	Low
Saturday	9:28 a.m.	3:07 a.m.	10:30 p.m.	4:13 p.m.
Sunday	10:57 a.m.	4:40 a.m.	11:28 p.m.	5:18 p.m.
Monday	11:48 a.m.	5:38 a.m.	-----	6:05 p.m.
Tuesday	12:10 a.m.	6:24 a.m.	12:30 p.m.	6:44 p.m.
Wednesday	12:48 a.m.	7:02 a.m.	1:10 p.m.	7:21 p.m.
Thursday	1:22 a.m.	7:38 a.m.	1:48 p.m.	7:56 p.m.
Friday	1:58 a.m.	8:12 a.m.	2:24 p.m.	8:30 p.m.

Answers to Last Week's Crossword:

1	B	O	D	E	D		F	L	I	C		S	C	A	M				
14	O	R	A	T	E		15	L	I	N	O		16	K	I	L	O		
17	S	A	L	E	S		18	E	S	C	A	19	M	I	L	L	O		
20	C	L	A	R	I	21	N	E	T		22	T	I	D	I	E	R		
			23	I	N	G	O	T		24	K	I	L	D	A	R	E		
25	A	26	S	L	A	N	T		27	G	U	S	T	O					
28	C	O	A	L	E	S	29	C	E	D		30		31	D	32	I	33	N
34	H	U	M		35	D	O	L	E	O	36	U	37	T		38	E	G	O
39	T	R	A	40	D				41	I	N	S	T	A	42	N	C	E	S
				43	E	44	R	45	I	C	A		46	T	R	E	A	T	Y
47	O	48	A	49	R	L	O	C	K		50	M	E	T	A	L			
51	S	L	E	U	T	H			52	S	A	R	A	T	O	53	G	54	A
55	M	A	L	I	C	I	56	O	U	S		57	R	E	G	A	L		
58	A	M	I	S		59	N	I	L	S		60	U	S	U	R	P		
61	N	O	T	E		62	G	L	U	E		63	S	T	E	P	S		

CREDO

Personal Growth Retreat

2- 5 May 2006

(Tuesday afternoon through Friday)

On board USNS Phillips



We're getting underway!

Call 370-4601 Now and join the fun!

Seats are limited.

The DG
Yacht Club



welcomes

new members! No prior
sailing experience necessary!

Meetings are held on the first
Wednesday of every month at

5 p.m. Come by for food and
fun!

Plantation Fee Increase

**Effective May 1, 2006 the fee
to enter the Plantation will
increase from \$1 to \$2.**



**AMERICA
SUPPORTS
YOU**

OUR MILITARY MEN & WOMEN
AMERICASUPPORTSYOU.MIL



Drinking Water Notice

This is to inform the public that the water from the tap (distribution water faucets) exceeds the maximum contaminant level requirements for TRIHALOMETHANE and is therefore strictly **NOT SUITABLE FOR DRINKING PURPOSES.**

Drinking Water (Potable Water) is regularly distributed in: white water tanks situated close to your barracks, 5-gallon bottled water coolers in offices and other areas, and hydro-pneumatic tanks located in all clubs and dining facilities.

For more information, please call the NSF Environmental Office at 370-4540.



USA Special Model

Calling all DG athletes!

The Branch Health Clinic is offering custom-made athletic mouthguards to help protect the mouth and jaws. Call the Dental Clinic at x4213 to make a 30 minute appointment!



LEAGUE STANDING SHEET

Results for Week No. 13 of 23 04/15/2006
DIEGO GARCIA MIXED LEAGUE 2006 - SEASON 3

Pos	Tm#	Team	-----Handicap-----						
			Won	Lost	Pct	TotPins	Ave	Gm	Ser
1	5	DET WON	72.0	32.0	69.2	27181	696	755	2223
2	16	RULES OF ENGAGEMENT	71.0	33.0	68.3	26457	678	803	2257
3	4	PORT OPS SHERIFFS	70.0	34.0	67.3	26649	683	774	2230
4	18	COOL RAVEN	66.0	38.0	63.5	27034	693	826	2237
5	7	HARBOR OOPS	64.0	40.0	61.5	27337	700	821	2258
6	22	OCEA 3	64.0	40.0	61.5	26530	680	765	2192
7	12	GUTTER DUSTERS	62.0	42.0	59.6	27048	693	789	2326
8	15	USS CENTER	59.0	45.0	56.7	26694	684	770	2253
9	11	SPACE BALLS	58.0	46.0	55.8	26765	686	783	2178
10	10	STEW BURNERS	57.0	47.0	54.8	27144	696	830	2286
11	21	LUCKY STRIKES	55.0	49.0	52.9	24235	673	757	2224
12	17	UNFORGIVEN	54.0	50.0	51.9	26443	678	775	2271
13	14	P.A.T.	52.0	52.0	50.0	27062	693	762	2178
14	1	SCRUBS	52.0	52.0	50.0	26316	674	751	2155
15	8	TURTLES	52.0	52.0	50.0	25423	651	735	2093
16	13	OCEA 1	50.0	54.0	48.1	26874	689	786	2174
17	20	PSN	50.0	54.0	48.1	23505	652	741	2118
18	6	C&W ALL STARS	44.0	60.0	42.3	26445	678	740	2158
19	2	THE OLDIES	32.0	72.0	30.8	19706	656	753	2070
20	9	SOCKS MANDATORY	30.0	74.0	28.8	23741	659	773	2163
21	19	THE YOUNGBUCKS	20.0	84.0	19.2	15502	645	732	2122
22	3	GHOST ONE	0.0	0.0	0.0				

Board Games Competition

Event held April 18

Dominos

- 1st - Jerimiah Smiley (40 EMXS)
- 2nd - Juan Carillo (AF)
- 3rd - Tim Carrington (BHC)

Chess

- 1st - Jerry Rapapdas (DG21)
- 2nd - Arnel Perez (DG21)
- 3rd - Rudy Rosales (DG21)

Spades

- 1st - James Gaskill (DG21)
Danny Frey (PSD)
- 2nd - Gregory Tormaschy
Douglas Gorisch
- 3rd - Tim Merz (AF)
Rolly Versoza (DG21)



(l to r) First place in chess: Jerry Rapapdas; first place team in spades: Danny Frey and James Gaskill; and first place in dominos: Jerimiah Smiley. Congratulations!



Bowling Tournament

Tournament held April 16.

Men

- 1st - Fernan Gasmin (NSF) 593
- 2nd - Lou Trembly (PACAF) 585

3rd - Donald Ilano (DG21) 567

Women

- 1st - Beth del Pilar (PACAF) 529
- 2nd - Janet Bennett (PWD) 461
- 3rd - Luz Magpoc (DG21) 421

Triathlon

Event held April 15

Time in hh:mm:ss

Men (29 & under)

1st - Eric Gould (OBREGON) 1:17:59

2nd - Jesse Lamarand (20 EBS) 1:46:00

Men (30 - 39)

1st - Fernan Salengga (DG21) 1:25:30

2nd - Steve Hasstedt (AMC) 1:27:27

3rd - Chris Chandler (EBS) 1:34:18

Men (40 - 49)

1st - Greg Bell (EBS) 1:04:45

2nd - Jojo Eugenio (DG21) 1:20:21

3rd - Larry Littrell (PACAF) 1:42:55

Men (50 & over)

1st - Larry Godek (OBREGON) 1:43:56

Women (29 & under)

1st - Ellen Serra (EBS) 1:31:26

Women (30 - 39)

1st - Dianna dela Torre (EBS) 1:36:32

2nd - Shannon Murray (BMC) 1:40:10

Women (40 - 49)

1st - Margaret Webb (BHC) 2:15:20

Team

1st - Jasper Salandanan (DG21) 1:08:59

Michael Estanislao

Joe dela Paz

2nd - Janet Bennett (PWD) 1:18:03

Pat Ligeralde

James Finch

3rd - Junnicel Flormata (DG21) 1:26:08

Arnold Limon (NSF)

Photos by Captain Rafael Vargas, 20th EBS



MWR Photography Contest Results

It's official, the MWR Photography Contest, under the coordination of JO1 Margallis, is over, and the winners were announced last Friday in the Island Room during an awards ceremony with presentations by NSF Commanding Officer, Capt. Birklund. Thank you to the judges Command Master Chief Renollet, PH2 Delano and Neng Dumlao for their time during the selection process. The choices were difficult, but they managed to narrow the more than 450 photos down to the top three and honorable mention in each of the nine categories. Thank you to everyone who entered the contest, and if you didn't pick up your T-shirt for entering, stop by the NSF MWR office. More winning photographs will be posted in the Tropical Times next week.

Underwater Category



2nd Place - Jon Schleyer, BIOT



3rd Place - Keith Cowell

Nature/Scenery Category



1st Place - Jojo Catipon, DG21



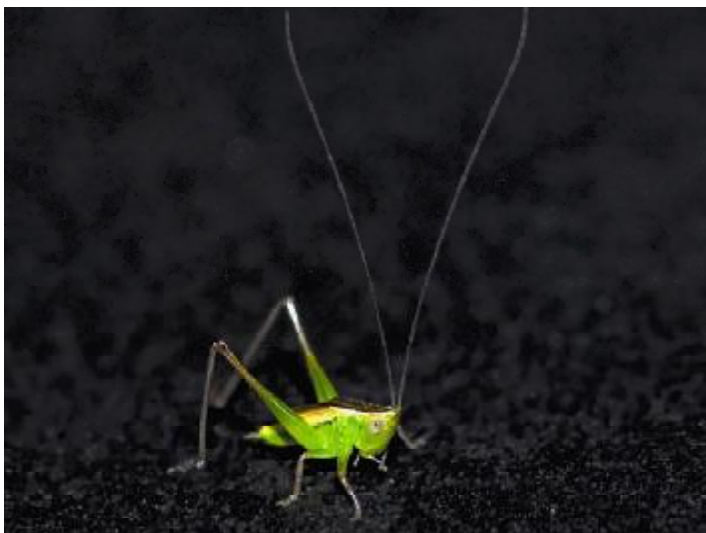
2nd Place - Nelson Evans, NSF SECURITY



3rd Place - Robert Farmer, 40 ELRF/POL

Macro Category

People/On the Job Category



1st Place - Niño Quijano, DG21

1st Place - Jon Schleyer, BIOT



2nd Place - Merlie Custodio, NCTAMS

2nd Place - CMSgt. Gooch, USAF



3rd Place - Bruce Armond, NSF ADMIN

3rd Place - Nestor Guzman, NSF Environmental

Navy Air Terminal Diego Garcia and AMC Airlift: Passenger Prioritization and Travel Tips

As the Commander of the Air Mobility Command (AMC) Detachment on Diego Garcia, it only took me a couple of hours on island to realize the question I would hear most frequently during my tour is, “When can I get a flight off island?” I would wager that I hear this question almost as often as the Ship’s Store Officer hears, “Why can’t we get (insert your choice beverage here) on island?” Our location at the end of the supply and transportation chain establishes limits on the services available to us, so I’d like to provide an overview of passenger airlift opportunities on Diego Garcia.

First it’s important to notice the sign in front of the passenger terminal, “Navy Air Terminal, Diego Garcia.” Across the planet the Navy owns many air terminals and through a Memorandum of Agreement between CNO and AMC, the rules of engagement are established so all military air terminals operate in accordance with the same regulations, the same information tracking systems, etc. On Diego Garcia, NSF owns the terminal, DG-21 (via the BOS Contract) provides the professionals who operate the terminal, and AMC funds the terminal annexes and provides the Quality Assurance expertise and oversight to provide training and ensure compliance with AMC Instructions. Our British allies and hosts on the island control approximately half of the terminal for customs screening and they also ensure personnel arrive and depart British Indian Ocean Territory in accordance with British laws.

Passenger prioritization

Military Air Terminals (AMC owned or Navy owned) all determine which passengers are manifested on a particular flight by following prioritization criteria established in AMC Instruction 24-101, Volume 14, “Military Airlift Passenger Service.” Passengers on AMC flights are classified as either Space Required passengers (duty passengers on orders) or Space Available passengers (allows authorized passengers to occupy surplus



seats after all Space Required passengers are accommodated). Space Required passengers are further categorized by the priority of their travel.

Priority 1: emergency travel

Priority 2: urgent travel (deadline, going TDY/TAD)

Priority 3: urgent travel (no deadline, returning TDY/TAD)

Priority 4: all others on orders.

Most space required passengers have confirmed reservations within the flight system (booked through PSD or TMO). If a space required passenger does not have a reservation, they need to check in with the passenger terminal, and upon presenting their orders, they will be entered into the space required backlog. The passenger terminal maintains this list and will move that space required passenger on the next available flight, according to their priority. It is only after all space required passengers are moved that space available passengers can be considered for any remaining seats.

Space Available passengers are also prioritized by category with active duty members carrying the highest space-A priority. Since Diego Garcia is a dependent restricted location, space-A travelers are prioritized by the following categories:

Cat I: Unfunded Emergency Leave

Cat II: Environmental Morale Leave (EML) – Active Duty or DOD Civilians

Cat III: Ordinary Leave – Active Duty on ordinary leave (not EML) house hunting or permissive TDY

Cat IV and Cat V (permissive TDY): apply to active duty family members (N/A for Diego Garcia)

Cat VI: Retirees and Reservists

In order to sign up at the passenger terminal as a space-A traveler, members must be on leave at the time of their sign up. All other things equal (active duty and leave status) the prioritization of space-A travelers is based on who signed up first; first come, first served. The space required and space available backlogs lists are updated daily and if you want to see where you stand, the lists are posted right next to the Passenger Service counter or you can call 370-2745 for an update.

Environmental Morale Leave is granted at overseas locations where adverse environmental conditions require special arrangements for leave in more desirable locations. The governing authority granting EML for Diego Garcia is PACOM (ref US PACOM Instruction 0201.2, Unfunded Environmental and Morale Leave Program, 16 SEP05). A key item in this instruction is the term unfunded. Since PACOM directs that Diego Garcia is an unfunded EML location, these passengers are still in the space-A category. When it comes to getting off of Diego Garcia on leave, another question I often hear is, “How can a civilian contractor on leave catch the flight while an active duty member on leave is left behind?” Leave for many of our civilian colleagues on island is funded and paid for as part of their contract so they are Priority 4, space required passengers. If these same civilian colleagues are traveling on un-paid leave as a space-A passenger (utilizing retiree or reservist status) they fall in the queue behind active duty members as Category VI passengers.

Continued, see Air Terminal on page 17.

Air Terminal,*continued from page 16.*

Sound confusing? All you really need to remember is that space required duty passengers always travel ahead of space available passengers. So how do you maximize your chances of getting off island when you want to? My best advice is to shoot for a window with decreased traffic to improve your odds. For example, PCS season peaks in June and July (lots of space required passengers) and a large majority of personnel on island try to take their mid-tours over the holidays in November and December. Avoid these high volume months and if you need to travel during that time frame, have a plan and be flexible – start your leave and sign up as a space A traveler to catch a Wednesday departure but be prepared to stay on leave and signed up so you're at the top of the list for a Thursday or Friday departure. Other items to keep your ears

open for are large site visits, inspection teams, DV visits, etc. These types of visits tend to consume a lot of seats and limit space-A opportunities upon arrival/ departure.

In mid February 2006 we started tracking the number of unused/open seats departing Diego Garcia to high interest areas like Paya Lebar (Singapore), Yokota AB (Japan), and Norfolk, Va. If you're curious, statistics from each previous week are posted on our slide show in the passenger terminal with the flight schedule. From 19 FEB to 1 APR 06, AMC has flown 141 empty seats to Paya Lebar, 68 empty seats to Yokota, and 49 empty seats to Norfolk, VA. Folks, any way you slice it, that is a lot of empty seating and any time we fly empty seats it means that all duty passengers have been moved with zero personnel signed up in the space required backlog and zero personnel signed up for space-A travel.

For planning purposes, East Coast

Rotator flights are generally scheduled every two weeks, departing Diego Garcia in the early morning on Saturdays. DC08 combi (passenger and cargo) missions usually depart DG for Paya Lebar in the early morning every Wednesday and each Friday there are both a DC08 combi and a KC-10 flying from DG to Paya Lebar. C-17s also transit DG en route to Paya Lebar regularly and if they have the space (cargo load permitting) they also release seats. Each time our deployed tanker comrades from the 28 Expeditionary Air Refueling Squadron (28 EARS) rotate, they release available seats as well (these are posted in the flight schedules and at the passenger terminal) so keep an eye open for opportunities that suit you. If you want to travel, do your homework by checking the schedules and if you have questions, call or stop by the passenger terminal, ask PSD, and enjoy your time off-island!

Turtle Sanctuary,*continued from page 9.*

The hawksbill reproduces like many other turtles. They come out of the water only during the breeding season. The rest of their lives are spent mostly in the water. They dig nests in the coastal sands and lay their eggs there. They return to the water after the eggs have been laid.

Hawksbill is one of the many species of turtle that is critically endangered. Nevertheless, its meat is rarely eaten and regarded as poisonous by most indigenous coastal-dwelling people. The toxin responsible has been identified as chelonitoxin and can be lethal if eaten. Although its chemistry is not well known, its flesh is highly toxic but the eggs are not. Some of the toxic effects include nausea; burning sensation of the lips, tongue and mouth; tightness of chest; difficulty in swallowing; skin rash; enlargement of the liver; coma; and death. The fatality rate for eating this species is high and there are no known antidotes.

The **GREEN TURTLE** is listed as endangered by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature. Aside from being heavily exploited for its meat and eggs, the Green turtles also suffer from the destruction and loss of nesting habitat and foraging sites. Humans have already caused the extinction of large green turtle populations, including those in Bermuda and Cayman Islands. The status of green turtle populations is difficult to determine because of our lack of knowledge about their life cycles. Chagos Archipelago and the Indian Ocean provide a pristine breeding habitat for the Green Turtle and numbers are known to be increasing in the area.

The green turtle is the largest hard-shelled sea turtle. Adults of this species commonly reach 100 cm in carapace length and 150 kg in mass. The average size of a nesting female is 101.5 cm straight carapace length, with an average body mass of 136 kg.

Hatchling green turtles weigh

about 25 g and have a carapace about 50 mm long. Hatchlings are black on top and white underneath. The plastron of Atlantic green turtles remains a yellowish white throughout life, but the carapace changes color from black to various shades of gray, green, brown and black, forming swirls and irregular patterns on their shells.

Females deposit egg clutches on high-energy (beaches with strong tidal and wave action influence) beaches, usually on islands, where a deep nest cavity (of 3 feet) can be dug above the high water line. Hatchlings leave the beach and apparently move into convergence zones in the open ocean where they spend an undetermined length of time. Foraging habitats are pastures of sea grasses and/or algae, but small green turtles can also be found over coral reefs, worm reefs and rocky bottoms.

(Sources: *Ecology of Chagos Archipelago, Marine Turtle Conservation and Management in BIOT*)

'DGAR'-based personnel experience life aboard merchant ship

Story and Photos by Edward Baxter
MSC Far East Public Affairs

(Aboard MV SGT William R. Button, Indian Ocean) Wearing life jackets, U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force, and British military personnel, head for the exits.

The order is then given to abandon ship and the crew heads to waiting lifeboats.

This time, only a practice drill, but, for 27 personnel assigned ashore on the British Indian Ocean Territory of Diego Garcia (DGAR), it was just small part of their experience during a three-day orientation cruise aboard Military Sealift Command's MV SGT William R. Button (T-AK 3012).

Button is a cargo ship contracted to Military Sealift Command (MSC), assigned to Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron Two (MPS 2)—based in the lagoon at Diego Garcia, the largest of 52



Senior Chief Storekeeper Tim Byng, USN, of Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron Two, checks the life jacket of Lt. Jerome Ragadio, USN, a Navy dentist assigned to Diego Garcia's Branch Health Clinic. 27 personnel from the USAF, Navy tenant commands assigned in DGAR, and British personnel, came aboard Button April 14-16, to experience life aboard ship. The cruise also represented a valuable training opportunity for both the embarked squadron military staff, and ship's merchant mariner crew members.

islands that form the Chagos Archipelago in the heart of the Indian Ocean.

Personnel from the U.S. Air Force, U.S. Navy tenant commands ashore, and British Navy and Marines, were guests of Capt. Tuck Hord, USN, Commander, Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron Two, and the ship's civilian master, Capt. Joseph J. Wildgen, as well as the ship's military and civilian crew, April 14-16.

The cruise involved a northerly transit towards the equatorial line, passing the Addu Atoll, the southern most island of the Maldives Island chain. Guests were also invited to participate in a traditional "crossing the line" ceremony.

"The cruise offered both an opportunity to experience life at sea and served as a valuable training opportunity for Button's regular crew," said Capt. Hord, who commands the 12-ship MPS



U.S. Air Force personnel assigned to the Diego Garcia-based 40th Air Expeditionary Group embark a lifeboat during an "abandon ship" drill aboard Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron Two ship MV SGT William R. Button on April 14. Button hosted 27 Diego Garcia-based USAF, U.S. Navy, and British personnel to a three-day cruise north, clipping the equator. Hosted by Capt. Tuck Hord, USN, Commander, MPS 2, and Button's master Capt. Joseph J. Wildgen, the cruise was designed to foster a better understanding of merchant marine ships as well as experience life at sea.

Two squadron. A squadron of 11 military personnel is based aboard Button, the flagship, but merchant mariners operate the ship.

Guests arrived aboard around 7 a.m. on April 14, from Diego Garcia's downtown area and from the U.S. Air Force's 'Camp Justice.' Capt. Hord welcomed the group aboard and discussed the MPS squadron's mission. Next, Chief Yeoman George Wooten, USN, the squadron's administrative officer, introduced key personnel and Senior Chief Storekeeper Timothy Byng, USN, talked about the ship's voyage, while Third Mate Matt Mrdutt provided a safety brief to all personnel—many of whom are unfamiliar with shipboard life.

"Thrust to starboard," said Capt. Wildgen, pointing Button towards the opening of DGAR's horse-shoe-shaped lagoon. Minutes later, the ship headed to the open waters of the vast Indian Ocean.

Once underway, guests were assigned specific 'tasks' aboard the ship in order to gain a better understanding of merchant ships and the close working relationship between U.S. Navy and merchant mariners. Some went to the bridge where they learned how to drive a merchant ship. Some even took their turn at the ship's helm and others learned how to plot a nautical course. Others helped prepared lunch and manned the chow lines in the ship's galley.

Button has a regular crew of just 29 merchant mariners, in addition to the embarked staff of 11 U.S. Navy personnel.

*Continued, see **Button Cruise** on page 18.*

Button Cruise, *continued from page 18.*

In the event of an actual crisis, however, the ship would have a surge of up to 100 additional U.S. Marine Corps and U.S. Navy personnel, in order to prepare for a speedy off-load of the ship's combat equipment and supplies.

By almost doubling the ship's company overnight, Button's crew was put to the test in their abilities to respond to an increase in food service, berthing requirements, and other services.

The cruise was also opportunity for Button to stretch her sea legs, completing her annual 'speed trial' requirements. By contract, the ship must be able to reach a speed just shy of 18 knots, which she did successfully.

Visitors included U.S. Air Force personnel from the 40th Air Expeditionary Group, British Royal Navy and Marines assigned to the Diego Garcia, and U.S. Navy personnel from various tenant commands, including the Naval Support Facilities' Branch Health Clinic and the Fleet and Industrial Support Center Detachment.

Just after lunch, Button's regular crewmembers, both military and civilian, mustered all personnel on the aft main deck, conducting an emergency 'abandon ship' drill. Crew quickly

assembled in formation so Senior Chief Byng could inspect their life jackets.

A radio announcement followed ordering all hands to abandon ship! Personnel were directed towards lifeboats, which were already being lowered by the ship's merchant mariner crew members. Once near the main deck, several crewmembers embarked aboard the lifeboat in groups of nine, and were instructed on safety procedures when being lowered to the water, and how to row the ship.

"All hands worked well together and we showed our guests just how strong the teamwork and camaraderie between the Navy and merchant mariners really is," Capt. Hord said. Guests were also treated to a cookout on the ship's aft deck and were also led on tours of the ship.

MPS Two ships are forward deployed and carry heavy combat equipment and supplies for the Department of Defense. On 24-hours notice, every MPSRON TWO ship can leave port and sail literally anywhere in the world and bring combat support and equipment the Marines, Navy, Army and Air Force need to accomplish their mission. Button is 673 ft. in length and displaces more than 46,000 tons.

Local Miss Philippines contestants visit ship

Story and photo by JOSN E. Jayce Fabrizio
Naval Media Center

Two contestants in Diego Garcia's Miss Philippines pageant visited the merchant marine ship MV A1c William H. Pitsenbarger recently.

Pageant contestants Emeleen C. Lontoc, data records clerk for the air terminal and Vanessa P. Sy, front desk clerk for Navy Support Facility billeting office, toured the vessel, mingled with the crew and promoted the upcoming pageant.

The beauty contest is a fundraiser for the Philippine Independence Day Committee, said Committee Chairman Master Chief Petty Officer Rudy V. David, Officer in Charge of the Personnel Support Detachment. The Philippine Independence Day ceremony is scheduled for June 10.

Aboard the vessel the ship's captain, Christopher O. Bartlett, gave the two contestants a tour of the ship from the bridge to the galley, highlighting various points of interest around the ship.

"We call those our cocoons," said Captain Bartlett, pointing to three large white structures. "Those are where we keep all the cargo, and it is all temperature controlled."

After the tour, the women had the chance to mingle with the crew next to the ship's indoor swimming pool, and sell raffle tickets for the Philippine Independence Day committee.

"Not every ship has a pool," said Captain Bartlett. "Everybody that comes out always wants to know if we ever fill up the pool. We only fill it up for special occasions. We filled it today specially for the visitors."

The ship's 25 crewmembers were happy to have visitors, said Captain Bartlett. After a 12-hour workday the crew has little time to socialize.

"It's a charity thing they're doing here," said Ship's Boatswain Allan D. Conaster. "It's good for the morale of the crew, and of course, everybody loves a pretty face."

After her first time aboard a ship, Vanessa said, "The people are very nice, and the ship is beautiful."

Vanessa and Emeleen are two of five contestants that will compete in the Miss Philippines beauty contest on Island.

"It's like the Miss Universe contest," said Master Chief David. "They will be changing into different outfits, and there will be a question and answer part too."

The pageant is scheduled to take place in the Turner Club's Island room on June 3.



The ship's captain, Christopher Bartlett, gives the Diego Garcia Miss Philippines pageant contestants a tour of his ship, MV A1c William H. Pitsenbarger.