

# TAKE NOTICE



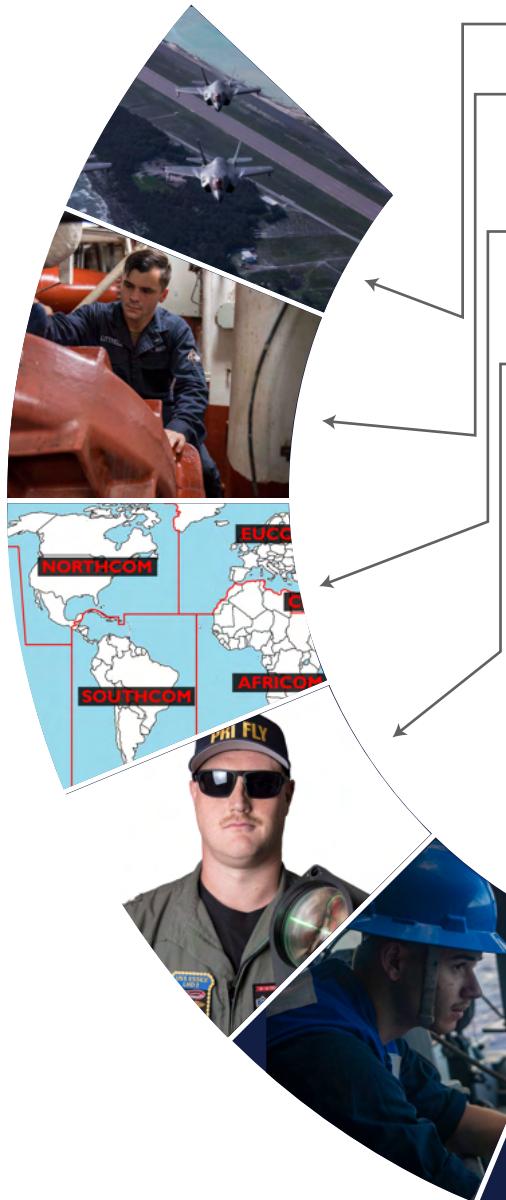
The Voice of the Iron Gator

4 August, 2018



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# Avengers: The Wake Island Story

By MC2 Chandler Harrell

Essex passed the atoll of Wake Island on Wednesday afternoon. It is a small place, with less than 3 square miles of land, no permanent residents, and an Air Force Base with only around 100 people stationed on it at any given time. You may have noticed that the F-35B squadron aboard our ship calls themselves "The Wake Island Avengers." You might have wondered why such a tiny place's name would be invoked by a fighter squadron. However, this island and the squadron that bears its name have an incredible history.

The island was largely unsettled and undeveloped until Pan American Airways built a stop for their island-hopper planes in 1935. A military base was established on the atoll of Wake Island in January of 1941. This base was staffed by 450 Marines from 1st Marine Battalion, supplemented by Marine Fighting Squadron (VMF) 211 and their 12 F4F-3 Wildcat fighters. Also on the island were 68 Sailors and over 1,200 civilians.

The Battle of Wake Island occurred just hours after the attack on Pearl Harbor, but it is said to have happened on December 8 as opposed to the 7th because it is on the other side of the international dateline. Thirty-six Japanese bombers from nearby bases attacked the island. The Japanese planes were undetected due to poor visibility. They destroyed 8 out of 12 Wildcats that were grounded at the time, while the four that were in the air shot down two bombers. Without their planes, Marine Corps aviators were forced to act as infantry in defense of the island. Fifty-two Marines were killed and 49 wounded when the fighting ended.

"It reminds us that every Marine is a rifleman," said Lt. Col. Kyle Shoop, commanding officer of VMFA-211. "When we lost those planes, those aviators were in foxholes. It's all part of our ethos. We support Marines on the ground, and then we become them."

In the following days, more Japanese raids came, including an invasion force of 11 ships and 450 landing troops. The Marines were able to fend off the raid with coastal defense guns and the remaining planes. The Japanese suffered 407 casualties, including all but one sailor from the destroyer Hayate, the first Japanese ship to be sunk in the war.

"It was our first victory in World War II," said Sgt. Maj. John L. Beckett. "It triggered a wave of patriotism that convinced Americans that we could win this war. It's not just significant to Marine aviation, it inspired the nation."

Capt. Henry "Hammerin' Hank" Elrod singlehandedly sunk the second Japanese ship, the destroyer Kisaragi, and shot down two Japanese planes. When all the aircraft were destroyed, he led the Marines on the shore in defense of the island. After being killed when the Japanese overran the island, he was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor and promoted to Major.

With the arrival of two Japanese aircraft carriers and 1,500 Marines, the Wake Island



garrison was forced to surrender to the Japanese on the afternoon of December 23. The Empire of Japan held on to the island for the duration of the war, eventually surrendering to a detachment of U.S. Marines on September 4, 1945.

The Japanese forced the American captives to build bunkers and fortifications in anticipation of reprisal by the United States. Throughout the war, blockades and constant raids by American forces led the Japanese to desperate acts such as hunting local wildlife to extinction to stave off starvation, and the execution of 98 American civilians by machine gun as a show of force.

One of the prisoners survived and carved a message into a rock near the mass grave where the prisoners were buried. The unknown survivor was re-captured and beheaded by Japanese Rear Admiral Shigematsu Sakaibara, using a katana. The message carved into the rock by the unknown

survivor still stands on the island as a landmark.

As the survivors from the squadron were relocated in May 1942, to Palmyra Atoll, they rebranded themselves as the "Wake Island Avengers" in honor of those lost in defending the island. The squadron continued to participate in World War II, the Vietnam War and the Global War on Terror. They completed deployments with Essex in 2005 and 2009. However, more than 70 years after Wake Island, the aviators of Marine Attack Squadron (VMA) 211 were again faced with defending against a devastating attack.

On September 14, 2012, 15 Taliban insurgents attacked the former British Army Air Base of Camp Bastion (now Camp Shorabak, in Afghan control), where 211 was stationed at the time. Lt. Col. Otis Raibel, the squadron commander, and Sergeant Bradley Atwell, a mechanic, died defending the flight line. It was the first time Marine aviators acted as infantry since Wake Island.

The insurgents were defeated by the combined American, British and Tongan forces, with all but one attacker killed and the survivor taken prisoner. However, seven planes were destroyed, the worst loss to military aviation in a single day since the Vietnam War. It is here the squadron earned their second, less well known nickname, "The Bastion Defenders."

In 2016, the squadron was redesignated as Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA) 211 and equipped with the F-35B Lightning II. Despite the new names and new planes they have had over the years, the squadron will never forget their heritage forged in the fires of Wake Island and Camp Bastion.

"We are proud to carry on the traditions ingrained into the squadron," said Maj. David Corkill, executive officer of the squadron. "We have an outstanding lineage that every Marine in VMFA-211 is aware of. We are all excited and honored to pass Wake Island and remember those who came before us."

VMFA-211 carries that legacy with them every time they go up in the air. You may notice that one of the squadron's fighters has the name of Maj. Elrod painted on its side. No matter where they fly, "Hammerin' Hank" flies with them.

# WARRIORS OF THE DAY



*SN Bryce Kahle  
White Water, KA*



*LCPL Lesly Olivos  
Los Angeles, CA*



*CPL Jaron Ruff  
Waterloo, NY*



*PS3 Sidney Nwosu  
Plano, TX*



*U.S. Navy*



*History and Heritage*

**1. Who was the first Naval Aviator?**

**2. What year did the Great White Fleet depart Hampton Roads, Virginia, for a round-the-world cruise to display the flag?**

**3. What was the first Navy warship to use steam?**

**4. When did the Marine Corps adapt the motto “Semper Fi”?**

**5. Who is referred to as the “Father of the Steam Navy”?**

**5. Commander Matthew Calbraith Perry**

**4. 1883**

**3. USS Demologos**

**2. 1907**

**1. Lieutenant T.G. Ellyson**

# WARRIORS OF THE DAY

***“People sleep  
peaceably in  
their beds at  
night only  
because  
rough men  
stand ready  
to do violence  
on their  
behalf.”***

*- George Orwell*



*LCPL Philip Koller  
Combine, TX*

*AM3 Ramsey Okdeh  
Jacksonville, FL*



*HM2 Kavonic Richards  
Edwards, MS*



*SGT Josue Chavez  
Harlingen, TX*



*QMSN Patricia Samson  
American Canyon, CA*





# The **BOILING POINT** of the Essex

Written by MC3 Molly Diservio

"Now each of us from time to time has gazed upon the sea and watched the mighty warships pulling out to keep this country free. And most of us have read a book or heard a lusty tail about these men who sail these ships through lightening, wind and hail. But there's a place within each ship that legends fail to teach. It's down below the water-line and it takes a living toll—a hot metal living hell that Sailors call the 'Hole'."

The poem "The Snipes Lament" speaks of what Sailors today call "the pit;" the deepest, hottest, and possibly the most dangerous part of the ship. Few outsiders understand the importance of the pit and the role the Sailors who work there play in completing the Navy's mission.

"We are the foundation and heart of the ship," said Machinist's Mate 3rd Class Austin Hamby, as he wipes sweat from his brow. "We do the work to provide for the ship so our fellow Sailors have what they need to do their jobs, to complete their mission and in turn

keep those back home safe and free."

The pit controls and maintains everything from the engine that propels the ship, to collecting

**"We are the foundation and heart of the ship."**

and creating potable water, and providing electricity. Chief Machinist's Mate Geobany Castillorosale explains how Machinist's Mates wake up and come to work knowing how dangerous it is, but take pride in the fact that without them and the nonstop work they do, the ship

cannot run.

"Working in the pit isn't for everyone. It's a different world down here," he said. "We wake up earlier, we work longer, and we don't get the time or opportunity to utilize the Morale, Welfare and Recreation events the rest of the ship enjoys. Our schedule is six on and six off, anything you choose to do in your off time is a sacrifice of sleep. It's all about keeping it positive, it's the only way to survive."

Those Sailors who work below very rarely see the sun or get a chance to go outside. They work in over 100 degree heat, surrounded by boilers and pipes carrying steam, hot enough to cause serious injury if something breaks. Despite this danger, there is a sense of accomplishment that comes with what they do everyday and the sacrifices made to keep USS Essex mission ready and operational.

"We walk through these halls with our heads held high," said Hamby. "Fellow Sailors may



look at us and see our dirty uniforms and think less of us or misunderstand what exactly we do down here, but that makes no difference. We know that at the end of the day we've accomplished something and provided common comforts to those Sailors who work and live above us."

The pit is a place where time does not stop and there is no pause or break. Many ratings come together to ensure the ship runs safely. Damage Controlmen, Electrician's Mates, Machinist's Mates and others all work as

one unit. Without the work performed by all these Sailors, the ship wouldn't have electrical power, engine propulsion, air

means, but it is a rewarding one," said Machinist's Mate 1st Class Arcadio Peralta.



conditioning, heating or the means to deploy.

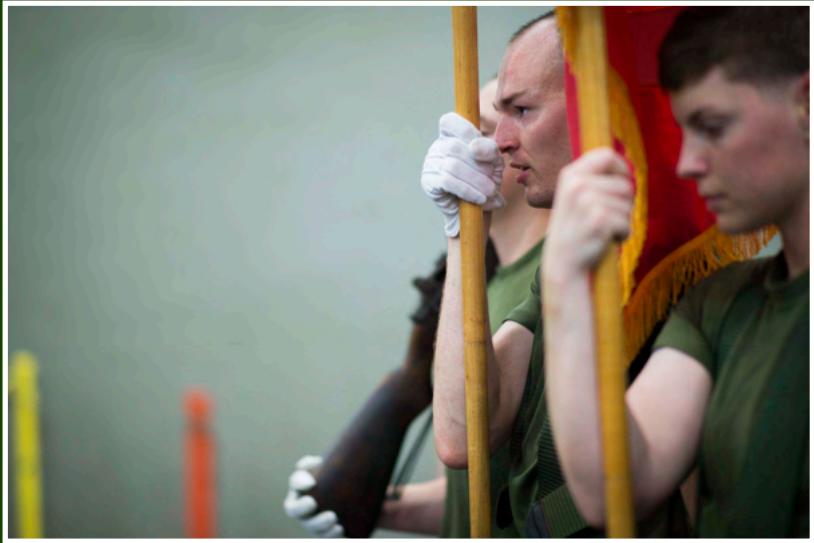
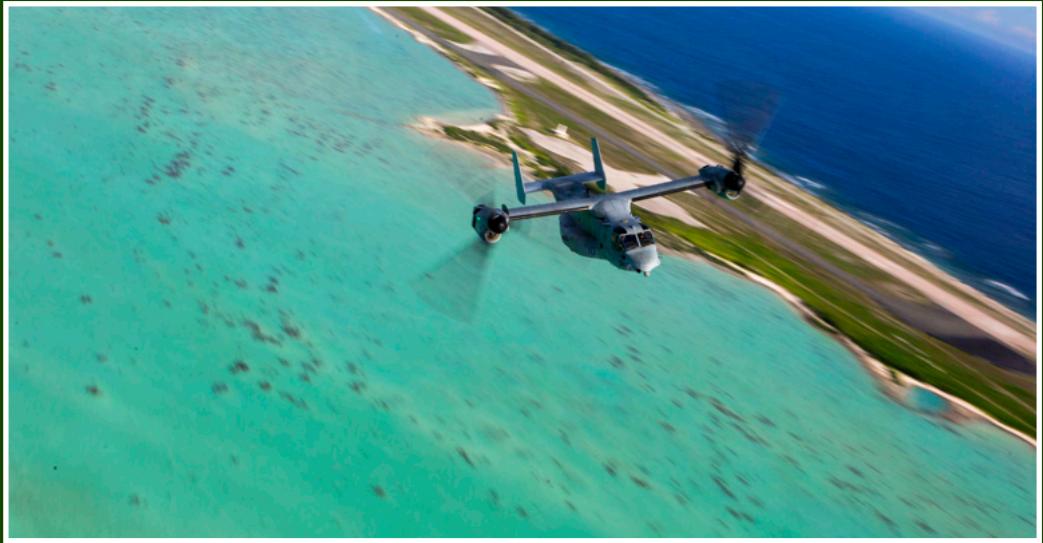
"It's not a glamorous job by any

The Snipe Lament concludes with a reminder to not forget those who work hard down in the pit, those who are easily missed because they are rarely seen.

"And thus they'll fight for ages on till warships sail no more, amid the boiler's mighty heat and the turbine's hellish roar. So when you see a ship pull out to meet a war-like-foe remember faintly, if you can, "The Men Who Sail Below."



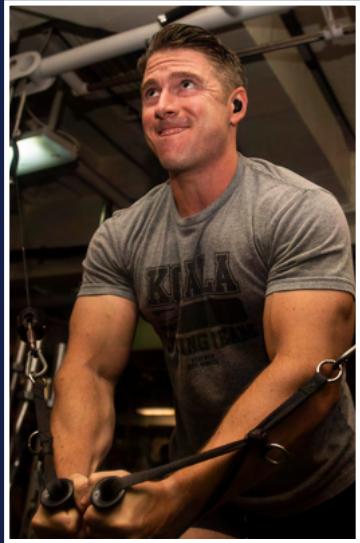
# THIS WEEK



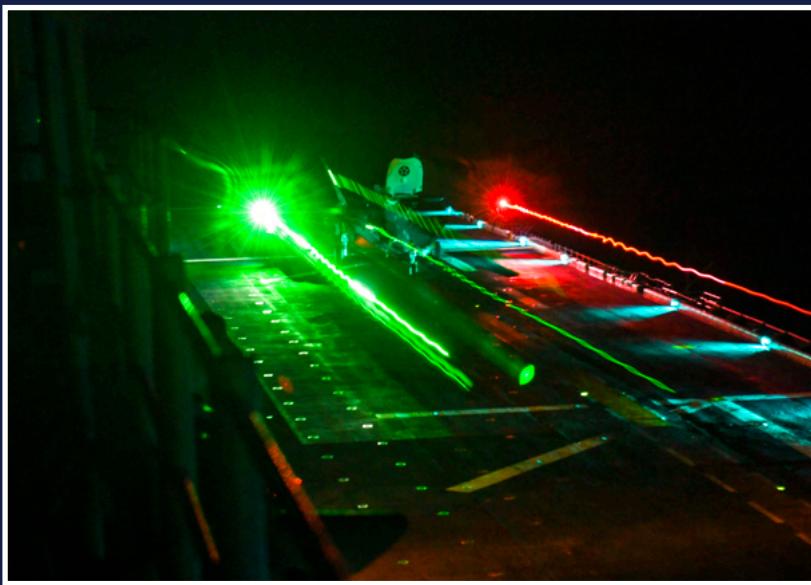
# IN PHOTOS



# THIS WEEK



# IN PHOTOS



# Command Managed Equal Opportunity (CMEO)



As the command climate specialist, AMI Watson oversees, leads and trains CMEO's on harassment, unlawful discrimination and sexual harassment issues. CCS's graduate from a three-month course of intense joint forces training, earning an NEC (9515) on identifying and correcting discriminatory practices.

The objective of the CMEO program is to promote an environment free from personal, social or institutional barriers that prevent service members from rising to the highest level of responsibility possible.

The Department of the Navy prohibits harassment and unlawful discrimination against persons or groups based on:

- Race: people who are identified by their biological traits
- Color: commonly understood meaning to be pigmentation, complexion or skin shade or tone
- Religion: a personal set or institutionalized system of attitudes, moral or ethical beliefs and practices
- Sex
- National Origin: an individual's or ancestor's place of origin
- Sexual Orientation: heterosexuality, homosexuality or bisexuality



## Country Western Dancing with CAPT Williams

Featuring music from Jason Aldean, Eric Church, Lady Antebellum, Zac Brown Band, Brooks and Dunn and more!



Sundays



2000



Classroom

*Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialist*

# The Navy Jack

## **PACOM - Pearl Harbor, HI**

USPACOM is in charge of using and integrating United States Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps forces within the USPACOM area of responsibility (AOR) to achieve U.S. national security objectives while protecting national interests. The commander of US Pacific Command reports to the President of the United States through the Secretary of Defense and is supported by multiple component and sub-unified commands including: U.S. Forces Korea, US Forces Japan, U.S. Special Operations Command Pacific, U.S. Pacific Fleet, U.S. Marine Forces Pacific, U.S. Pacific Air Forces and U.S. Army Pacific.

## **EUCOM - Stuttgart, Germany**

Headquartered in Stuttgart, Germany, EUCOM is a joint forces community responsible for conducting broad spectrum operations throughout Europe.

## **SOUTHCOM - Miami, FL**

SOUTHCOM is responsible for providing contingency planning, operations, and security cooperation in its assigned Area of Responsibility which includes: Central America, South America and the Caribbean. The command is also responsible for the force protection of U.S. military resources at these locations. SOUTHCOM is also responsible for ensuring the defense of the Panama Canal.

## **CENTCOM - Tampa, FL**

USCENTCOM directs and enables military operations and activities with allies and partners to increase regional security and stability in support of enduring U.S. interests. The CENTCOM area of responsibility spans more than 4 million square miles and is populated by more than 550 million people from 22 ethnic groups. The 20 nations of the AOR stretch from Northeast Africa across the Middle East to Central and South Asia.

## **SOCOM - MacDill AFB, Tampa, FL**

The United States Special Operations Command is the Unified Combatant Command charged with overseeing the various Special Operations Component Commands of the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, and Air Force of the United States Armed Forces.

## **NORTHCOM - Peterson AFB, Colorado Springs, CO**

U.S. Northern Command provides command and control of Department of Defense homeland defense efforts and to coordinate defense support of civil authorities. USNORTHCOM partners to conduct homeland defense, civil support and security cooperation to defend and secure the United States and its interests. USNORTHCOM's AOR includes air, land and sea approaches and encompasses the continental United States, Alaska, Canada, Mexico and the surrounding water out to approximately 500 nautical miles. It also includes the Gulf of Mexico, the Straits of Florida, and portions of the Caribbean region to include The Bahamas, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

## **TRANSCOM - Scott AFB, IL**

USTRANSCOM is the DOD provider of full-spectrum global mobility solutions and enabling capabilities to our customers in peace and war.

## **STRATCOM - Offutt AFB, Omaha, NE**

USSTRATCOM integrates and coordinates the necessary command and control capability to provide support with the most accurate and timely information for the President, the Secretary of Defense, other national leadership and combatant commanders. USSTRATCOM combines the synergy of the U.S. legacy nuclear command and control mission with responsibility for space operations; global strike; global missile defense; and global command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance.

## **AFRICOM - Stuttgart, Germany**

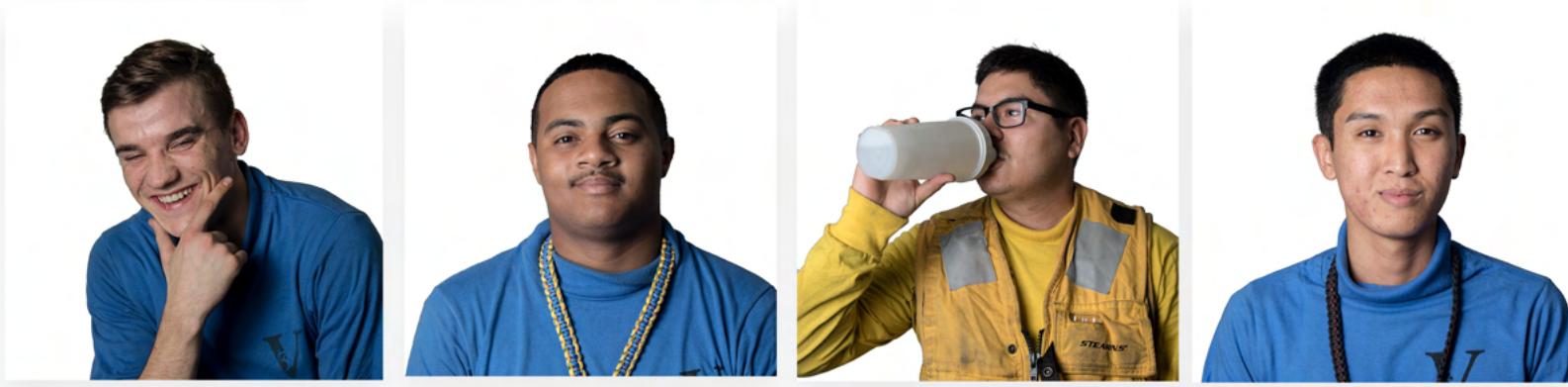
United States Africa Command is one of six of the U.S. Defense Department's geographic combatant commands and is responsible to the Secretary of Defense for military relations with African nations, the African Union, and African regional security organizations. A full-spectrum combatant command, U.S. AFRICOM is responsible for all U.S. Department of Defense operations, exercises, and security cooperation on the African continent, its island nations, and surrounding waters. AFRICOM began initial operations on Oct. 1, 2007, and officially became fully operational capable on Oct. 1, 2008. U.S. Africa Command, with partners, disrupts and neutralizes transnational threats, protects U.S. personnel and facilities, prevents and mitigates conflict, and builds African partner defense capability and capacity in order to promote regional security, stability and prosperity.



# THE FACES OF

"WE ARE LIKE A BIG FAMILY. SOMETIMES WE FIGHT LIKE  
BROTHERS AND SISTERS, BUT WE REALLY LOVE EACH OTHER."

ABH2 SCHUMAN





The multi-colored jerseys make the hard-working Sailors of Air Department's V3 division easy to identify. Chances are you transit their home turf, the hangar bay, daily.

The mission of V3 is the safe transportation of aircraft throughout the hangar bay, operating aircraft elevators and CONFLAG stations.

***"Our job is to get aircraft off the flight deck and into the hangar bay. Once here, they can undergo necessary maintenance and then get back in the air ready to engage our adversaries," said ABHCS Yarde.***

Managing one of the most trafficked spaces on the ship is no easy task, but the Sailors of V3 tackle this responsibility with professionalism and enthusiasm.

***"I'm absolutely blown away by their ability to transform the hangar bay to accommodate any tasking," said ABHCS Yarde.***



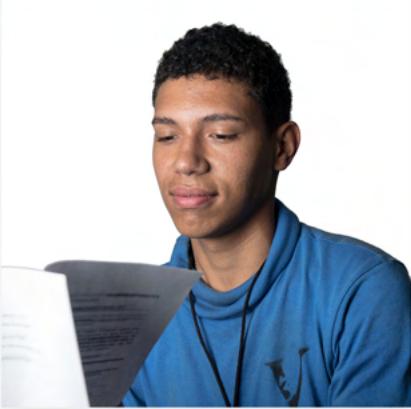


TAKE NOTICE



"OUR DIVISION IS MADE UP OF SAILORS FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE. THIS MAKES FOR NO DULL MOMENTS AND A WEALTH OF DIVERSITY AND EXPERIENCE THAT ULTIMATELY CONTRIBUTES TO OUR SUCCESS."

ABH1 GARCIA



TAKE NOTICE

# AROUND THE DECKPLATES

## WHAT'S YOUR WORKOUT SONG?



“Angel of Death by Slayer”

- ITI Sobolik



“III Mind 5 by Hopsin ”

-FR Skinner



“Eye of the Tiger”

- LCPL Townsend



“Grind on Me by Pretty Ricky”

- IS2 Watson



“Give It to Me”

- CPL Robert Guercio



“Sorry Not Sorry by Demi Lovato”

- CPL Rogers

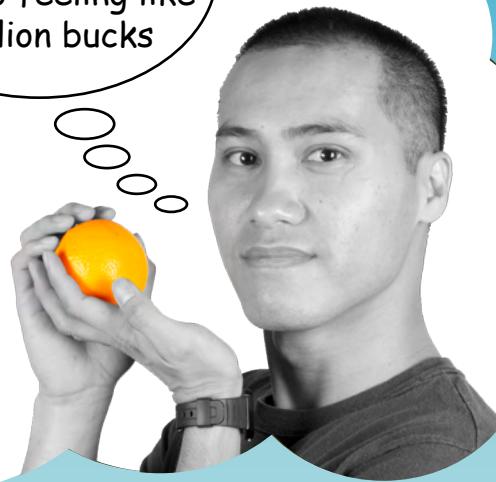
# Sampaga's Joke Corner

What do you call a security guard in a SAMSUNG phone store?  
Guardian of the Galaxy

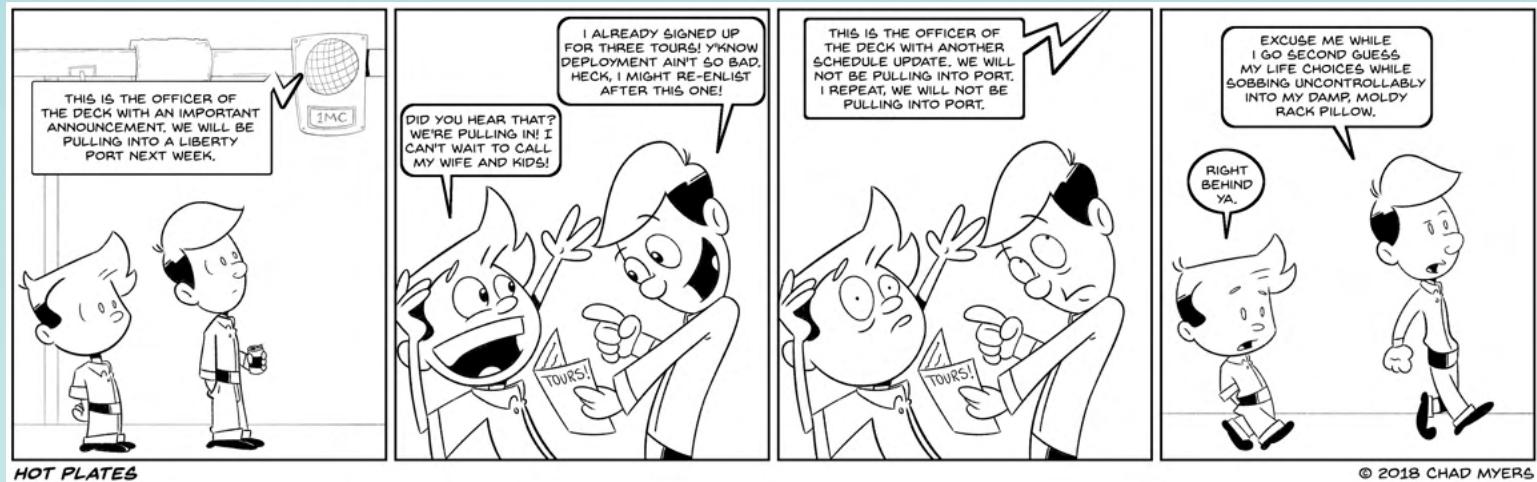
What are the three rings you wear when you get married?  
Engagement ring, wedding ring, and suffering

I'm kinda scrawny, so I had to quit my job as a personal trainer. I gave them my too weak notice.

It must suck when billionaires wake up feeling like a million bucks



Submit your jokes to  
[jenna.dobson@lhd2.navy.mil](mailto:jenna.dobson@lhd2.navy.mil)





**FOREIGN  
OBJECT  
DAMAGE  
KILLS**