

Issue 2
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Inside this Issue:

Dental Tech: The Crowning Edge of Technology 2

Cruise Officials Recognize Reagan, HS-4 for Med Evacuation 2

NDSL San Diego Employee Ends 51-Year Navy Career 3

The Three R's for the New Year 4

Sailors Save Civilian's Life 5

Items of Interest:

Become an active patient. Many people are somewhat shy and sometimes overwhelmed when it comes to dealing with their own personal medical issues. By becoming a more active and knowledgeable patient (asking questions, keeping a list of medicines, etc.), a person will have an easier time communication with a doctor and be more at ease with coping with medical issues. So what are the steps to becoming an more active patient:

1. Ask questions if you have doubts or concerns.
2. Keep and bring a list of ALL the medicines you take.
3. Get the results of any test or procedure.
4. Talk to your doctor about which hospital is best for your health needs.
5. Make sure you understand what will happen if you need surgery and what to expect after you have your surgery.

For more information, visit <http://www.ahrq.gov/consumer/>

Navy and Marine Corps Medical News

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Navy Medicine Learns Under Fire

By Marine 2nd Lt. Tyson Alexander and 2nd Lt. Sarah Lane, MATSG-21; and Rod Duren, Naval Hospital Pensacola, Fla. Public Affairs

PENSACOLA, Fla. - Marines and Navy servicemen are brothers-and sisters-in-arms and together defend America. This ideal has created the Navy-Marine Corps team that has been successful in operations throughout history.

Part of this success stems from the ongoing evolution and increased efficiency of the team, especially in the field of medicine.

The Navy-Marine Corps team works together to save the lives of Sailors, Marines, and civilians injured or wounded from combat or while on humanitarian missions.

Practice is the key to successful execution, according to Marine Capt. Dennis Wait, a CH-46 helicopter pilot assigned to Whiting Field

Naval Air Station Whiting Field in Milton, Fla.

Before deploying to Iraq, Wait's squadron spent many hours preparing for combat. At Camp Lejeune, N.C., as part of training, his squadron simulated casualty missions.

Once on the ground, during the training, the corpsmen quickly loaded the "wounded." As the helicopter took off the corpsmen practiced inserting IVs into each other as part of the training.

According to Wait, "The corpsmen would want us to maneuver the way we would normally maneuver, while they are in the back giving treatment and training."

Corpsmen, however, are not the only ones being trained to treat today's battlefield wounds. With the fluidity of the battlefield, every person involved needs to be trained on

(Continued on page 3)



KABUL, Afghanistan - U.S. Navy Lt. Cmdr. Frank Grassi, right, assigned to the Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan checks on a patient three days after an Afghan doctor performed a Pericardio Centesis procedure on her Jan. 3. It was the first time a pericardio centesis had ever been done at the National Military Hospital, and it saved the 15-year old patient's life. *U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class David M. Votroubek*

Dental Tech: The Crowning Edge of Technology

By Cpl. Mikaela M. Bravo-Cullen,
2nd Marine Logistics Group

MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP LEJEUNE, N.C. - Searing pain constantly rips through your mouth, shooting bullets through your head. Throbbing, swollen gums drive you to starvation, and chills rage through your body every time you take a drink of water, all because of one broken tooth.

Second Dental Battalion, 2nd Marine Logistics Group, can assist Marines and Sailors who may experience these effects by conducting ceramic restorations or even a crowning to relieve the pain and restore the tooth.

Second Dental Battalion, works hard to maintain the most updated and modern dental equipment available, such as the Computer Assisted Design, Computer Assisted Milling dental restoration unit, to better serve the Marines and Sailors

of Camp Lejeune.

For the past year, 2nd Dental Battalion has been using the CAD-CAM, which allows dentists to produce crowns and ceramic restorations of greater quality at a faster rate.

According to Navy Captain Ken S. Gore, the prosthodontic command consultant, 2nd Dental Battalion, the CADCAM gives 2nd Dental Battalion the ability to produce crowns and ceramic restoration in only hours, which in the past took anywhere from three to six weeks.

Gore also said that dental studies show that crowns made with this machine will last 10-15 years, compared to the old fillings lasting only one year.

"Let's just pretend a Marine has a filling in his tooth and he bites down on a piece of food and it breaks the front half of the tooth off," Gore explained as he began to



MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP LEJEUNE, N.C. - Navy Lt. Corey Sheppard, a general dentist with 2nd Dental Battalion, 2nd Marine Logistics Group, takes an optical impression of a Marine's tooth and designs the missing part using the Computer Assisted Design, Computer Assisted Milling technology Jan. 9. Second Dental Battalion, 2nd Marine Logistics Group has been using this technology for the past year to better serve the Marines and Sailors of Camp Lejeune. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Mikaela M. Bravo-Cullen

(Continued on page 4)

Cruise Officials Recognize Reagan, HS-4 for Med Evacuation

By Chief Mass Communication Specialist (SW/AW)
Donnie Ryan and Mass Communication Specialist 2nd
Class (AW) Christopher Blachly, USS Ronald Reagan
Public Affairs

SAN DIEGO - Princess Cruises honored the crew of USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) and Helicopter Anti-Submarine Warfare Squadron (HS) 4 during a press conference and recognition ceremony Jan. 6 aboard the cruise ship Dawn Princess.

According to Princess Cruise officials, the ceremony was held to bring together the officers and crew from Ronald Reagan, the Dawn Princess and U.S. Coast Guard officials who played major roles in the recent successful medical evacuation of a 14-year-old Laura Montero who was suffering from a ruptured appendix while on board the cruise ship.

Montero, who attended the press conference and recognition ceremony with her mother Trudy Lafield, was traveling with her family aboard the 2,000 passenger cruise ship when she became ill the evening of Dec. 14.

Captain Marco Fortezze of the Dawn Princess issued a distress call to the U.S. Coast Guard who then contacted Ronald Reagan, the closest ship in the vicinity with an on board surgical facility.

"I am delighted that Laura is here with today with her mother and that she looks so good," Fortezze told the group of attendees.

"It's very exciting for me to gather with everyone," added Fortezze, noting this was the first time everyone

involved in the medical evacuation was able to meet.

Ronald Reagan was operating approximately 550 miles away from the Dawn Princess at the time of the distress call, and both ships traveled throughout the night until they were within 175 miles for the medical evacuation.

"We communicated many times over the course of the evening [Dec. 14] and it took approximately six hours before our two ships were within range so that a helicopter could be launched," said Fortezze.

In a dramatic medical evacuation Dec. 15 that drew national media attention, an HH-60H helicopter from HS-4 was dispatched for the mission. Because the helicopter could not land aboard the Dawn Princess, a basket was lowered and the patient was lifted onto the helicopter. Montero was then transported to Ronald Reagan where life-saving emergency surgery was performed.

"Some people have stated that they are amazed and pleased that we would divert an aircraft carrier to rescue a single 14-year-old girl," said Capt. Terry B. Kraft, USS Ronald Reagan Commanding Officer. "What I would submit is that these kinds of things happen all the time and all over the world in our Navy. The spectrum of operations we're ready to execute range from disaster relief to full combat operations and everything in between."

"We were all pulling for Laura," added Kraft. "And although the Dawn Princess is a beautiful ship, we very much enjoyed having Laura and her mom as our shipmates for a few days."

NDSL San Diego Employee Ends 51-Year Navy Career

By Bill Sendt, Navy Drug Screening Laboratory Public Affairs

SAN DIEGO – Jon Winter's Dec. 21 retirement ceremony at the Navy Drug Screening Lab (NDSL) recognized 21 years of civilian service to the Navy. It also represented the end of a combined 51-year Navy career. Winter retired 21 years ago from the Navy as Master Chief Hospital Corpsman.

Winter was awarded the Meritorious Civilian Service Award during his December retirement ceremony for his continued outstanding service to the Navy. He said his retirement plans will not allow boredom, especially with grandkids, future fishing trips and more importantly, "the to-do list my wife has put together for me."

The retired master chief's active duty Navy career began when he entered active duty in 1956. His

active duty assignments include Oak Noll Hospital, and Naval Hospital, San Diego. In 1961, he was aboard the USNS Edwin D. Patrick while being transferred to his first overseas assignment when he met his future wife, Jean. They were married at the Naval Hospital Guam after a short romance. Other overseas assignments included a tour in Vietnam assigned to the Station Hospital NSA Da Nang and the 1st Medical Battalion, 1st Marine Division. Winter's sea duty assignments include USS Bon Homme Richard (CVA 31), USS Dixon (AS 37), and USS Constellation (CVA 64).

At his last duty station, Landing Force Training Command Pacific, Winter experienced what he told a co-worker was his most satisfying accomplishment in his military career. While teaching medical support of amphibious assaults to the

Marines it was "most gratifying to see our students finally see the big picture and grab hold of the concepts" that ultimately saved the lives of our troops.

After retiring from active duty and running out of projects at home, Winter applied for a position as a medical technician at NDSL. Since then, he has held a variety of technical, quality assurance and supervisory positions.

With family, friends, and staff members present for the Dec. 21 awards ceremony and farewell potluck, Cmdr. Kevin Klette, NDSL commanding officer, spoke about Winter's achievements.

"It's a rare occasion to be able to honor an individual who has given so much time in service to his country," Klette said. "It has been

(Continued on page 5)

Under Fire continued...

(Continued from page 1)

life-saving techniques.

Capt. Kevin Berry, commanding officer of Pensacola Naval Hospital recalled this taking place when he served as medical officer with the Marines' 1st Light Armor Infantry Battalion in Desert Shield/Desert Storm.

In 1990-91, he trained both the corpsmen and Marines on how to "put in IVs" and provide minimal medical care through a buddy-system, especially when a corpsman wasn't immediately available.

"I didn't know what to call it," said Berry, "but every single Marine with that battalion, and it must have been a thousand, learned how to put in IVs."

Berry said they also learned how to do the most rudimentary battle dressings to provide medical assistance to their buddy.

Still, battle dressing and stabilization of the wounded Marine, through buddy-aid and corpsman-aid, was only the start of the life-saving process. Medical personnel and casualty evacuation (CASEVAC) platforms had to be ready at a moment's notice and appropriately located in order to provide expedient treatment.

For follow-up treatment, the Navy-Marine Corps team kept doctors a few miles from the front lines working out of the back of Humvees or fixed-site medical-surgical units.

Lt. Col. James Kennedy, executive officer of Helicopter Training Squadron 18 "Vigilant Eagles" at Whiting Field, flew these missions while his squadron, Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron (HMM) 161, was operating in Iraq.

"While I saw some really terrible images during my time in Iraq standing the CASEVAC mission, I have never done anything more rewarding in my life," Kennedy explained. "I know there are men alive today because of the work we did while deployed there. They know that they somehow arrived by airlift, but they'll never know that it was Marines and corpsmen of HMM-161 who landed in the middle of a firefight to pull them out of there."

Marines depend on Navy medicine personnel and resources "to save their lives," said Capt. Paula McClure, executive officer of the Naval Hospital and former commanding officer of Bravo Surgical Company, Combat Logistics Battalion 2, in the Al Anbar Province of Iraq.

Berry and McClure, two Navy officers, offer the same description of what it was like serving with the Marines in a combat environment -- "surreal."

"But, the surreal became the routine," said McClure. "It was the most threatening time of my life, but I learned more in those eight months than the rest of my life."

As the field of medicine continues to evolve and increases its efficiency of the team, so will the future of Armed Forces medicine.

One evolution will be the relocation of the Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TCCC) course. It will be relocated to San Antonio, Texas, where all of the armed services military medical personnel will learn the same techniques and nomenclature about combat trauma care guidelines, good medical care and small-unit medical-specific tactics. In addition, the TCCC advisory board is tasked with bring-

The Three R's for the New Year

By Douglas H Stutz, Naval Hospital Bremerton Public Affairs Office

NAVAL HOSPITAL BREMER-TON - Resolve and Resolute about making a Resolution. These are the three R's a person needs to follow in the time-worn and sometimes iffy evolution of undertaking a New Year's Resolution.

Traditionally, embarking on the New Year, be it following the full slate of bowl games, sharing a toast, or simply grateful not having the mid-watch if on duty, allows many the perfect opportunity to make a concentrated promise and determined pledge to engage in some type of personal improvement.

Those initial good intentions do have a way of falling away, tailing off, and being shoved aside. Regular base gym patrons know that the initial weeks of January account for a sudden influx of more people working out, only to have the numbers gradually reduce back to the previous totals. Work, family, duty, and responsibilities all combine to compete with time-management for sticking to even the most common resolutions; getting in better (physical) shape and/or losing weight. Experts state one of the best methods to keep to any resolution is to not go it alone, and Na-

val Hospital Bremerton is there to assist all eligible beneficiaries with their resolution needs.

"Instead of going it alone, people can achieve their health goals by teaming up with our experts and people just like them who also want to live happier, healthier lives," said Janet Mano, Naval Hospital Bremerton (NHB) Health Promotions Division.

According to Mano, there are courses available at NHB to support people, such as Therapeutic Lifestyle Change (TLC) 100 class, 'Setting the Foundation.' In this course, people can set long and short term goals, identify and overcome barriers, and change negative self talk into positives. The course convenes January 23 from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., February 5, and March 1, from 1 p.m. to 3p.m. "The basis of all our course are on being interactive," explained Mano. "The courses focus on healthy habits and how to strive for a long term behavioral change."

Mano attests there's no pressure, no strict regimen to follow. "We're here to help anyone who is interested to get started," she said. "One question that anyone can ask who is making a resolution, is 'what is most important' to them?" From knowing what is important as a baseline, achievable goals can then

be set, along with brainstorming for skill building methods, and diverse needs like how to plan activities towards goals and how to handle stress. It's not rocket science, Mano admits, but by having a person articulate exactly what their resolution goals are, they then tend to be more achievable.

"We all need the skills and confidence to change existing habits," Mano said. "All of us at times do not give ourselves enough credit for making even small changes. There are small habits that have big rewards, such as simply drinking water instead of soda, being more active by taking the stairs instead of the elevator, and actually thinking about our portions of food before a meal. It's all of our small positive habits that can all add up to helping to reach a bigger goal."

Hospital Corpsman (HM) 3rd Class Jonathon Solonar, of NHB Health Education, has set his sights on a lofty resolution goal for 2008. "I plan on training for the Marine Corps Marathon," said the Chinook, Montana native. "A good friend of mine ran it before and said that when she ran by the Iwo Jima Memorial, she was moved to tears. Another buddy is going to join me.

(Continued on page 5)

Dental continued...

(Continued from page 2)

describe the CAD/CAM technology.

"Using the CAD/CAM allows dentists to take optical impressions of the Marine's remaining tooth and designs the missing part," Gore said. "The created information is then sent to a milling machine where a ceramic restoration is made. The newly shaped block fits inside the remaining tooth and then we bond them together."

"The machine also does crowns," Gore added. "Sometimes the tooth is so badly broken down either through decay or fractures that we're not just replacing a segment of it, we're replacing the whole thing."

Gore also explains that the crowning process is slightly more difficult than a ceramic restoration, but it can be better accomplished with this technology.

"The main reason we purchased the CAD/CAM is that we've seen a significant amount of broken teeth," Gore explained. "When I was in Al Asad, Iraq for about six

months, I saw more broken teeth than I have in perhaps my entire career. I attribute it to stress. We tend to clench and grind our teeth when we are stressed. We are hoping that by allowing us to get the teeth restored, we'll see a decrease in that kind of event."

Along with eliminating potential problems that could occur, this new technology removes the hassle of going back to the dentist numerous times for one crowning process.

"I have had three silver fillings on the same tooth in the last four years," said Cpl. Trevor A. Wood, a Marine with 2nd Tank Battalion, 2nd Marine Division. "I had to go back to the dentist several times for each one. The crowning process here only took about four hours and it's supposed to last ten years, so I'm pretty excited."

Along with less hassle and a decrease in dental visits, the CAD/CAM shows true promise in allowing the hard working personnel of 2nd Dental Battalion to continuously treat our Marines and Sailors.

Sailors Save Civilian's Life

By Lance Cpl. Shannon E. McMillan,
Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton

MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. - Saving a woman's life was not on the menu for three hospital corpsman from Camp Pendleton while dining at a local sushi bar in Vista, Calif., Dec. 14.

They planned to have a casual dinner out in town. The sudden sound of crashing dishes brought something else to the table.

"All we heard was dishes colliding and a little girl screaming," said Hospital Corpsman (HM) 3rd Class Margaret R. Reusi, with Company B, 1st Medical Battalion, 1st Marine Logistics Group. "The little girl was trying to pick her mother up off the floor."

Seeing the woman was unresponsive, the group rushed to her side to administer medical attention.

"We proceeded to the lady, checking her vitals and airway," Reusi said. "She started to turn blue."

The woman wasn't breathing and had no pulse.

With little time to spare, the corpsman started the steps of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

"I put her in the shock position as HM Vega started compressions and HM 3rd Class) Flores checked her air ways," Reusi said. "What seemed like hours of hard work were a few moments of fast acting procedures."

Reusi said the emergency medical team arrived after the woman began breathing on her own.

"When the EMTs evaluated her medical state, they explained that our actions saved her life," said Seaman William S. Vega, a corpsman with Company B, 1st Medical Battalion, 1st MLG. "The ambulance

would have arrived too late for her."

Vega attributed their success, not just to himself and the other corpsmen, but to their military medical education.

"We are trained to act in life situations, to finish our mission we need to know what we're doing," he said.

Vega has experienced high-speed, high-anxiety situations first hand during combat deployment. He said that if an emergency situation arises for corpsmen, they react in a heartbeat.

"We have two uniforms, military and civilian, but it's not like one moment I wake up and say I want to be corpsman and another I want to be a civilian," Vega said. "I'm the same person all the time, and when a situation comes up when I'm out in town, I'll be ready to help someone in need."

51-year continued...

(Continued from page 3)

my pleasure to work with Jon not only once but twice – first as XO and now as CO. You will be missed."

Winter responded, "I'll miss the people. It's a blessing

to be able to work for 51 years with some of the most highly motivated, professional people who truly care about their shipmates and their country."

Three R's continued...

(Continued from page 4)

As a fleet marine force (FMF) enlisted warfare specialist, it's my honor to do it."

Then there are some who are

following the theory that they simply don't need to make any resolution. "I don't need a resolution," quipped HM3 Wayne Dorman, NHB Anesthesia Department. "I'm like a Mary Poppins, pretty much perfect."

Others are feeling that they have a hard act to follow. "All my goals last year happened," said HM3 Krystelle Syster. "I advanced in rate, and got selected to the Medical Enlisted Commissioning Program. This year, I'm due (with baby) in June, and start school at Indiana University of Pennsylvania in August. It will be a busy year even without making any resolution goals, but I am going to try and be more physically fit."

NHB has a lineup of Health Pro-

motion classes to help anyone with their health, medical or physical goals and resolutions in such areas as Diabetes Prevention, Supermarket Savvy, Healthier Alternatives, Healthy at Heart, Medical Appointments, Aiming for a Healthy Weight and Maintaining the Momentum, and more, such as Healthy Shopping featuring commissary tours and cooking demonstrations and Baby Basic classes, that give support for expectant and new parents. For more info, call NHB health Promotion at 360-475-4541, E-mail at health@med.navy.mil, call TRICARE at 1-800-404-4506, or check the current schedule on line at nh_bremerton.med.navy.mil.



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