

The Courier

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Naval Medical Center Portsmouth

January 2010

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Rear Adm. William Kiser, Commander, Naval Medical Center Portsmouth, bids farewell to 129 Sailors stationed at the medical facility as they prepare to depart for Haiti. The contingent, made up of doctors, nurses, corpsmen, pharmacists and other clinicians and supports staff, is part of the 550-person medical crew on board USNS Comfort.

Staff Deploy to Provide Medical Assistance

Story by MC2 Riza Caparros, photos by MC3 Jessica Pounds

Less than 24 hours after receiving word they would be assisting relief efforts to Haiti, the gymnasium at Naval Medical Center Portsmouth was crowded Jan. 15 with 129 staff members packed and ready to help.

An additional 60 staff members from Naval Medical Center Portsmouth left Jan. 20 to join USNS Comfort (T-AH 20) to maximize the full capabilities of the hospital ship in providing medical care to injured Haitians.

Haiti sustained a 7.0 magnitude earthquake near its

capital city of Port-au-Prince, Jan 12. More than 200,000 people were killed due to the cataclysmic event. Many more were injured or left homeless and are dependent upon international emergency aid coming into the Caribbean nation.

NMCP's deployers left the medical center by bus that Friday to rendezvous with Comfort in Baltimore to be part of the hospital ship's 550 medical personnel. The ship got underway for Haiti the next morning.

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HAITI

Staff members from Portsmouth participating in the humanitarian mission include doctors, nurses, corpsmen, pharmacists, technicians, culinary specialists and administrative personnel.

Cmdr. William Scouten of NMCP's Pediatrics Department was designated mission commander. He said one of the most important jobs he will have is making sure every member of his team is okay throughout the whole deployment.

"As a leader, I have to be certain that I check on all the members of the team and throughout the entire time we are gone, to make sure they all realize that it is okay to say, 'I'm depressed, I'm tired, what we are doing and seeing scares me'," Scouten said.

"This is not going to be an easy trip," he added.

The work ensuring staff are ready to deploy for this mission was intense, according to Hospital Corpsman Chief Petty Officer(SW/AW/FMF) Marcell Brown of NMCP's Plans, Operations and Mobilization department.

"Our job in POMI is to prepare all personnel so they are ready to go out on the

missions," said Brown. "We make sure they are medically ready to deploy, their immunizations are up to date, travel arrangements are made and the lengthy task of screening all the health records once a staff member has been identified to deploy."

All of those tasks were completed in



Capt. Craig Bonnema (left) greets Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class(SW) April Hambrick as she prepares to board a bus transporting a second team from the medical facility designated to deploy to provide medical assistance to Haitians injured in the earthquake. The group of 60 caught a flight Jan. 20 from Norfolk to NAS Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, where they were transported to the hospital ship USNS Comfort.

under 24 hours for all 129 staff members who departed.

Despite the presence of his wife and two-year-old toddler at the going-away ceremony, one deployer said he couldn't help

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This publication provides an avenue to circulate all useful information the NMC Portsmouth staff has to offer. Submissions are welcome. Contact the Public Affairs Office by calling 953-7986, by fax at 953-5118, or by emailing the PAO, Deborah Kallgren, at deborah.kallgren@med.navy.mil. Submissions should be in Word format. Photos should be a separate submission from the document and in jpeg, bitmap or tiff format. PAO is located in Building One, Third Deck, Rm. 311.

but be anxious about the mission he was about to embark upon.

“I’m very excited to get going, but a little nervous about what I will be doing and seeing,” said Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Christopher Hunt. “I found out I was going 18 hours ago. Since then, I have been running around packing, getting things I need for the trip, making sure my wife would be okay while I was gone.”

One part of the predeployment process was getting all those who were leaving immunized for potential diseases they could come in contact with. This included getting immunized for H1N1 influenza, typhoid and yellow fever.

The deployers lined up in the gym to receive those shots. While Hunt was being immunized, his wife Angelica talked about the whirlwind of emotions that she went through since her husband received word that he would be going.

“At first I was upset when I heard my husband would be leaving, especially when I heard it would be anywhere between 30 days to three months,” she said. “But I know this is something he really wants to do. Because of that I support him completely.”

With the deployers standing in formation in the gym, NMCP Commander Rear Adm. William Kiser spoke to the group before they left, telling them how proud he is of them and the mission.

“You are going to see difficult things but also the best of humanity,” he said.

Scouten praised the medical facility and the staff members who are keeping it going.

“The hospital itself has a lot of talented people. This group leaving with me has been identified for a mission and we will accomplish the mission with the combined talents we have.”

He had this message to his team: Work hard, work with one another and reach out for help when they need it.

“All medical center services are continuing. We have deployed a large number of our staff in support of this vital relief mission, and we continue to support the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.”

Capt. Craig Bonnema
NMCP Deputy Commander

To those awaiting the group’s return, he said, “Keep watching the TV. Every day what you watch on the TV should get better and your loved ones are a part of that process. Have pride in that.”

With that, the deployers said goodbye to their families and friends, picked up a boxed lunch and filed out of the gym and onto buses to begin their daunting journey to provide care and hope for the people of Haiti.



The deploying Sailors had less than 24 hours to buy supplies and pack everything they would need for up to three months.



As the hours counted down, each Sailor was vaccinated for H1N1 flu, typhoid and yellow fever.



Cmdr. William Scouten, mission commander, discusses general information with local media.

Photos From Haiti, USNS Comfort

Courtesy of Baltimore Sun



On day three of the voyage of USNS Comfort as it sailed to Haiti on a humanitarian mission to help earthquake victims, Lt. Cmdr. Mill Etienne, a doctor based at the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, talks to HN Daniel Joseph, hospital corpsman based at the Naval Medical Center in Portsmouth. Both are Creole speakers whose language skills will help as they tend to the victims of the earthquake in their native land.



This brain-injured man was too badly hurt for Capt. Rich Sharpe, from NMCP, left, a trauma surgeon, and Dr. Larry Ronan, a volunteer, to



HM3 John Lawrence, from NMCP, plugs in equipment in the Casualty Receiving Area as USNS Comfort prepares for the trip to Haiti. The hospital ship is carrying supplies as well as medical expertise to the earthquake stricken area.

Blood Donations Needed!

The Armed Service Blood Program has sent more than 900 units of blood with NMCP's teams that deployed to support earthquake victims in Haiti. The impact of these deployments has reduced the Red Cross' local monthly collections by more than 140 donations. We need continued support to replenish the current inventory and prepare for future requests. Those interested may make an appointment between 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday through Friday by calling 953-1717. We are located in Building 2, first deck Apheresis section of the laboratory. Thank you for your support.



NMCP Celebrates National Blood Donor Month

Story by Ralph Peters, ASPB Blood Donation Recruiter, and MC2 Riza Caparros

As a way to recognize National Blood Donor Month, the Apheresis Department of Navy Medical Center Portsmouth held an open house Jan. 7.

Apheresis involves the removal of whole blood from a patient or donor. During the open house, the department provided information and background on how whole blood and platelet donation works. Additionally, the blood bank honored some of its most generous whole blood and platelet donors.

“The need for whole blood and especially platelets is always there,” explained Judith Barnes, Apheresis Department nurse and supervisor. “Platelets only have a shelf life of five days and after required testing, they may only have a three-day shelf life.”

Platelets are the natural clotting factor found in whole blood. One of the unique challenges in obtaining platelet donors is the time factor. While a whole-blood donation process may take 30 to 40 minutes, a platelet donation requires up to two hours.

“On average, we recruit our donors once every three weeks so their bodies have ample time to recover from the procedure,” Barnes said. “The standard recovery time for platelets is three weeks and whole blood is every 56 days.”

NMCP’s Apheresis Department has several long-term donors, and it is because of their ongoing participation that the department is able to make a significant impact on those who need blood and blood products.

Hospital Corpsman 1st Class David Blessing works in the department supervising its military staff. He explained why he donates platelets and whole blood for the program.

“When I started working in the department, I began to gain an understanding of the process and benefits resulting in donating platelets and whole blood,” Blessing said. “I donate platelets because I can directly affect the life of another human being.”

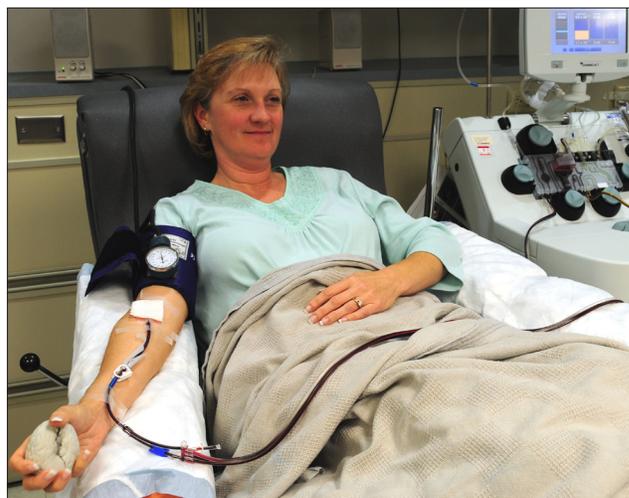


Photo by MC3 Jessica Pounds

Luann Smith, NMCP Information Management Department system administrator, donates blood platelets at the Apheresis Department, Jan. 19.

Barnes added that recognizing some of their long-term donors was fitting because, “It takes a fair amount of commitment and desire to help others selflessly.”

NMCP Deputy Commander Capt. Craig Bonnema presented awards to several long-term donors and also presented a plaque recognizing Barnes for her 14-year dedication and service to the department.

“What all of you do is vitally important; there is no substitute for what you do and the impact it makes for our military family,” Bonnema said.

Lt. Cmdr. David Koch, Blood Bank officer-in-charge, praised donors for the impact they had on the overall program.

“Yours is a major, major impact on what this program is able to do. You are the reason why the hospital and our medical people at war are able to do what they do.”

While platelets are used at NMCP and in other medical facilities for premature infants, leukemia and other cancer patients, the Blood Donor Center ships nearly 50 percent of the whole blood units it collects each month to support the war in the Middle East.

NMCP Doc Recognized as ‘Physician Leader’

Story by MC3 Jessica Pounds

The first recipient of the “Building Stronger Female Physician Leaders in the Military Health System” award can be found at Naval Medical Center Portsmouth caring for service members and their families, as well as mentoring and serving as a role model for women following in her footsteps.

Capt. Marlene DeMaio, medical director of the facility’s Orthopedic Clinic, learned late last year that she would be presented with this new award, which attracted 70 nominations from all branches of the military. DeMaio received the

award Jan. 28 at the 2010 Military Health System Conference in Maryland. Junior winners from the Army, Navy and Air Force were also selected.

“To even be nominated for this award was a big enough honor for me,” said DeMaio. “I am proud that my peers feel that I embody the Navy core values.”

DeMaio’s award honors outstanding female physicians who have made significant contributions to the practice of military medicine and who serve as exemplary role models for others. It is an initiative to attract female physicians into the Military Health System, as more and more women enter and graduate from medical schools.

“Only five percent of those working in the orthopedic field are women,” said DeMaio. “This is an increase from when I was in training when it was only 0.5 percent.”

Cmdr. (Dr.) Rees Lee, president of the Executive Committee of the Medical Staff at NMCP, submitted DeMaio’s nomination.

“Every day Capt. DeMaio serves as a role model for all physicians at NMCP,” said Lee. “She is the consummate example of a ‘can-do’ spirit and everyone around her recognizes this.

“To simply note that Capt. DeMaio has been an inspiration to numerous military physicians would be a gross understatement,” Lee added. “She represents the best in military medicine and her extensive list of successes is testament to this outstanding clinician, researcher, mentor and teacher.”

DeMaio was commissioned into the



Photo courtesy of Caroline Deutermann

Capt. Marlene DeMaio, left, receives the “Building Stronger Female Physician Leaders in the Military Health System” award from Ellen Embrey, acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs.

Navy as a lieutenant commander in July 1992, following many years of education. She received a B.S. in Biology from Brown University in Providence, R.I. She then went on to graduate training at Hahnemann Medical College in Philadelphia. Expanding her knowledge even further, she attended postgraduate training

at Yale-New Haven Hospital, Louisiana State University and the Cincinnati Sportsmedicine and Orthopedic Center.

“I chose to work in the orthopedic field because I feel that it is a good position for teamwork,” said DeMaio.

This was not DeMaio’s first award of this nature. While attending medical school she was presented with the Most Outstanding Senior Woman award. She also possesses a leadership award from Officer Indoctrination School.

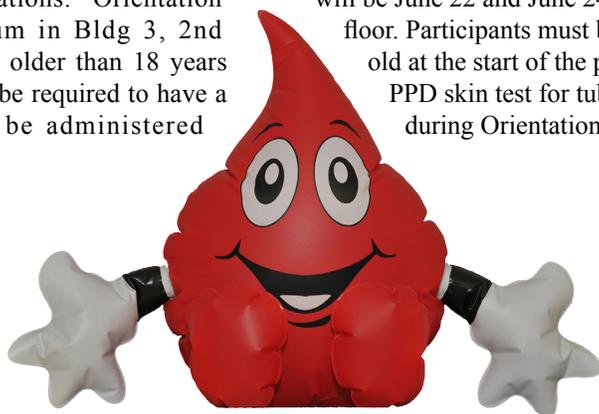
Ellen Embrey, acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs said, “Female

See AWARD, next page _____

RED CROSS NEEDS VOLUNTEENS!

Naval Medical Center Portsmouth's Red Cross will accept applications for teens interested in volunteer opportunities within their organization. Application packets will be accepted March 1 – May 14 at the Red Cross Office (Building 3, 4th floor, room 4). Call 953-5435 for more information. The VOLUNTEEN program will begin June 28 and run through Aug. 27.

In order to participate both THE PARENT AND TEEN MUST HAVE FULL ACCESS TO THE BASE. Parents/guardians must attend the first day of orientation to ensure all forms are signed and are aware of all rules and regulations. Orientation will be June 22 and June 24 in the Auditorium in Bldg 3, 2nd floor. Participants must be at least 14 and no older than 18 years old at the start of the program. They will be required to have a PPD skin test for tuberculosis that will be administered during Orientation.



Meet the "O" Team

If you are attached to NMCP or any of its outlying clinics, if you are preparing to deploy or if you are family member...

your NMCP Command Ombudsman Team is here to help!

Pre-deployment brief is held at 9:30 a.m. on the 3rd Tuesday of each month in the chapel.

Email us to join our Ombudsman email tree and learn the latest news.

NMCPombudsman@med.navy.mil
or
757- 953-1973

New Establishment Deemed Off Limits

As a result of recommendations by the Joint Armed Forces Disciplinary Control Board for southeastern Virginia and northeastern North Carolina, and acting in accordance with OPNAVINST 1620.2, Tidewater Auto Brokers is "Off Limits" to members of the Armed Forces.



AWARD

physicians are an integral part of the work of the MHS and this award represents our commitment to honor their contributions to military medicine.

"This also serves as an opportunity to motivate the next generation of young women physicians," Embry added.

A panel composed of a female physician leader from each service, as well as one female leader from Department of Defense Health Affairs, reviewed and tallied each of the nomination packages to determine the award winners based on the order of merit.

Equally impressed with DeMaio's leadership is Capt. Craig Bonnema, NMCP's deputy commander.

"This is a highly prestigious and well-deserved honor," said Bonnema. "DeMaio was selected from a very competitive, elite group of nominees from the Army, Air Force and Navy. We are exceptionally proud of her accomplishments."

DeMaio is a native of Vineland, N.J. She now resides in Portsmouth.

Dental Readiness Key to Deployment Readiness

Story by MC3 Jessica Pounds

Naval Dental Clinic Norfolk and Naval Medical Center Portsmouth's Mobile Dental Unit have worked diligently over the years to ensure the crews of all ships and submarines getting underway for a deployment are dental ready. The clinic recognized the guided-missile destroyer USS Cole (DDG 67) Jan. 15 as the 150th ship to sail out of the harbor with at least a 95 percent Operational Dental Readiness.

To celebrate the milestone, the Cole hosted members of the clinic and the MDUs on board the ship for a cake cutting ceremony. During the ceremony, Capt. Howard Anderson, deputy commander, Navy Dental Clinic Norfolk, congratulated the crew.

Anderson also said the celebration is a testament to the Navy's commitment to ensure the highest levels of dental health, safety and mission success in our fleet forces.

While this mission is a shared responsibility of all dental staff, the MDU's play an important role to bring necessary and efficient care to those Sailors who need it.

Each MDU is a dentist office on wheels that provides pier-side care to destroyers, frigates, cruisers and submarines that do not have their own dental assets on board. In 2009, NMCP's Branch Dental Clinic Norfolk introduced four brand-new MDUs to the fleet.

"The Mobile Dental Unit is a huge cost and man-hour savings by not having our Sailors go over to the dental clinic," said Cole's command master chief, CMDCM Steve Timmons. "If you have a tooth problem or an impacted molar when you are on deployment, you could be in some serious pain and are really a loss to the ship."

"Being able to deploy in an exceptionally high state of dental readiness means that there will be very few dental accidents that are going to require attention while you are at sea," said Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Chantel DeValk, who travels with one of NMCP's MDUs.

Many Sailors may not think much about their dental health, but it is a key part of a ship's crew being deployment-ready.

"The cause of many dental ailments may be simple in nature; the effect of untreated dental disease can have a significant impact on mission accomplishment," said Capt. Howard Anderson, deputy commander, Navy Dental Clinic Norfolk.



Photo by MC2(SW/AW) William Heimbuch
Cmdr. Michael Hill, left, NMCP General Dentistry department head and HM3 Cathleen Collins, NMCP's Oral Maxillofacial Clinic leading petty officer, discuss how they instruct dental patients to properly clean their teeth.

Anderson described common symptoms as ranging from chronic discomfort to acute debilitating pain to systemic infection, "all of which can adversely impact the Sailor's ability to perform the rigorous demands of the Sailor's job."

"Although independent duty corpsmen are trained to provide basic emergency treatment while underway, many 'show-stopping' dental emergencies are beyond their scope of care. Ships with 95 percent or greater Operational Dental Readiness greatly minimize their risk of having dental-related emergencies while deployed," said Anderson.

Anderson described Navy Dental as a "quiet hero of the fleet."

"Dental readiness is but one piece of our powerful and complex, worldwide deploying military organization," Anderson added. "Daily, we provide dental care 'that is second to none' so that our deploying Sailors are able to accomplish their greater mission. This is also a testament to the Navy's commitment to ensure the highest levels of dental health, safety and mission success in our fleet forces."

HOSPITAL ROUNDS...

What do you hope to achieve in 2010?



Cmdr. Angela Wilkins
Heart and Vascular Clinic

"I will complete my Ph.D. this year!"



HN Jacob Clark
Oncology/4J

"To enroll in nursing classes."



Dawn Watkins
General Surgery

"Pass the national boards for the Coding exam."



Lt. Kenneth Prince
Internal Medicine

"I want to become more knowledgeable."



HM3 Cathleen Collins
Dental

"Finish my prerequisites to go to dental hygienist school."



Matt Francella
Thoracic Surgery

"Plant a garden in the yard of my new house."

First Baby of 2010



USS Wasp (LHD 1) Aviation Ordnanceman Airman Aaron Anderson and his wife, Sabrina, welcomed their baby boy Roper Lee Anderson into the world Jan. 1 at 1:50 a.m. Roper was the first baby born at Naval Medical Center Portsmouth in the new year.

Eight Additional Sailors Frocked in January



RP1(SW/FMF) Raul Cardona



RP2 Travis Strother



HM2 Jazmin Brandt



HM2 Danielle Lowe



HM3 Paul Hammer



RP3 Juan Prado



HM3 Tanya Carr



HM3 Vonetta Craigen

NMCP Wounded Warriors on Road to Wii-coveyry

Story by MC2 Riza Caparros

The question: Go to rehab or play video games?

Naval Medical Center Portsmouth staff treating Wounded Warriors would argue it's not a choice. They're one and the same.

When validating whether to purchase a gaming system, the Wounded Warrior Regiment Battalion East at Naval Medical Center Portsmouth can provide a good reason to spend the money. The Nintendo Wii gaming system entertains those in the battalion, but also provides an alternate way for service members in recovery to regain their motor skills.

According to Lt. (Dr.) Daniel Houlihan of NMCP's Occupational Therapy Department, "I think there is great potential for the Wii game units to help. We have used the Wii for a few years in the Occupational Therapy Clinic and have found it to be a useful adjunct to rehabilitation.

"It is often a fun way to challenge people to increase their movement and even social interactions," Houlihan added.

Through collaboration with the Navy Exchange Command, Nintendo has donated 60 Nintendo Wii's throughout the world. NMCP Wounded Warriors received three Wii gaming systems Dec. 23, when NEXCOM commander, Rear Adm. Steven Romano, along with Nintendo representatives presented them to the battalion.

"Those are the folks that we really have an obligation to help. They made a commitment and we have a commitment to help them following their combat wounds," said Romano after presenting the systems. NMCP commander, Rear Adm. William Kiser, accepted the Wii's on behalf of the Wounded Warrior Program.

"The game system allows the Marines to relax and have a little fun. It can also be therapeutic depending on the person's injuries," said Gunnery Sgt. Alec Welden, Wounded Warrior Regiment



Photo by MC2(SW/AW) William Heimbuch

AO3 Michael Vanguenten, formerly attached to USS Bataan (LHD 5), uses the Nintendo Wii as a form of physical therapy after suffering injuries sustained in a motorcycle accident. Vanguenten was a member of NMCP's Wounded Warrior Battalion during his recovery.

Battalion East commander.

"While there's nothing like actually being outside with friends throwing a football or playing fetch with your dog, the Wii can encourage people to take another step closer to such goals," said Houlihan.

NMCP Physical Therapist Joseph Flores said, "Utilization of the Wii for rehabilitation can be an invaluable tool to work on balance and coordination."

"It can also be utilized by the Occupational Therapy Department to work on fine motor skills, such as hand-eye coordination," added Gildardo Vasco, NMCP licensed physical therapy assistant.

Wounded Warrior Regiment Battalion East at Naval Medical Center Portsmouth falls within the infrastructure of the Department of Defense five Wounded Warrior programs. Stated in the United States Marine Corps Wounded Warrior Regiment Web site, the mission of the organization is to provide and facilitate assistance to wounded/injured/ill Marines, Sailors attached to or in support of Marine units, and their family members throughout the phases of recovery.

January Awards

NAVY & MARINE CORPS ACHIEVEMENT MEDAL

NC2(SW/AW) Ronda Gayton
HM1(SW) Christina Davis
Lt. Hannah Bellenbaum
Lt. j.g. Jennifer Willis
HM3 Amy Erdman
HM1 Kayla Coleman
BM3 Christina Knight
HM2(SS) Mark Webb, Jr.

HM1 Yoruba Cox
HM2(SW) Rossel Dioso
HM2 Amanda Mosley
HM3(FMF) Christopher Bucciarelli
HM3(FMF) Joseph Goeddeke
HM3(AW) Leila Sims
Lt. Cmdr. Tamara Braghieri

NAVY & MARINE CORPS COMMENDATION MEDAL

Lt. David Churchman
Cmdr. Robert Fetherston
HM1(SW) Valarie Boyd
Capt. Hsingchien Cheng
Lt. Cmdr. Michael Kind
Cmdr. Benjamin Griffeth
Lt. Cmdr. Eric Lubeck
Cmdr. Heather Gilchrist
Capt. Eric Zintz

HMC Roona Jackson
HM1(SW/AW) Sara Whipple
Capt. Maryetta Nolan
Lt. Janeen McClellan
Capt. Debra Crowell
HMC(AW) Tyson Rager
Lt. Regina Leassear
Lt. Cmdr. Jennifer McKinney
HM1 Keith Dilley

Got News?

Are you are planning a newsworthy event on base? For information about Public Affairs support, please contact MC2 Riza Caparros in the Public Affairs office at 3-7422. We are located in Building 1, 3rd Deck.

