



September 2010

# THE COURIER

Naval Medical Center Portsmouth, Portsmouth, Va.



CPO Indoctrination Season — Page 8

## New OIC, Same Quality Service for Branch Medical Clinic Norfolk Triad

STORY AND PHOTO  
By MC2 RIZA CAPARROS  
NMCP Public Affairs

More than 200 people came out to welcome the new officer in charge of Branch Medical Clinic Norfolk Triad during a change of charge ceremony at the Naval Station Norfolk Vista Point Conference Center Aug. 27.

Cmdr. Sarah M. Neill relieved Cmdr. David C. Collins as officer in charge of the Norfolk Triad, which includes Sewells Point Branch Medical Clinic, Yorktown Branch Health Clinic and Norfolk Naval Shipyard Branch Health Clinic in Portsmouth.

Guest speaker Rear Adm. Alton L. Stocks, Naval Medical Center Portsmouth commander, praised Collins and his staff on their accomplishments during Collins' tenure.

"Cmdr. Collins led the delivery of



health care and support to our most deserving beneficiaries...those who serve aboard our combatant vessels and those other operational

Cmdr. Sarah Neill reports for duty before NMCP commander, Rear Adm. Alton L. Stocks, during the Branch Medical Clinic Norfolk Triad change of charge ceremony Aug. 27 at Naval Station Norfolk's Vista Point Conference Center. Cmdr. David Collins was relieved of his duty as officer in charge by Neill after serving three years in that role.

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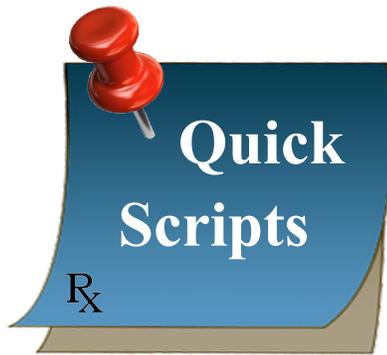
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## Fall PFA Weigh-ins begin

Fall 2010 PFA weigh-ins begin Oct. 4 and run through Oct. 15. Weigh-ins are being held Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the Command Fitness Office, Bldg. 3, 5th floor.

Members who choose to take the PRT using the bike or elliptical must call Command Fitness at 953-5082 to reserve a time and date and weigh in 24 hours prior to their scheduled PRT. All members must weigh in wearing their physical training uniform and have a military identification card or NAVMEDCEN staff ID badge.

## Saturday Flu Shot Clinics

TRICARE-eligible retirees, dependents or family member who are unable to get their seasonal flu shot during the week can get immunized at NMCP or its branch clinics during Saturday flu shots clinics on the following dates and times:

Oct. 16, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. - Adm. Joel T. Boone Branch Clinic, JEB-Little Creek

Oct. 30, 5 to 7 p.m. - NMCP Immunization Clinic, Trick or Treat Vaccination

Nov. 6, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. - Retiree Seminar, Rockwell Gym, JEB-Little Creek and Oceana Branch Clinic, NAS Oceana

Nov. 13: noon to 4 p.m. - Yorktown Branch Health Clinic

## Steam Pipe Replacement

In early October, work will begin on the steam line in the grassy area between Bldg. 2 and Bldg. 249. The new line installation will take about 3 to 4 weeks.

In November, there will be a temporary change to vehicle and pedestrian traffic. The circle in front of the Bldg. 2 will close, and a temporary patient drop-off/pick-up location will be at the entrance to the circle. The ground-

level sidewalk from the parking garage to Bldg. 2 will also close. The second floor skyway connector will be open. During clinic hours, security will direct traffic and assist patients and visitors to ensure pedestrians safety.

## Badminton Tournament

MWR is hosting the inaugural 2010 Portsmouth MWR Badminton Tournament Nov. 8 to 10 at 4:30 p.m. daily. Play consists of 2 vs. 2 in the Bldg. 276 basketball court. Dates may be adjusted depending on the number of entries.

All authorized gym patrons are welcome. The registration deadline is Nov. 4 at 4 p.m. Email [joseph.powers2@med.navy.mil](mailto:joseph.powers2@med.navy.mil) to register your team. Call 953-7108 with questions.

## Oakleaf Club Open to New Members

The Oakleaf Club of Tidewater is open to Medical, Dental, Nurse, and Medical Service Corps (active duty and retired) officers and their spouses in the Hampton Roads area. The club is a social and benevolent organization.

We are always happy to welcome new members. For more information on membership, contact Heidi Schmidt at [livermoresweetheart@hotmail.com](mailto:livermoresweetheart@hotmail.com).

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## NMCP Ombudsman Team Pre-Deployment Brief

The NMCP Command Ombudsman Team is here to help when you are attached to NMCP or any of its outlying clinics and you or a family member are preparing to deploy!

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](mailto:NMCPombudsman@med.navy.mil)  
or  
757-953-1973

THE  
COURIER

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**MC2 Riza Caparros**

The Courier is an authorized publication of Naval Medical Center Portsmouth, 620 John Paul Jones Circle, Portsmouth, VA 23708, and is published monthly by the Public Affairs Office.

The Courier provides an avenue to circulate all newsworthy information the NMC Portsmouth staff has to offer.

Anyone who wishes to submit an article or news information for publishing should 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](mailto: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.

The Public Affairs Office is located in Building One, Third Deck, Rm. 308.

# A Mother Praises NMCP Docs Who Healed Her Son

STORY AND PHOTO  
BY MC2 RIZA CAPARROS  
NMCP Public Affairs

Angela Anderson knows what it is like to worry about the safety and well-being of her son. She was concerned when she first heard her son, Hospitalman (FMF) Angelo Anderson, would deploy to Afghanistan. Her worst fears came true when she received the call from her son that he had been injured.

Anderson, a corpsman who had been assigned to NMCP's Infectious Disease Clinic, was serving with the 3rd Battalion, 6th Marines in Helmand Province, Afghanistan, as an individual augmentee and had been shot July 2 in the arm and leg while on patrol.

Her feelings of fear soon turned to feelings of helplessness. Angela flew to Hampton Roads from her home in Georgia, arriving at NMCP July 6, the same day her son returned here for treatment.

Reunited with her son, she initially felt unable to do anything but watch, hope and pray as the doctors worked to save Anderson's limbs and put him on

the road to recovery, for which Angela would be by his side.

"The first words he said when he saw me was, 'momma, don't go anywhere,'" said Angela. "That tore at my heart. I wanted to help him, like I always have his entire life, but this time, there was nothing I could do."

Angela resolved to place her

faith and trust in the healing hands of Anderson's caretakers, and said she was incredibly impressed by and grateful for all they have done for him.

"Angelo's orthopedic surgeon, Lt. Cmdr.(Dr.) Robert Gaines has the heart of an angel," she said. "He is rebuilding him back into the strong, young man he was, with a precise hand and wonderful bedside manner.

"Dr. Gaines helped me under-



**Angela Anderson and her son Hospitalman (FMF) Angelo Anderson after he was pinned the Fleet Marine Force Enlisted Warfare Specialist Device during a ceremony in his hospital room on July 9.**

stand the medical side of things," she continued, "and his patience and kindness have been an amazing gift."

Angela also spoke highly of her son's other orthopedic surgeon, Lt.(Dr.) Matthew Matiassek.

"Dr. Matiassek was incredible with what he did for Angelo – I was truly amazed," Angela said.

"He put a plate in his shoulder to rebuild what was lost. His shoulder was destroyed. To me, it was like hamburger meat."

According to Angela, plastic surgery, "made my boy whole again. They put skin grafts where there was nothing. They are rebuilding him. I didn't know they could bring him back to life the way they did.

"I couldn't have asked for better angels to watch over my son," Angela added, referring to Gaines and Matiassek.

Recovery has not been easy.

Within the first month, Anderson had eight separate surgeries and later battled a wound-site infection. He's had to push himself to regain strength.

"Most of the time, he had kept good spirits," said Angela. "I look at him, and I don't see my son. I see a Marine – he's stubborn, and he's a fighter. The war has made him that way, I think. But I know my son is in there somewhere."

Angela was present for many good times – when Anderson received his Fleet Marine Force Enlisted Warfare

Specialist Device and when he was awarded a Purple Heart by Lt. Gen. Richard F. Natonski, commander, U.S. Marine Corps Forces Command. But the receipt of the award was followed by that unexpected infection, setting back his recovery six weeks and

— See **MOTHER**, Page 11

# NMCP Participates in CNO-directed PANFLUEX

BY DEBORAH KALLGREN  
NMCP Public Affairs Officer

Naval Medical Center Portsmouth and its branch clinics immunized 89 percent of its active duty staff, 67 percent of its General Service civilians, and 46 percent of its contractors against the flu on Sept. 14 and 15. That's comes out to nearly 4,000 sore arms and stuffy noses.

The medical center was taking part in PANFLUEX, the Chief of Naval Operations' pandemic flu exercise – one of two medical treatment facilities to test the Navy's ability to surge in the event of a real pandemic. Naval Hospital Bremerton, Wash., also participated in the exercise.

When the influenza vaccine arrived at NMCP, the medical center's mobile vaccination teams had 48 to quickly respond and get the designated active duty and mission-essential civilians immunized.

Capt. Matthew Pommer, deputy commander, noted that the medical center had 124 staff deployed and 235 others on leave or temporary additional duty on the exercise days. Additionally, multiple staff members presented with possible medical contraindications and were unable to receive a flu vaccine.

"Given the variables, ongoing commitments, Chiefs' Initiation, E-4 exams and multiple hurdles, things went very well," Pommer said.

There are four phases of NMCP's surge capability. The first was at the medical center. Four teams of 20 fanned out to immunize personnel at the main hospital and its nine branch clinics. The remaining three phases are being conducted as vaccine is received.

"We wanted to stress the system and see how well and how fast we can get a large volume of our staff vaccinated," Capt. Dexter Hardy, director of Public Health Services, said.

Teams began administering flu injections and the nasal FluMist vaccine on Tuesday, Sept. 14 at 7 a.m. They worked continuously through that night to immunize the overnight staff and into the next day. They completed PANFLUEX at 11 p.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 15.

The teams got off to a good start the first day.

"Over a 16-hour period, we vaccinated over 70 per-

cent of our active duty staff," Hardy added.

CherylAnn Kraft, NMCP's immunizations manager, said much of the PANFLUEX's success was due to the hard work of the immunization teams. "We have increased our efficiency and reduced vaccination wait times by 50 percent in the pandemic model, getting patient through in 3½ minutes. We are excited to share our lessons learned with our Navy family."

NMCP expects to administer about 130,000 flu shots this year, 60,000 of which will be administered in the pandemic surge exercise. The remaining allocation of flu shots is for TRICARE-eligible dependents



Photo by MC2 Riza Caparros

**A staff member at NMCP reacts as she receives a dose of FluMist, the nasal influenza vaccination. The medical center was one of two to take part in PANFLUEX, the Chief of Naval Operations' Pandemic Flu Exercise, to test the medical facility's ability to quickly immunize first responders in the event of an actual**

and family members; flu shots for those individuals will be available soon.

Each year, the flu vaccine is updated to protect against the three flu strains that research indicates will cause the most illness during the flu season. This year's vaccine contains three new flu virus strains.

The 2010-11 influenza vaccine protects individuals from getting sick from these three viruses, and it can make symptoms milder if the person contracts a related, but different influenza virus strain.

Influenza or "flu" has the potential to significantly impact Navy force readiness and missions. In the U.S., influenza results in more than 25 million reported cases, more than 150,000 hospitalizations due to serious complications and more than 30,000 deaths annually.

# Patriots' Inn Provides Home Away from Home for Wounded Warriors

STORY AND PHOTO BY REBECCA A. PERRON  
NMCP Public Affairs

Six months after the ribbon cutting for the new Wounded Warrior Patriots' Inn at Naval Medical Center Portsmouth, service members wounded on the battlefield and those who need extensive outpatient care for other injuries are finding the inn to be a place of care, comfort and support while they recuperate.

The inn's proximity to the medical center has proven to be an asset for Sailors and Marines transitioning from inpatient to outpatient care at NMCP. The facility includes a transitional living area of 13 private rooms with queen-sized beds designed like hotel rooms rather than hospital rooms. Each room features a wheelchair-accessible private bath, a desk with a computer connected to the Internet and a flat-panel television. The rooms are accessed by a plastic key card, just like in a hotel.

"From the Marine liaison point of view, the most relevant factor for us is of course the quality of life the new PI provides," said Melissa Marshall, deputy officer in charge, Marine Corps Liaison Detachment – Portsmouth. "It is a simply phenomenal facility. The accessibility for my Marines in wheelchairs is more than adequate and having the laundry facility and lounge right there with them is such a great feature. The old facility had those amenities, but they were a shared commodity, and with this being centrally located inside the PI wing, it gives them a much better feeling of 'home.'"

The former inn was housed in one of the wards of the main hospital building and had limited space. The new facility allows not only for additional comfort and privacy for the patients, but for more patients to stay there.

One patient of the facility, a Marine who had been injured while recruiting in Quincy, Mass., came to NMCP for outpatient treatment because his family lives in Martinsville, Va., and had been a patient in the former inn as well.

"I broke both femurs in an auto accident and had been at a rehabilitation facility in Braintree when I asked to be transferred here," said Staff Sgt. Demario Preston. "I had been staying at the former Patriots' Inn. The atmosphere

of the new inn is so much better. The paint colors, the homey feeling, the television and internet... anything to keep my mind off what I'm going through is great."

Preston was especially grateful for the wheelchair accessibility of the rooms since he used one when he first arrived. He said he also was thankful for his ability to visit his family on some weekends and for his family to travel to NMCP to visit him.

"We averaged two-to-three patients when we were at the old Patriots' Inn, but now we average seven to eight," said Senior Chief Hospital Corpsman (SW/AW/FMF) Mark Morse, division officer of NMCP's Operational Forces Medical Liaison Services. "The maximum that we have had at one time is 10. I think the driving factors for the increase are the awareness of the facility, ADA compliancy and that the patients have the feeling of a hotel instead of being in a hospital. We've had requests from patients to stay here because of the convenience."



**Staff Sgt. Demario Preston surfs the Web on the computer in his room in the Patriots' Inn.**

The complex fills the entire seventh floor of Bldg. 3. On one side, the inn occupies more than 5,200 square feet, and includes a lounge, small kitchen and a laundry area. The other side houses administrative spaces, which takes up more than 13,200 square feet. This is where service members have access to all of their benefits advisors – fleet liaison officers, disability counselors, Veterans Affairs representatives, Navy Safe Harbor members, Naval Legal Service Office representatives and medical board personnel, as well as exam rooms.

According to Marshall and Morse, the feedback from patients and their families has been overwhelmingly positive.

"The Marines whom we have had staying in the PI are extremely grateful and amazed at the accommodations," Marshall continued. "Families are particularly

— See **PATRIOTS**, Page 7



Photo by HMC Kristi Lanstra

## New U.S. MARFORCOM Commander Visits NMCP

Lt. Gen. Dennis J. Hejlik, left, commander, U.S. Marine Forces Command and Marine Forces Command, Europe, and Rear Adm. Alton L. Stocks, commander, Naval Medical Center Portsmouth, stop by the hospital room of Sgt. Kevin Koffler Aug. 31 to speak with him and his mother, Meeri Layne Faber.

Hejlik visited the medical center to tour the Wounded Warrior Patriots' Inn and meet with Marines receiving outpatient treatment here while assigned to Wounded Warriors Battalion-East. Hejlik had assumed command of MARFORCOM earlier in the month.

**SEWELLS** — *Continued from page 1* units that support the Combatant Commander,” said Stocks. “He led nearly 450 military and civilian staff who generated 175,000 outpatient visits.”

The Sewells Point clinic overwhelmingly supports the waterfront and is the Navy’s largest branch medical clinic serving operational forces. More than 82 percent of its patients are the active duty warfighter. Only about 40 percent of the patients at the other branch clinics serving Naval Medical Center Portsmouth are active duty service members.

“Cmdr. Collins expected all Sailors in his clinics to be deployment ready and ready to serve,” Stocks added. “He consistently provided over eight percent of his active duty staff for deployment missions in support of the warfighter. Cmdr. Collins pushed his staff to go beyond excellence.”

As officer in charge, Collins also fostered medical readiness for 367 tenant commands on Naval Station Norfolk. He also assured the medical care and support to the Naval Mobilization Processing Site, in which 22,000 Sailors have been processed to mobilize to the Middle East.

Collins was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal for his exceptional performance as officer in charge from September 2007 to August 2010.

“My staff has provided excellent health care and are outstanding representatives of Navy Medicine,” said Collins. “It has been my privilege and honor to serve with them. I hope they are as proud of what they do as I am of them.”

Stocks added that both the outgoing and incoming officers in charge are visionary leaders, consummate senior health care executives and impeccable Naval officers. Ad-

ditionally, both are compassionate people.

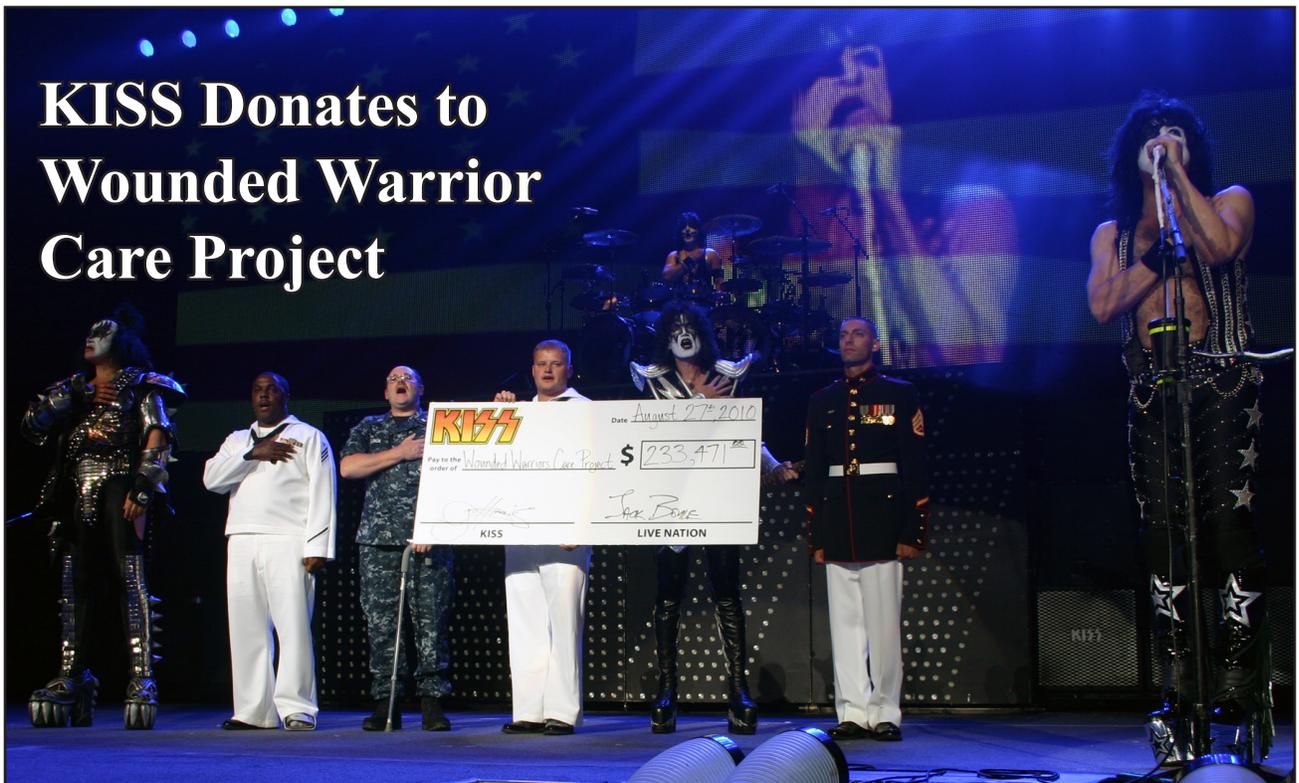
As Neill assumed charge of BMC Norfolk Triad, she acknowledged the quality of the staff and patients she was inheriting: 450 personnel – including 45 providers and 20 registered nurses – caring for more than 24,400 enrolled patients.

“The success of the Norfolk Triad is dependent upon each and every one working there,” said Neill. “I expect that it will continue with the great service and outstanding health care delivery as a member of the First and Finest.”

Neill’s previous assignment was as the director for Administration and deputy chief of Staff, Human Resources for Navy Medicine East, headquartered in Portsmouth.

Collins isn’t going far. His next assignment will be as the deputy chief of staff, Installation and Logistics, Navy Medicine East, in Portsmouth.

# KISS Donates to Wounded Warrior Care Project



Photos by MC1 Susan J. Caraballo

Above: SN Lamar Linton, HM1 Mark Ulrich and HM2 Ryan Yohn recite the Pledge of Allegiance on stage with rock legend KISS Aug. 27 during their appearance at the Virginia Beach Amphitheater. The three Sailors are assigned to NMCP's Wounded Warrior Battalion-East. The band invited some of NMCP's wounded warriors to join them on stage for a check presentation to the Wounded Warriors Care Project. KISS is donating one dollar from every ticket sold throughout the Hottest Show on Earth Tour and, to date, has raised \$233,471.

Right: HM2 Ryan Yohn helps hold the ceremonial check while a member of KISS endorses it.



**PATRIOTS** — *Continued from page 5*  
impressed. The proximity to the Marine liaison provides enough oversight to the patients without being as intrusive as the old location.”

“The patients all love it,” Morse added. “Once their medical needs are taken care of, many don’t want to leave. The only complaint I have heard is that we don’t have cable television channels like HBO.”

One parent is particularly happy about his son’s experience at the Patriots’ Inn.

“I can’t say enough about the care my son is receiving here,” said Gus Alban, father of Lance Cpl. Christopher Alban, who was injured in Afghanistan in July and is staying at the inn. “Melissa Marshall, the other Marines

who are here supporting him, the nurses, the doctors, the care my son is receiving... I couldn’t ask for anything more. The support we are getting from NMCP makes it so much easier for his mother and me to support him in his recovery.”

The Patriots’ Inn is a self-providing unit for all service members of all ranks. Patients must be able to carry out activities of daily living without assistance from any medical providers. It is mainly for patients with limited mobility, such as those who use a wheelchair or crutches. The inn provides convenience to service members, giving them proximity to the exchange, food court, Navy Federal Credit Union, medical appointments at the medical center and the galley.

# CPO Indoc Season

16 trade crows for anchors

Photos by MC2 Riza Caparros or contributed by HMC Priscillia Johnson



NMCP's CPO selects joined other selectees from around Hampton Roads to tour the battleship Wisconsin (BB 64) as part of Chief Petty Officer Heritage Day on Aug. 16. The annual tour, sponsored by the Hampton Roads Naval Museum, gave the selectees the opportunity to explore spaces of the battleship normally closed to the public. They also learned about topics such as CPO scholarships, military customs and traditions, and Navy core values.



HMC(SW/AVNAC) Duane Bert Spencer conducting the CPO pinning ceremony.



Left: The CPO selectees and chief petty officers who participated in the "Run with the Chiefs" at Naval Station Norfolk Aug. 20 get together for a photo after the run.

Right: NMCP's Duane Bert Spencer, speaking at the pinning ceremony, they are now...



Left: One of many PT sessions.



Right: CPO selectees hold a car wash Aug. 15 at Sewells Point Branch Health Clinic to raise money to help pay for the Khaki Ball and other indoctrination expenses.



(V)Shannette Bryan, retired MCPON(AW/AV) R. Bushey and HMCM(SS/FMF) Rob Bushey and the youngest and the oldest CPOs at the ceremony. Bushey was guest speaker during the ceremony.



Above: The newly pinned CPOs let out some steam for a fun picture after a busy month of indoctrination training.



Command master chief, CMDCM(SW/SS) Carl Morley addressed the medical center's 16 CPO selectees during the pinning ceremony Sept. 16. During his speech, he reminded them that they should be giving the guidance when it is time to "ask the chief."



Members of NMCP's Chief Mess accompany the chief selectees during the sixth annual Run with the Chiefs at Naval Station Norfolk on Aug. 20. More than 2,000 runners participated, including former Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy Duan R. Bushey, Adm. John C. Harvey Jr., commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command, and Fleet Master Chief Michael D. Stevens.

# Coddington Given Commendation Medal with Combat V

Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Jesse Coddington was awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal (with Combat Distinguishing Device) Sept. 7 by Rear Adm. Alton L. Stocks, NMCP commander, for heroic actions while serving as a combat corpsman individual augmentee in Afghanistan from July 2009 to April 2010. Coddington was part of an embedded training team with the Afghan National Army, training his counterparts on weapons, tactics and lifesaving techniques.

Always a courageous and clear-headed leader, Coddington significantly enhanced the performance of his team and the Afghan team he mentored. When describing his experience overseas that led to receiving the award, Coddington said, "My team took direct and indirect fire. I was involved in multiple engagements, and my actions under pressure helped keep us safe."

Coddington acknowledged that it is nice to be recognized and awarded for his work while deployed, but



Photo by MC2 Riza Caparros

that "it is important to remember those who are still fighting this war today...especially those who, without hesitation, fight on another day. Every day, someone in a U.S. military uniform puts their life on the line. We need to remember them."

# Kraft Receives Meritorious Civilian Service Award

CherylAnn Kraft received the Navy Meritorious Civilian Service Award for her work as the director of Immunization Services and as the regional immunization program manager for Hampton Roads.

While serving as director of Immunization Services from October 2009 to March 2010, she formed a team of 15 corpsmen to administer seasonal influenza immunizations to more than 3,000 beneficiaries within an eight-hour period.

She also led the team in immunizing an additional 5,000 people for the H1N1 virus within a 12-hour period, raising operational readiness to 60 percent.

Kraft also established an independent flag level immunization site to immunize flag officers, se-



Photo by MC2 Riza Caparros

nior executive service personnel and their personal staff while ensuring minimal disruption to their daily routines and achieved a 94 percent vaccination rate.

In addition, when Fleet Forces Command responded to the humanitarian mission "Operation Unified Response" in Haiti in January, the quick response required several geographic-related immunizations for emergent deploying personnel, Kraft immediately and effectively provided support to more than 7,000 fleet personnel that ensured 20 ships were forward deployable.

# Hancock Awarded MSM for Mobile Trauma Bay Concept; Improved ER, Clinic Service

STORY AND PHOTO BY MC2 RIZA CAPARROS  
NMCP Public Affairs

Cmdr. James Hancock was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal for outstanding meritorious service as director, Medical Services and department head, Emergency Medicine Department at Naval Hospital Camp Lejeune, N.C., from August 2007 to January 2010.

Rear Adm. Alton L. Stocks, commander, Naval Medical Center Portsmouth, presented Hancock his award during a ceremony Aug. 23. Hancock is currently the director of Medical Services for NMCP and its outlying clinics and has been selected for captain.

Hancock analyzed and adjusted work procedures resulting in a 26 percent decrease in Emergency Room wait times and a 63 percent increase in clinical staff availability.

He deployed to Afghanistan in 2008 and, while there, created the Mobile Trauma Bay, an armored container used as a treatment room that can travel closer to the battlefield in order to provide immediate medical treatment to injured troops onsite.

He also crafted policy recommendations on Department of Defense treatment of traumatic brain in-

jury, deploying for Operation Enduring Freedom in January, February, and October of 2009 to implement theater TBI reporting guidelines.

“This award is a true reflection of the folks I work with,” said Hancock after receiving his award. “No matter where I go, my part in getting this award was having the resolve to not take no for an answer. Without the help of those around me, these programs would not have been created.



“This award really goes to my corpsman who protected me while in the trenches of Afghanistan,” Hancock continued, “my corpsman supporting me in the Emergency Room, and everyone who continues to listen to me as I speak these truths that need to be heard about patient care, protecting our service members out in the field and traumatic brain injury.”

## **MOTHER**— *Continued from page 3*

causing Anderson’s hospital stay to be extended and the need for Angela to remain at his side.

“I stay with him, I laugh with him when he wants to laugh, and I pray over him when he is asleep,” Angela added. “I bless him with all my strength, good wisdom and love that I can give to him.”

During this time of uncertainty, Angela stayed at the Fisher House, the command’s home away from home for families of seriously ill or injured patients receiving treatment at the medical center. The proximity the Fisher House to the hospital, as well as the open arms of the staff, made the experience more bearable.

“I can’t say enough good about the staff members taking care of my son and me,” said Angela. “The Fisher House is for restoring your spirit and to get

yourself together to go on and face the challenges of another day with your loved one.”

Angela said she also received strength from her son’s friends and co-workers who showered them both with their love and support.

I would like them to know that I appreciate the embrace we have had from them all,” she said. “Friends and family are very important, and right now, that is what we need most. I am thankful that they were there in our time of need.”

Today, Anderson has recovered to the point where he is living in the barracks. He continues physical therapy at NMCP and uses a cane, well on his way to his goal of playing basketball again in October. Angela returned to Atlanta in early September and keeps up with his progress through frequent phone calls.

# NMCP Helps Sub Fleet Clear the Smoke

By MC2 RIZA CAPARROS  
NMCP Public Affairs

Naval Medical Center Portsmouth has been giving the submarine force some assistance in preparing its crews for Jan. 1, the day smoking on submarines will cease.

The medical center held the last of seven tobacco cessation instructors' classes Aug. 31. Five chief petty officers from the Los-Angeles class submarine USS Scranton attended the daylong course to learn how to help crew members who smoke kick their nicotine habit. Scranton is the last of the Norfolk-based submarines to receive training; the local sub community is now trained to move forward with the mandate and help its smokers quit tobacco.

Approximately 5,000 of 13,000 submariners smoke.

Submarine Forces Commander Vice Adm. John Donnelly announced the ban April 8, citing "unacceptable levels of secondhand smoke in the atmosphere of a submerged submarine."

NMCP provides tobacco cessation classes all year. When the ban was announced, classes were added to meet the demand from the sub community. Tobacco cessation program manager Mark Long said the class is meant to encourage positive feelings toward quitting so it becomes a lifestyle change, not a temporary one.

"We provide the facilitators all the materials and resources needed to be effective," said Long. "Facilitators can conduct classes once a week, in a group setting or individually. We teach them to recognize that everyone will learn – and quit – differently, and they have to have patience with the person trying to quit."

Chief Navy Counselor (SS) Shane Johnson said the class is merely one tool to use as Scranton prepares to implement the ban. The information and techniques he learns will help him encourage his Sailors to go tobacco-free, but ultimately, he says, the decision falls to the Sailor trying to quit.

"There are mixed feelings on the sub about the ban," Johnson said, "but eventually the policy will become an accepted part of the culture. There will be pushback, but the bottom line is the health of our Sailors."

Submariners who want to stop smoking will have the resources and support they need to successfully quit.

"The class facilitators will wear dual hats as teacher and counselor," continued Long. "We explain to them that they are dealing with addictive behaviors, and it is not something that will stop overnight."

Each submarine will appoint a smoking-cessation coordinator to help wean Sailors off tobacco, using nicotine gum, patches and other alternatives provided to ease the transition.

## Alban Receives Care, Purple Heart at NMCP

STORY AND PHOTO  
BY REBECCA A. PERRON  
NMCP Public Affairs

Lance Cpl. Christopher Alban, 20, of Combat Logistics Battalion 6, was awarded a purple heart by Col. Yori Escalante, commanding officer of Combat Logistics Regiment 2 at Camp Lejeune, N.C., Aug. 19 in the Bldg. 1. Alban's father, Gus, had traveled from Fort Lauderdale, Fla., to support him in his recovery and was present for the ceremony.

Alban was driving a tactical vehicle in Afghanistan – traveling outside the wire in a six-vehicle convoy – when his vehicle was hit by an improvised explosive device July 11.

"I was flung to the other side of the September 2010 - The Courier

truck," Alban said. "I was mad and in shock, but I tried to stand up. I felt pain and saw my foot was injured."

Four Marines and Georgian corpsmen in the mission tended to Alban's injuries.

"They splinted my leg and called for a helo to take me to the forward operating base. Because of our position and small arms fire, it was about 18 hours from the time of the explosion until the helo could pick me up."

Alban was taken from Bagram Air Base to Andrews Air Force Base, Md., before returning to Camp



Lejeune, N.C. He was diagnosed with multiple fractures to his left foot. The best course of treatment required a transfer to Naval Medical Center Portsmouth. He has had three surgeries, including surgery to place a metal rod in his leg and pins in his toes to hold them in place while his leg heals.

# Volunteer Summer Program Ends with Awards, Smiles

By MC2 RIZA CAPARROS  
NMCP Public Affairs

For 25 local teenagers, this summer was filled with more than video games, beaches and movie theaters. A group of students aged 14 to 18 spent part of their summer vacation volunteering at Naval Medical Center Portsmouth when they took part in the 2010 Summer Youth Volunteer Program, a collaboration between the medical center and the American Red Cross. The program ran from June 28 to Aug. 27.

Capt. Matthew Pommer, NMCP's deputy commander, commended the teens during a recognition ceremony Aug. 19.

"Your work does not go unappreciated," Pommer said. "The commander, the staff and, most importantly, the patients appreciate you volunteering your time to help throughout the hospital."

The teens worked in 16 locations including the Pediatrics Ward, Labor and Delivery, the Judge Advocate General's office, and the Intensive Care Unit, together logging more than 2,000 volunteer hours.

Taylor Johnson, daughter of Capt. Denise Johnson, the director of Nursing Services, spent a majority of her volunteering hours doing paperwork for new interns checking into the command. She also had the chance to peek into her mom's working world.

"I came twice a week and worked all day," Taylor said. "I also helped my mom's secretary with filing and other small jobs. It was fun to see what mom does every day."

Mom echoed the sentiment. "It tickled me to see her walking in the halls," said Johnson. "This was a great opportunity for her to get exposure to the medical field and expand her horizons, and hopefully will lead her to pursue a career in medicine."

Twenty-five to 35 youths are hosted every year, according to Tom Smith, NMCP's ARC station manager.

"I hope the program expands, because there is real value in what these kids do here," Smith said. "It takes a special type of teenager to give up his or her summer vacation so they can do something positive with

their time. We are very fortunate every year to have such great interest in the program."

During the ceremony, the teens received a letter of appreciation signed by Pommer and a backpack to start them off for the new school year.

This is the 8th annual Red Cross Summer Youth Volunteer Program. In that time, more than 225 teen volunteers participated in the program. According to Smith, almost all have been dependents of NMCP staff members.



Photo by Rebecca A. Perron

**The 2010 Summer Youth Volunteer Program volunteers gather on the front steps of Bldg. 1 at the beginning of the program for their official group photo.**

## CAT Conducting Surveys

The Command Assessment Team will be conducting surveys from Oct. 1 to 31. The military POC is Cmdr. Kathleen Hinz. The civilian POC is the Human Resources Office.

The Navy is committed to fair and equitable treatment of all hands, by all hands, at all times.

Equal Opportunity is a fundamental element of the Navy's core values of Honor, Courage, and Commitment. The Navy Regulations regarding Equal Opportunity (Article 1164), reads "Equal Opportunity shall be afforded to all on the basis of individual efforts, performance, conduct, diligence, potential, capabilities and talents without discrimination of race, creed, color, gender, or national origin. Naval personnel shall demonstrate a strong commitment to stand on these principles and carry them out."

# 'Team Mental Health' Walks to Prevent Suicide

STORY AND PHOTOS  
BY REBECCA A. PERRON  
NMCP Public Affairs

More than 300 Naval Medical Center Portsmouth staff members participated as "Team Mental Health" in the 5th annual Out of the Darkness Community Walk held at Mount Trashmore on Sept. 11.

The annual walk is organized nationally by the American Foundation for Suicide and has been sponsored locally by the Hampton Roads Survivors of Suicide Support Group.

The purpose of the walk is to increase national awareness about depression and suicide, assist survivors of suicide loss, and raise money for vital research and education programs to prevent suicide and save

lives.

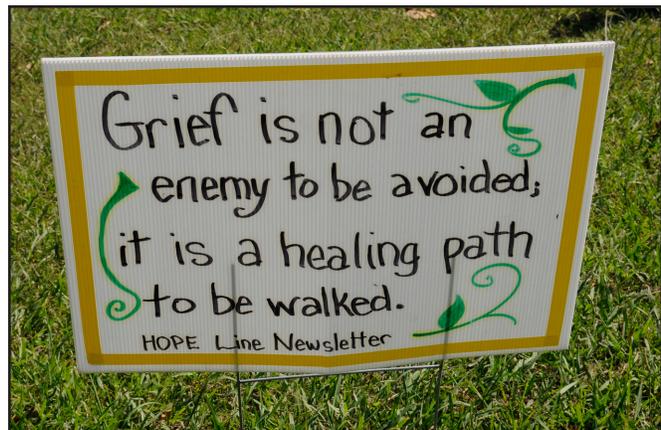
The Hampton Roads walk was one of about 200 walks held throughout the country, drawing nearly 2,000 participants.



**The Crane** The crane has been chosen to represent the walk as it as become an international symbol of healing, hope and peace. Legend has it, if you fold 1,000 paper cranes, your prayers will be answered. One thousand cranes were made and strung as a curtain at the starting point of the walk.



**"96 for 96"  
DUI-Free Challenge**  
As of press time, NMCP was on day 59 of the DUI-Free Challenge.



# SEPTEMBER AWARDS

## MERITORIOUS SERVICE MEDAL

Capt. Carol Barone-Smith  
Capt. Peter Bondy  
Capt. Douglas Knittel  
Capt. Rochelle Owens  
Capt. Fred Southern  
Cmdr. David Collins  
Cmdr. Clare Feigl  
Cmdr. Bryan Fox  
Cmdr. Derek Ross

## NAVY & MARINE CORPS COMMENDATION MEDAL

Cmdr. Helena Ely-Dyson  
Cmdr. Karen Follin  
Cmdr. Gregory Francisco  
Cmdr. Kelley James  
Cmdr. Stewart Kerr  
Cmdr. Tina Liebig  
Cmdr. Fred Lindsay  
Cmdr. Eric Mitchell  
Cmdr. Randolph Stanton  
Lt. Cmdr. Kevin Bailey  
Lt. Cmdr. Newton High  
Lt. Cmdr. Beth Jackson  
Lt. Cmdr. Huong Nguyen  
Lt. Cmdr. David Sheppard  
Lt. Thomas Douglas  
Lt. Shawna Grover  
Lt. Jodi Phillips  
Lt. Susanne Pickman  
Lt. Cmdr. Timothy Powell  
Lt. Douglas Thomas  
Lt. j.g. Stephanie Cabrera  
HMCS(SW/AW/FMF) Bryan Anderson  
HMCS(SW/AW) Kimberly Coore  
ITCS(SW/AW) Brenda Lamb  
OSCS(SW/AW) Eldred Moye  
HMC(SW/FMF) Richard Clements  
HM1 (FMF) Pamela Arceneaux  
HM1 Leslye Brown-Ruiz  
HM1(SW) Maria Decena  
HM1(SW) Rex Mangosing  
MA1(EXW) James Martinez  
HM1 Latasha Williams  
HM2(SW/FMF) Aaron Castro

## NAVY & MARINE CORPS ACHIEVEMENT MEDAL

Lt. Lydia Blalock  
Lt. Jennifer Jones  
Lt. Shawn Passons  
Lt. j.g. Kurt Christen  
Lt. j.g. Danielle Gannon  
Lt. j.g. Paul Jordan  
HM1(SW/AW/FMF) Allen Ballard  
HM1(FMF) Kaioni Garnes  
HM1(SW/AW) Lafayette Holley  
HM1(SW/AW) Phonechia Long  
CS1(SW/AW) Victor Mitchell  
CS1(SW/AW) Eric Oliver  
HM1(SW) Thomas Randolph  
HM2(FMF/SW) Peter Adams  
HM2(FMF/SW) Gabriel Bordelon  
HM2 Brittany Brinkley  
CS2 Brendnan Cameron  
IS2 Alisia Freshney  
HM2 Yesenia Harris  
HM2 Laura Jablinski  
HM2(FMF) Bjard Jones  
CS2 Joseph Love  
HM2 Aliaka Mansfield  
HM2 Vanessa Martin  
HM2(FMF) Sierra Monroe  
HM2 Reina Sadler  
SH2(SW) Efrain Santos  
HM2(SW/AW) Yashonda Strong  
MA2 Scott Tasber  
HM3 Courtney Casey  
HM3 Shanna Colmenero  
HM3 Jacklyn Davis  
OS3 Leah Els  
LS3 Sean Garland  
LS3 Yanbin Kuang  
HM3 Glenn Lodigkeit  
HM3 David Miller  
CS3 Brandal Phillips  
HM3 Erin Price  
HM3 Brandon Shea  
HM3(SW) Marisellah Williams  
HN Antonio Frazier  
PSSN Beau McCoy  
HN Daniel Perritt

# SHIPMATE OF THE MONTH



HN NATHAN J. PENA  
HN MIEKAL D. HINSON  
HN CARLOS J. VASQUEZ  
HM2(FMF) JAVIER P. SANCHEZ  
HA JOSE C. CARRENO

HN JUSTON E. ATHA  
HN TIMOTHY R. BROCKETT  
HM3 NICHOLAS W. CROSS  
HM2 PETER WELLS  
HA ASHLEY S. ROLLE

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## SEPTEMBER MENTOR OF THE MONTH

Chief Hospital Corpsman Richard Laxa began his Navy career in May 1992 here at Naval Medical Center Portsmouth. Although he originally planned to serve one tour, 18 years later, he finds himself at NMCP again. During the course of his career, he has been stationed at Naval Medical Center San Diego and on board two ships – USS Enterprise and USS Carter Hall.

Laxa is currently the leading chief petty officer for the Directorate of Nursing Services. Selected for chief petty officer last year, he was very active in training this year's chief petty officer selectees. He credits his upward movement in the Navy to the mentoring he received from the senior and master chiefs he has encountered during the course of his career. Because he had positive role models early in his career, he feels

very strongly about sharing what he has learned with others.

He has been very active in maintaining a strong mentoring environment among enlisted sailors and has been a great resource to other communities as

they strengthen their mentoring programs. When people around him say, "Ask the Chief," HMC Laxa is often the one they seek for answers or guidance.

Would you like to become a mentor or find a mentor? Check out the Mentor Program on the intranet to find valuable information about mentoring at NMCP. Go to the directory website map and look under M to learn more and join the Mentor Program today. Everyone is welcome.

