

BUMED Oral History Project
Captain (later RDML) Kenneth J. Iverson, M.D., MC, USN
Commander, Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton

Date and Location of Interview: 5 June 2013, Camp Pendleton, California

Interviewer: COL Richard V.N. Ginn, USA, Ret

SYNOPSIS

Captain Kenneth Iverson MC, USN, was born in Texas and raised in Minnesota, where he graduated from Burnsville High School in 1972. He completed a B.S. in pre-medicine studies at Bob Jones University in 1976, and a B.S. in biology from the University of Minnesota in 1978 while also working as a part-time high school math teacher. He received Master of Divinity degree from Central Baptist Theological Seminary in 1981 financing his education with Seminary Brothers Painting, a company he formed with a fellow divinity student. CAPT Iverson entered the University of Minnesota Medical School in 1982 and considered combining his theological and medical training into future service as a medical missionary. Learning of the HPSP program and the opportunities for an initial period of service in the Navy, he applied for and received an HPSP scholarship during his first year of medical school which covered the remaining three academic years and was granted a commission as an ensign. He graduated in 1986 and entered active duty as a lieutenant, Medical Corps.

From 1986 to 2005 CAPT Iverson's career was distinguished by extensive involvement in clinical practice and graduate education during a series of alternating overseas and stateside tours, along with an accumulation of varied, specialized training. He completed his internship and residency in family medicine at the Naval Hospital, Pensacola, Florida, which was followed by a succession of teaching and practice positions at the Naval Branch Medical Clinic in La Maddalena, Italy, and Naval Hospitals in Orlando, Florida; Rota, Spain; Pensacola, Florida and Sigonella, Italy. A particularly unique assignment during this period was his duty as the Director of the Regional Space Shuttle Support Team in Spain.

Since completion of the Naval War College in 2006, his career has been centered on executive medicine positions, initially as the Senior Medical Corps Assignment Officer at the Navy Personnel Command, followed by Executive Officer of the Naval Hospital Bremerton, Washington, and Commanding Officer of the Expeditionary Medical Facility, Kuwait. At the time of this interview he was the Commanding Officer of the Naval Hospital

Camp Pendleton. He had been selected for promotion to rear admiral (lower half), and was awaiting orders for his follow-on assignment.

CAPT Iverson and his wife Karen, have two sons, Kenneth Charles Iverson, M.D., a pediatric otolaryngologist, and Kyle Jeffrey Iverson, M.D., a general surgery resident and Air Force captain. They have five grandchildren, Katelyn, Kenneth, Nathan, Layne, and Nifton.

KEY FIGURES

Roberts, William, Rear Admiral, MC, USN: METC Commandant, 2012-2014
Kiser, William Robert, Rear Admiral, MC USN: METC Commandant
Nathan, Matt, Vice Admiral, MC, USN: Surgeon General
Faison, Forrest, Rear Admiral, MC, USN: Commander Navy Medicine West and NMCSO.
Bono, Raquel Cruz, M.D., Rear Admiral, MC, USN: Surgeon, Pacific Command, 2011-2013.
Coglianese, Vincent A., Brigadier General, USMC: in 2013
Commanding General, Marine Corps Installations West, and Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, CA.
Hunter, Christine S., M.D., Rear Admiral, MC, USN: 2003-4, Surgeon, Pacific Fleet. In 2013, Chief Medical Officer, U.S Office of Personnel Management.

KEY WORDS

Construction of new Camp Pendleton hospital
Executive medicine
Graduate medical education
Navy Medicine

GLOSSARY AND ACRONYMS

4415: Medical Department Officer Distribution Division (PERS-4415), Navy Personnel Command, Millington, TN
AARA: American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009; an economic stimulus package signed into law 17 February 2009 to respond to the Great Recession, which began in December 2007 and sharply accelerated in September 2008.
ACLS: Advanced Cardiac Life Support
ALSO: Advanced Life Support in Obstetrics
Bob Jones University, Greenville, SC
Challenger crash: On 28 June 1986 the Challenger space shuttle (STS-51-L) exploded 73 seconds into flight killing all seven crewmembers. The explosion was caused by failure of an o-ring seal in the right rocket motor.
Continuing Promise (CP13, etc.): Annual humanitarian civil

assistance operation in Latin America supported by U.S. and international military medical personnel under the direction of the US Southern Command.

CSH: combat support hospital, the Army deployable field hospital that provides the first point of definitive surgical care on the battlefield and can perform split operations at different locations; is transported by aircraft and trucks, and consists of Deployable Medical Systems (DEPMEDS) ISO hard-sided, air conditioned operating room and intensive care facilities, plus climate controlled tents and is configured in various sizes up to 248 beds, a typical size is 54 beds.

ECOMS: Executive Committee of the Medical Staff

EMF-K: Expeditionary Medical Facility, Kuwait, a Navy unit that operated the 44 bed military hospital in Kuwait, assuming this mission from the Army's 801st CSH in April 2004, when the hospital was operating in tents in Camp Doha, and in August 2008 occupied permanent buildings constructed at Camp Arifjan. The Navy's operation of the facility ended in November 2011, when it transferred the hospital to the Army's 325th CSH.

ESC: Executive Steering Committee

HPSP: Health Professions Scholarship Program, a DoD program initiated in 1972, is the primary source of medical professionals in the military. Individuals selected for the program are commissioned as an ensign in the Navy or second lieutenant in the Air Force or Army.

McCarthy/Clark: a joint venture design-build team of Clark Construction Group and McCarthy Building Companies; was awarded the \$465 million, 60-bed Camp Pendleton hospital that will replace the current 73 bed facility constructed in 1974. It is the largest Navy project constructed under the AARA, and is scheduled for completion in December 2013.

NAVFAC: Naval Facilities Engineering Command; NAVFAC Southwest is the manager for the Camp Pendleton project.

NIIMITZ-West: USS *Nimitz*

PALS: Pediatric Advanced Life Support

UAB: University of Alabama at Birmingham, Birmingham, AL

RVU: relative value unit: Medicare reimbursement formula for physicians established as a result of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1989; the formula includes three RVUs: physician practice, practice expertise, and malpractice exposure.

SPC: structural performance category; seismic performance

standards range from SPC-1 to SPC- 5. SPC-1 is potential collapse imminent; SPC-5 is immediate occupancy after a seismic event.

SURFPAC: U.S. Naval Surface Forces, U.S. Pacific Fleet; home port Coronado, CA.

USS *Nimitz*, CNN-68: super carrier commissioned 5 May 1968; home port Everett, WA; currently the oldest combat ship of the U.S. Navy.

USS *Nimitz*-West: *Nimitz* scheduled for Western Pacific (WESTPAC) deployment in 2013.

USS *Orion*, AS -18: Fulton class submarine tender, commissioned in 1943, decommissioned in 1993; its last homeport was La Maddalena, Italy, and at the time it was decommissioned it was the oldest active ship in the U.S. Navy fleet.

R. Ginn 9/25/13