

SEA & SHORE

The Navy and Marine Corps Magazine

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Safety

In this issue:

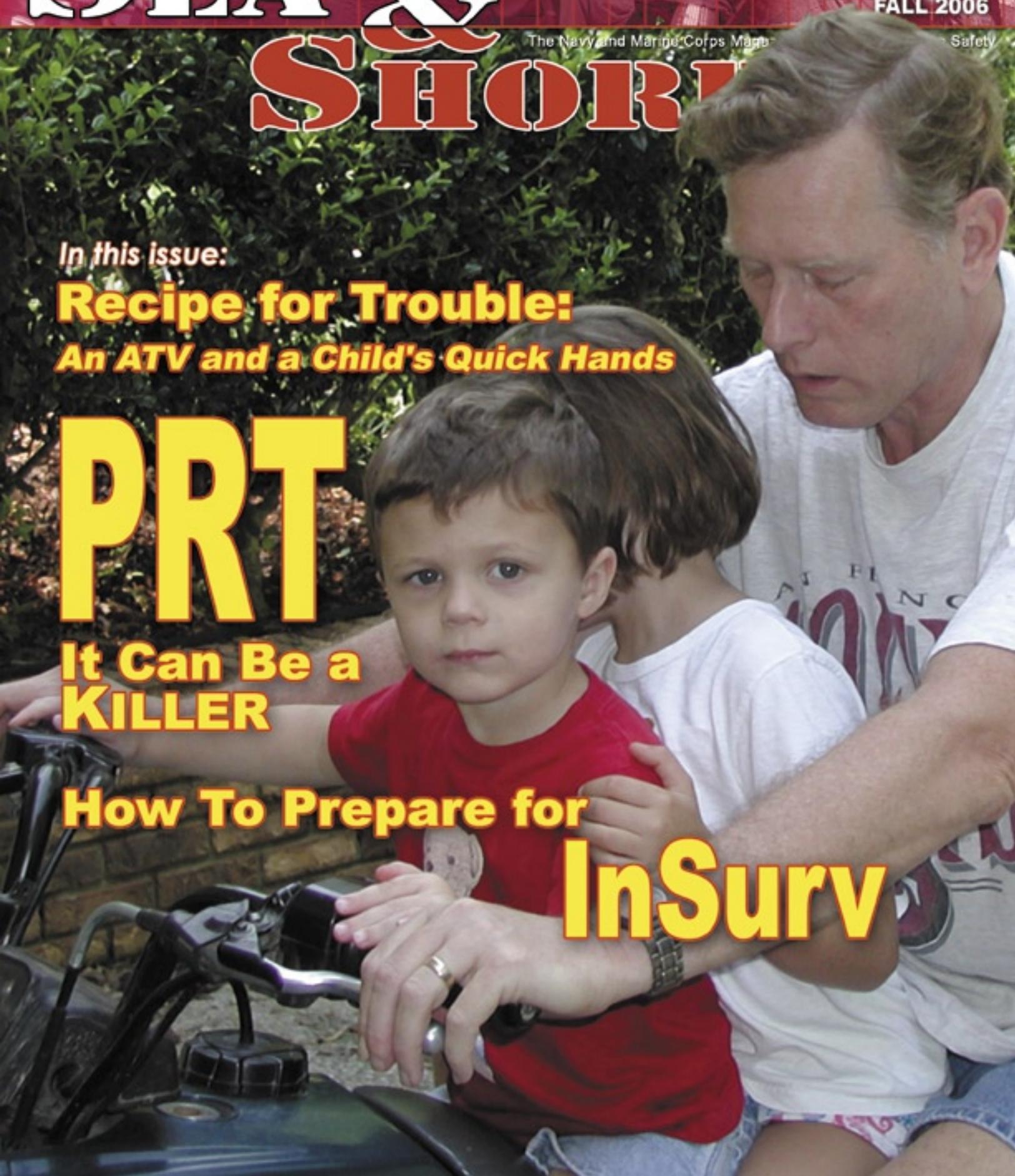
Recipe for Trouble:
An ATV and a Child's Quick Hands

PRT

**It Can Be a
KILLER**

How To Prepare for

InSurv



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Mishaps waste our time and resources. They take our Sailors, Marines and civilian employees away from their units and workplaces and put them in hospitals, wheelchairs and coffins. Mishaps ruin equipment and weapons. They diminish our readiness. This magazine's goal is to help make sure that personnel can devote their time and energy to the mission, and that any losses are due to enemy action, not to our own errors, shortcuts or failure to manage risk. We believe there is only one way to do any task: the way that follows the rules and takes precautions against hazards. Combat is dangerous and demanding enough; the time to learn to do a job right is before combat starts.

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9 Focus-Group Study: A Strategy for Change

By Dan Steber

Naval Safety Center teams with Human Performance Center to conduct a focus-group study into impaired and fatigued driving among USS *George Washington* Sailors.

10 Hotshot Biker Chillin' Now

By AME3(AW) Wilfrido Baldera

Overconfidence in his abilities leads a motorcyclist to take one too many chances.

12 Ship Raises the Bar in DUI Awareness

By Dan Steber

Sailors aboard USS *Harry S. Truman* take a hard look at the repercussions of drinking and driving.

16 25-Year-Old History Lesson Still Valuable Today

By Cdr. Douglas F. Keller

The USS *Nimitz* safety officer discusses how he plans to prepare the crew for their return to operations at sea after a planned incremental availability.

18 Attack of the Stack-Beastie

By BM2 Michael R. Kelly & John Mapp

Having been assured a boiler is secured and won't be lit off, two technicians start working on a ship's faulty radar antenna.

21 Bicyclist Has Eye-Opening Ride

By Bill Heath

A bicyclist crashes after being cut off by a motorist, but his problems don't end there. He has no ID card, no cash, and can't speak the local language.

22 Recipe for Trouble: An ATV and a Child's Quick Hands

By "Mondo" DeGuzman

The author and a co-worker learn a valuable lesson about letting kids and grandkids ride an ATV with them.

24 Slippery Rock Sends Hiker Into Rapids

Story and photos courtesy Friends of Yosemite Search and Rescue

A hiker slips on a rock and slides on his hands and knees into one of the rapids at Yosemite National Park.

URES

27 **How I Nearly Killed Some Shipmates**

By DC3 Lloyd Horton

The author fails to consider the danger of his actions and releases deadly carbon dioxide into a confined space.

28 **How To Prepare for InSurv**

By Robert Strait

Following these tips will help surface ships and submarines get ready materially to sail into harm's way.

30 **PRT—It Can Be a Killer**

By CWO4 David Tomlinson

A look at the Navy's physical-fitness program.

33 **CNP Amplifies Fitness Policy**

By Lt. Sarah Self-Kyler

The chief of naval personnel outlines some changes to OpNavInst 6110.1H.



Pg. 10



Pg. 12



Pg. 27

DEPARTMENTS

2 **Editorial**

4 **Letters to the Editor**

7 **Work Zone**

8 **Best Practices**

FRONT COVER



An innocent outing on an ATV can turn ugly in a hurry, as we learn from the story on pgs. 22 and 23. The fact that riders often don't wear any PPE only compounds the problem. Another factor in this photo is that the ATV is designed for only one person.

Cover graphics by Jeff Hobrath of KR Systems, Inc. (krsystems.com)



Editorial

The Thrills, Chills and Spills of Life in the Fast Lane

By Ken Testorff,
Naval Safety Center

“A brand new styling, a redesigned chassis, an even more performing engine... The [brand of motorcycle] is still more beautiful, stunning and powerful... A jewel for the demanding motorcyclist, the rider who seeks maximum naked performance—on the road and on the track.”

With advertisements like this, is it any wonder why so many impressionable—and, oh yes, don't forget “invincible”—young people, including Sailors and Marines, are flocking to motorcycle dealerships? Unfortunately, many also are dying on the nation's roadways.

Statistics show 3,927 motorcyclists were killed and another 76,000 injured in traffic crashes in the United States in 2004. Fatalities have increased each year since 1997, with a total increase of 1,184, or more than 85 percent. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the number of people killed on motorcycles has out-paced, percentage-wise, all other fatalities involving motor vehicles—an increase of 7.3 percent in 2004 alone.

As young Sailors and Marines, you probably scoff at these statistics, saying, “So what? Those numbers seem pretty small to me when you're talking about

the whole United States. Nothing like that ever will happen to me.” But, you're wrong—it's happening to lots of people who feel that way. Private motor vehicles (PMVs) still are the No. 1 killer of our Sailors and Marines.

Fiscal year 2006 totals, through Aug. 16, showed 66 Sailors and 51 Marines had died in PMV crashes. Of those numbers, 21 were Navy motorcyclists, and 13 were Marine Corps motorcyclists. Speed and alcohol continue to be major factors.

Consider the case of a Navy ensign who had passed the Navy's motorcycle-rider's course with an almost perfect score. One day, though, he decided to go riding without a helmet, hard-soled shoes, reflective vest, or gloves. Did I mention his BAC at the time was 0.37?

While trying to change lanes in a very small gap between a truck in front of him and a sedan in the next lane, his front wheel hit the rear of the truck. Simultaneously, his face collided with several metal rails protruding 21 inches above the tailgate of the truck. He was ejected from his bike and landed on the roadway in front of the sedan, whose driver didn't have enough time to avoid the victim.

On the day of this mishap, the ensign had called his girlfriend and volunteered to help her move some personal articles. He said he would “be over in five minutes.” The girlfriend questioned his ability to make it to her house so quickly, but he said he could. The deadly crash occurred en route.

In another case, a Marine corporal on terminal leave was traveling with another motorcyclist after leaving his civilian job. Both riders were going too fast for the traffic conditions and physical layout of the street. The excessive speed caused the corporal to lose control, and he subsequently was thrown from his motorcycle. Neither the knowledge he had from attending both the motorcycle-safety course and driver-improvement course, nor all the required personal protective equipment he was wearing, could make up for the impact of hitting a utility pole. He died at the scene.

Part of the problem is in what manufacturers are offering the public today—machines (sport bikes) with 140 or more horsepower and capable of speeds reaching 160 mph...and faster. The design of these bikes, in every sense, says, “Go fast; no, go faster; no, go even faster!”

I recently read an account of a 20-year-old sport biker [*allegedly the son of a sheriff's deputy*] who was cited for going 205 mph—in a 65-mph zone. A vet-

eran state trooper in an airplane reportedly clocked him with a stopwatch, then radioed ahead to a fellow trooper, who pulled over the motorcyclist. Some have challenged the accuracy of the trooper’s stopwatch, but, at the last report I could find, the biker still had a court date. His charges included reckless driving, driving without a motorcycle license, and driving 140 mph over the posted speed limit.

One possible solution to the problem would be for manufacturers to take a more responsible approach to the sale of these machines. A veteran rider suggested the manufacturers could offer would-be buyers an MSF (Motorcycle Safety Foundation) motorcycle-training class as part of the deal. Instead, though, noted the veteran rider, you see bold ads that play up the speed and power aspect. You’ll see a machine whipping around corners at a high rate of speed, while, printed at the bottom of the ad, will be a tiny message stating you shouldn’t exceed the speed limit, nor should you try any of the actions promoted in the ad.

It doesn’t take a rocket scientist to figure out why manufacturers use these tactics: They know their market, and they know full well the riders attracted to such ads often are young, first-time owners, with little if any riding experience. They know, too, young people are susceptible to this go-fast, look-at-me image. Guess who won’t be at the funeral, though,

when one of these youthful riders crashes and burns. ❏



Wearing shorts and T-shirt, a sport-bike rider looked like this after crashing at 100 mph.

Letters to the Editor



Re: "A Father's Worry," Spring 2006

Lyle Beck here again. I just wanted to let you know my son's '96 Chevy Cavalier referenced in this story got so modified that it died. A 2005 Dodge SRT4, with a super-duper, factory turbo; big ol' factory stereo; monster shifter; and mega-brake system—all nice and neatly matched by professional auto designers at Dodge—replaced it. What they left out was the operator brain module.

Situation: Late-night driving (just after the heavy North Florida dew made its early morning appearance), sack full of Krystal food to keep driver and passenger occupied, and a smooth street—just long enough to really get the SRT4 zooming.

Actions: Zoom off a curb to the right side, overcorrect to left, slide and spin on dew to right, clip off three 8-by-8-inch pressure-treated fence posts, and kill an 18-inch oak that, on the other hand, also managed to stop the car—**instantly!** [See accompanying photo.]

Result: Impact was so fast that notebook full of CDs folded in half, instead of flying off the seat. Right, rear-door armrest was pressed up against passenger headrest; lower edge of right rear window extended out of car about a foot. If the standard backseat Charlie had not needed some extra hours at work, he literally would have been split down the middle. His right arm and neck would have gone in different directions, courtesy of the tree. Airbags didn't activate

because the impact was right-side, rear, on top of the gas cap, where there are no sensors.

Thank goodness both front-seaters were wearing seat belts **and were sober!** My son, the NASCAR LCpl. Jeff Gordon-Tony Stewart-Dale



Earnhardt, Jr., all rolled into one—and his buddy only got scratches and seat-belt soreness (and missed out on the Krystals). I ended up with a fairly new battery (for my old "Mayo-Jack" VW, your 4/28/04 website Picture of the Week) and a nice spare tire.

My son ended up with a "new," \$100, 1994 Lumina that actually would go interstate speeds—but little else. He kept it until he purchased another SRT4 that he swears he will drive "safely." At least, he has a good spare tire!

Lyle Beck
Naval Air Depot
Jacksonville, Fla.

Re: "D2D Takes Driver Safety to the Marines," Spring 2006

Because *Sea&Shore* is one of my favorite Navy safety publications, I feel compelled to respond to a couple of misleading statements in this article. I'm sure Dave Stall ("the Car Guy") is very knowledgeable about vehicle maintenance, but I was an ASE-certified master auto technician for 10 years before entering the Navy, so I know a few things, as well.

The first statement I take exception to is when "the Car Guy" encourages drivers to follow the pressure listed on tires themselves, rather than the safe level prescribed in the owner's manual.

Auto manufacturers often list two pressures in the owner's manual and/or on a placard located on the driver's doorframe [*or sometimes on the underside of the trunk lid*]. One recommended pressure is for normal, everyday driving, with just the driver and one or two passengers, and the other is a higher number, for when the vehicle is loaded to max capacity. Also, there usually are two or more sets of numbers for vehicles that have more than one tire-/wheel-size option. The air-pressure recommendations from the factory are matched to gross vehicle weight and suspension setups for that particular vehicle, something no tire manufacturer can or should be expected to compile for every vehicle on which the tire possibly could be mounted.

The pressure listed on the tire itself is the "maximum," not minimum, safe pressure when the tire is cold, and inflating to that pressure isn't always the best thing to do. For example, heavy-duty tires on a pickup do not need to be inflated to 80 psi when the truck is driven empty most of the time. Neither do low-profile, high-performance tires need to be inflated to 44 psi on small passenger cars that weigh less than 2,500 pounds, even though that's what is listed on many of those types of tires.

I won't even go into pressure requirements for non-stock wheel/tire sizes. Nowhere have I ever seen a vehicle manufacturer recommend a tire pressure "lower than the safe level prescribed by

tire manufacturers." In general, vehicle manufacturers have a better understanding of what tire pressure a particular vehicle requires than do tire manufacturers.

The second thing to catch my eye was Dave Stall's statement, "There is no such thing as a tune-up on cars built later than 1985." This statement really bothers me. Cars built after 1985 still use spark plugs, wires and distributor caps, and the ignition still often needs mechanical timing, all of which requires periodic inspection and adjustment. Also, fuel injectors and throttle bodies still get gummed up, fuel filters clog, belts crack and stretch, and myriad emissions-related items wear out and/or fail.

Cars did not magically become self-sustaining after electronically controlled fuel and ignition systems were introduced, even though the "100,000-mile, no-tune-up" advertising prevalent today may lead some people to think so. Instead of following advice that lumps all cars built in the last 20 years into one category, I would recommend following the maintenance guidelines in your owner's manual because every car has different requirements. Any advice that suggests all you need is a new air filter installed every so often is flawed.

I don't doubt Dave Stall's experience or his good intentions, but broad statements like those can cause more harm than good. What he should be advising people to do is to find a good, honest technician who will communicate exactly what a vehicle's needs are and then to build a customer relationship and history with that technician. But then, "the Car Guy" wouldn't have an audience for his shows and newspaper column, would he?

AE2 Michael R. Goliver, USN

VP-47

E-mail: michael.goliver@auab.centaf.af.mil

My research reveals that Petty Officer Goliver is correct on both counts.—Ed.

Re: “No Grass Growing Under These Wheels,” Fall 2005, and “Ride to IBR Stops Short in ‘Show Me’ State” (with accompanying Letter to the Editor), Spring 2006

I am pleased that your magazine took the time to interview VADM Arthur, and I appreciate the post-accident follow-up, too. VADM Arthur made some really good points.

As a fairly active rider, I question the negative feedback [*Letter to the Editor*] in the spring 2006 issue. I especially question the writer’s validity in suggesting that more restrictions be placed on service members who ride. We are required to wear the proper PPE, regardless of duty status (e.g., if I die, I don’t want SGLI denying benefits to my family as the result of a bad line-of-duty determination for not wearing PPE). I also question the letter writer’s criticism of VADM Arthur’s motives.

While I feel saddened by the loss of the writer’s [*motorcycling*] shipmate and the impact on the young family, life is not without risks. How many of his Sailors wrecked their cars? He didn’t make any comparison in his letter.

The writer expresses doubt in the example set by VADM Arthur as an avid motorcyclist and even goes so far as to suggest that the admiral is a hypocrite and should be “evaluated and addressed by the CNO.” The writer also questions the relevance of your interview with the admiral to safety and comes close to suggesting the interview might indirectly lead to more injuries and deaths. VADM Arthur didn’t say every young Sailor should ride on a whim. The interview didn’t give me a perception of “smooth language” or the “lawyer side” of anyone’s background. The admiral simply pointed out that commands might do well to encourage safe and responsible riding, rather than discourage all riding.

I took away some valid points from the first interview, and I’ll recap three in my own words: Take the MSF (Motorcycle Safety Foundation) course (the admiral is a RiderCoach), appreciate that riding requires a set of skills that are both complex and perishable, and *always* wear PPE. Responsible riders, such as VADM Arthur, understand that these principles only minimize (vice eliminate) the risks. He makes it clear in both stories that he’s fully aware of the nuances of the sport, and his survival of two bad wrecks reinforces it.

The concerned writer of the letter does point out, correctly, that some of the more expensive bikes have certain features designed to improve safety. For example, some have ABS brakes, and one, the 2006 Gold Wing, even features an optional air bag! The actual effect of these measures, in my opinion, though, is mostly academic; better equipment never can be a substitute for safe riding practices. That’s also the case with automobiles.

I’m 27, started riding in May 2005, and have employed ORM in every aspect of this journey. I took the MSF course (out of my own pocket), got my license, and bought a low-displacement bike. It’s not a BMW, but it’s still fast enough to kill me. I spent more than \$500 on safety gear. I always wear my helmet, along with an armored jacket, armored gloves, and boots. I inspect my bike before every ride. I ride defensively and avoid bad situations as much as possible. However, things can and do go wrong. In 11 months of riding, I have used every avoidance technique taught in the MSF Basic Rider course. I’ve even experienced a flat tire on a busy highway during rush hour in San Diego. My immense amount of fun derived from riding has far outweighed the inherent apprehension that comes with the sport.

In our pseudo-culture of risk aversion, the Navy should benefit from VADM Arthur’s example. Both stories contain words of wisdom from 38 years and millions of miles of motorcycling experience. I will, in my future tours as a department head, proudly use VADM Arthur’s comments to promote the safe operation of all types of motor vehicles.

A Navy lieutenant
[Name withheld by request]

WORK ZONE

Preventing an Autumn Backache

Raking piles of leaves is a common chore for homeowners this time of year. If you don't do it correctly, you run the risk of injuring your back, shoulders and wrists.

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, there were more than 12,000 raking-related injuries treated at hospital emergency rooms, doctors' offices, and clinics in 2004. Using yard tools improperly, combined with overextending and overexerting muscles, may increase your susceptibility to musculoskeletal injuries.

"The potential for orthopaedic injury is high, whether you rake routinely or only once or twice a year," said Frank B. Kelly, MD, orthopaedic surgeon and chair of the American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS) board of councilors. "When raking, don't twist your body; instead, use your legs to shift your weight, switching sides frequently," he warned.

The AAOS offers these tips to help minimize raking-related injuries:

- **Conduct a yard walkthrough.** Before raking, it's important to pick up any fallen branches, tree limbs, or debris that may cause you to trip and fall.
- **Stretch.** Before any physical activity, warm up your muscles for 10 minutes with light exercise. It's also essential to stretch your muscles after raking to relieve tension.
- **Pace yourself.** Raking is an aerobic activity. Take frequent breaks, and replenish fluids to prevent dehydration. If you experience chest pain, shortness of breath, or other signs of a heart attack, seek emergency care.



- **See what you are raking.** Don't let a hat or scarf block your vision. Watch out for large rocks, low branches, tree stumps, and uneven surfaces. Avoid falls by wearing shoes or boots with slip-resistant soles.

- **Use a rake that feels comfortable for your height and strength.** Avoid using a rake that is too short or long. Allow space between your hands on the tool grip to increase your leverage. Wear gloves or use rakes with padded handles to help prevent blisters.

- **Vary movements when raking.** To rake without strain, alternate your leg and arm positions often. When picking up leaves, bend at the knees, not at the waist. Also, keep the leaf piles small, so you don't strain your back while gathering.

- **Avoid overfilling the bags, especially if the leaves are wet.** You should be able to carry bags comfortably, so make sure they aren't too heavy or large.

- **Don't throw the leaves over your shoulder or to the side.** This action requires a twisting motion that places undue stress on your back. ■

Other Resources

www.homeownernet.com/articles/leavescleanup.html

www.landscaping.about.com/cs/landscapecolor/raking_leaves.htm

www.hgtv.com/hgtv/gl_equipment_hand_tools/article/O,1785,HGTV_3582_1394733,00.html

Best Practices

All Cole Sailors Play a Role

By Ltjg. Bralyn Cathey,
USS *Cole* (DDG-67)

The well-being of USS *Cole* Sailors extends beyond the ship's bulkheads and angle irons. Because the crew's welfare is a main concern both on and off duty, the command safety council has developed initiatives that ensure the ship's material safety, as well as the safety of her most valuable asset: her Sailors.

The command philosophy is to be "combat ready all the time." This challenge requires the dedicated efforts of all hands.

Among the new programs implemented by *Cole's* safety council is one that empowers Sailors to take an active role in mishap mitigation. Sailors report working

conditions they deem unsafe via the ship's "safety desk" e-mail-trouble-call log. By logging onto the ship's homepage and accessing an interactive form, they can describe in detail the situation they discovered. They then send the completed form to the safety officer and assistants, who place the information in a log. With the help of the safety committee, they track all deficiencies and ensure the problems are corrected. The most important aspect of this initiative is that it allows everyone from the most junior Sailor to the command master chief to play an active role.

The command also has adopted a policy whereby every Sailor who checks on board receives a reflective physical-training belt. These belts are mandatory [*in some locations*] when running on or off base between dusk and dawn and are highly encouraged when running all other times, too.

Another initiative finds division safety petty officers doing daily walk-throughs to ensure the ship's material condition is preserved. They identify, record and correct any noted discrepancies, which normally are tracked through a daily damage-control list.

By empowering all its Sailors to take the necessary steps to keep themselves and the ship safe, *Cole* leaders have helped ensure the ship always is ready to carry out its mission—successfully. Because of the initiatives now in place, the number of safety-related incidents has dropped. And, the command safety committee has been able to address safety issues, reinforce the idea that safety is not just a shipboard concern, and maintain a historical file that could help to identify and reduce fleetwide safety discrepancies. ■

The author has been reassigned to a company-officer billet at the U.S. Naval Academy since writing this story.—Ed.

Navy photo by PH2 James Elliot



Focus-Group Study: A Strategy for Change

By Dan Steber,
Naval Safety Center

When USS *George Washington* (CVN-73) returned to Norfolk from a six-month Arabian Gulf deployment, Capt. Dee Mewbourne, the ship's XO, started noticing a steady increase in private-motor vehicle (PMV) incidents. Alcohol, speed and fatigue were the primary factors involved. He challenged his DAPA and safety department to develop intervention strategies to reduce the number of incidents.

"We were perplexed at what we were seeing," said Cdr. John Reese, the *GW* safety officer. "We knew our ship had introduced several proactive programs to improve safety and to change off-duty behavior. We had implemented a mentoring program, followed several best safety practices found on the Naval Safety Center website, and we felt good about our efforts. Yet, we clearly had to act fast to prevent PMV incidents from getting out of control."

This concern moved ship leaders to explore several other avenues. They redoubled their efforts and used the ship's SITE-TV and 1MC announcing systems, safety newsletters, and POD notes to increase safety awareness and promote favorable performance—both on and off duty—through better decision-making. They also decided to contact the Naval Safety Center and solicit more help.

The result was a focus-group study for the *George Washington* Sailors. The Safety Center teamed with the Human Performance Center, which is part of Center for Personal Development at Dam Neck, Va., to plan this study. The goal was to assess drivers' prevailing attitudes and beliefs regarding impaired and fatigued driving and to get their ideas of the most effective methods to prevent crashes, fatalities and injuries.

A team of safety officers, traffic-safety specialists, and instructional specialists conducted the focus groups in February 2005. These groups included two driver groups (DUI offenders and

non-offenders) and one leadership group. Using Naval Safety Center data, the focus-group team identified male and female drivers in the high-risk 18-to-26-year-old age group. The leadership group included division chief petty officers and supervisors who provide guidance and implement command policies affecting driving.

These sessions produced a significant amount of information that was instrumental in developing an internal survey for impaired and fatigued driving. Four hundred thirty-three Sailors participated in the 15-minute survey to identify possible solutions that may help the problem. To find all the results and recommendations, visit the Naval Safety Center website at www.safetycenter.navy.mil/bestpractices/ashore/GW_focus_groups.htm.

"Our role at the Safety Center isn't just to gather statistics and analyze trends," said traffic-safety specialist Mary Brigham. "We're responsible for looking at the numbers more closely and seeing where we can improve. After identifying what the Sailors and leaders would like to see implemented in their command, we will continue to work with the *George Washington* safety team in designing effective information and education campaigns for their target population."

Two of *GW*'s division chiefs, AEC(AW/SW) Bernadette Kingsley and ABHCS(AW) Jonathan Reed, were instrumental in making these sessions a success. "We have to find out what is driving our people to ignore warnings and raise personal risk, endangering their lives and the lives of their shipmates," said Senior Chief Reed.

"This out-of-the-box effort has been very interesting," noted Cdr. Reese. "We didn't know what to expect, but our people were engaged and seemed ready to look at plans, programs or efforts that might work. We have seen a reduction in our incidents, so we're pleased. Certainly, these focus groups were a step in the right direction." ■

Navy photo by PH1 Brien Aho

Hotshot Biker Ch

By AME3(AW) Wilfrido Baldera,
VS-31

My story begins in New York, where I learned to ride and bought my first motorcycle, a 250cc Kawasaki Ninja, when I was 17 years old. After two years, I moved up to a more powerful Suzuki GSXF Katana 600cc. It wasn't a super-sport, but this bike had a lot of power, and, once I felt comfortable riding it, I learned how to do some small stunts. In a few more years, my riding skills and confidence had grown to the point where I was doing wheelies, burnouts, rolling burnouts, and stoppies.

Thus far, I had taken some spills but only had suffered a few scratches. My most significant crash to date had been a collision with a light pole, but, once again, I had walked away with only minor injuries. The lack of any major crashes, coupled with my perception of my skills, had sent my confidence level through the roof. With this self-assurance, I decided to try a wheelie near my house—one that didn't have the desired results. I totaled the Katana, which was valued at \$3,000.

After high school, I joined the Navy, got married, became a dad (to a beautiful baby boy), and received my second set of orders to VS-31 at NAS Jacksonville, Fla. Things in my life were going great. I slowly was building a solid reputation as a valuable asset to the command, with one exception: My chain of command recognized that I had some reckless motorcycle habits. What I didn't realize at the time was that I was about to give them even more cause for concern.

In July 2005, I bought a GSXR750, the bike I always had wanted. I was riding my bike one evening when a deputy from the local sheriff's department pulled me over for racing another rider. I had to appear in court, which resulted in the charge being reduced from racing to reckless driving. That reduction saved my driver's license but didn't change my perception of my riding abilities.

That incident sparked increased awareness from the chain of command. I subsequently was counseled on numerous occasions about the dangers of riding recklessly and the impact it might have on my family and my career. I just blew off their warnings, though,

and kept riding aggressively. I didn't like being counseled—I felt I was responsible enough, old enough, and mature enough to know how to behave outside work. I also believed that, if I didn't get caught riding the way I wanted off duty, no one would have to know. Needless to say, I was wrong.

On the evening of Sept. 30, 2005, I was riding with a group of people in a local parking lot. It was dark, and we were hanging out, demonstrating stunts to one another. As I was going down one of the main aisles, I popped a wheelie and crashed into the brick wall of a building at 59 mph. Did I mention I wasn't wearing any protective gear? I suffered serious injuries [see accompanying photos] and had to be airlifted to a local trauma center.

I woke up from a two-week coma to learn I had two broken ribs, a collapsed lung, a bruised heart, a perforated colon, and a shattered elbow. My recovery started with a six-week hospitalization, including six operations, multiple trips to the intensive-care unit, and a battle with pneumonia. Before this incident happened, I didn't know how fragile I really was—a common mistake among young people. The sticker shock was equally impressive—my hospital bill was about \$900,000.

I'm writing this article to help Sailors and leaders make better choices. I know it can be fun to push the limit in life, but there's a time and place for everything. My experience has taught me that, no matter what we do, we always need to apply risk management. I also have learned it's a violation of the

The author with his bike before the mishap.



illin' Now



the toughest time in her life, and my son nearly was left without a dad. My entire family was hurt, my friends were affected, and so were others in my command—they had to pick up the slack created by my absence.

And, the people I used to ride with never visited me once in the hospital. Why? For the same reason I wouldn't have visited one of them—I wouldn't have wanted to see a friend lying in a hospital bed that way.

I'm working hard to return to full duty, but my elbow still is broken, and I'm told I may not be able to stay in the Navy I have learned to love and respect. Think about your choices because there may not be any second chances.

A supervisor added this note to the author's story:

As can be seen by Petty Officer Baldera's eye-opening account, motorcycle crashes can happen to anyone at any time, no matter what your level of

Uniform Code of Military Justice to engage in reckless activities that can hurt you or anyone else. I went to non-judicial punishment (for the first time in five years of service) as soon as I returned from convalescent leave and answered to an Article 92 (failure to obey a lawful order) and Article 134 (reckless endangerment).

Does something this big really have to happen before we realize what's going on? I suggest it shouldn't take a nearly fatal crash and a trip to the CO to make us realize we're Sailors 24/7/365—no matter what. I suddenly understand just how many people are affected by the choices we make. My wife endured

experience. The probability of this kind of mishap occurring grows exponentially when individual Sailors perceive that they are indestructible or that no one in the chain of command cares. As naval leaders, we are responsible for mentoring our troops and providing them with all the information we can to shape their perceptions about the need to make wise decisions. Experiences such as this, coupled with statistics and information about safety courses and training-skills courses, go a long way in reaching out to our Sailors. While they ultimately make their own decisions, we, as leaders, can and must weigh in heavily with timely influence. ■

Ship Raises the Ba



By Dan Steber, Naval Safety Center,
Photos courtesy USS *Harry S. Truman* photo lab

Between the end of deployment in April 2005 and February 2006, USS *Harry S. Truman* (CVN-75) lost three Sailors in PMV accidents. Of those three deaths, two involved DUI while driving aggressively, while the other one involved a Sailor driving aggressively on her way home from work.

As noted by Cdr. Thomas Fohr, the safety officer aboard *Harry S. Truman*, “We usually see several links in a chain that leads to a mishap. In these cases, the seat belt was an obvious link that, if used, could have saved all three Sailors. Another link leading to these mishaps was the DUI and/or aggressive driving. If anyone had broken just one of these links, our shipmates still could be with us today.”

Like most other Navy units, *Harry S. Truman* has conducted several safety stand-downs, with a major portion of each one dedicated to safe-driving techniques and the results of DUI. The training usually is

broadcast on the ship’s closed-circuit TV or provided during briefs from the chain of command.

The ship’s safety department also has taken an innovative approach and made training available on a much more personal level. The first effort was to get the Driving for Life training (normally only available by going to the Internet and logging into Navy Knowledge Online) put on the ship’s intranet for all hands. The bandwidth for most ships on the waterfront doesn’t allow access to the Internet so Sailors can complete such courses.

With help from Jean Kirchner, director of training at the Center for Personal Development, NAS Oceana Annex Dam Neck, the ship received the Driving for Life course on a CD-ROM. “We had to alter the program to print out an official-looking course-completion certificate,” explained Cdr. Fohr, who went on to add that, if done properly, the course

r in DUI Awareness

takes about five hours to complete. Kirchner receives the course-completion database and enters the results into each person's NKO account. "We ensure that all new check-ins complete the course within 30 days of checking on board," noted Cdr. Fohr.

The ship didn't stop there, either. The next action was to implement AAA/Driver Improvement Program (AAA/DIP) for all hands under the age of 30 or anyone over 30 with a moving violation in the last 12 months. Aboard *Harry S. Truman*, these guidelines equated to 2,440 people. This course takes eight hours to complete and is taught by AAA/DIP-trained instructors.

[To obtain instructors in the Tidewater region, you can call Michael Lucas, CNRMA public safety, (757) 322-3116 (DSN 262). You also can send a fax to (757) 444-5541 or an e-mail to michael.s.lucas1@navy.mil.]

The ship's latest effort to combat the DUI link was a DUI awareness fair that ran from Feb. 27 through March 3. Designed to make a lasting impression with Sailors, the fair addressed the effects of alcohol, penalties of drinking and driving, and the impact of poor decision-making.

"It was a fantastic opportunity to help the ship raise safety awareness about all aspects of an alcohol-related incident," said Bonnie Revell, a traffic-safety specialist at the Naval Safety Center. "The ship came up with the idea, and we simply helped bring some of the pieces together and showed support."

The DUI fair, which had been planned for weeks, involved a series of recreated scenes that took Sailors from a nightclub to a hospital and then to a funeral. The idea for the event was the result of Cdr. Fohr's review of a program where a VP squadron took Sailors to see a local court and jailhouse as part of the indoctrination process.

"Our ship has 30 people a week [*checking in*], and it would take forever

to do it that way. I couldn't figure out how to handle the ship's more than 3,000 people until one night I awoke with the answer."

Fohr's idea was to bring everything to the ship's site or, more accurately, to the ship's berthing barge. It worked like most theme-park rides: Sailors went through various stages to get through the whole experience, beginning with an introduction to the effects of alcohol and the problems it causes. Once members of one group were done, they moved to a holding area, then went down to the first real stop—Club 75, where



they started learning the consequences of a night on the town. “We tried to keep everything going in four-minute segments and hold the group size to four people,” said Fohr.

The stop at Club 75 included a DJ, MA2 Mills, and a bartender, PS2 Latricia Lewis, who served non-alcoholic beer to simulate a club scene. Mills welcomed the group to the club with chest-thumping music.

The pre-arranged script stated that too much alcohol was consumed and a decision point was reached: to drive or not to drive. Discussion ensued about the need to have a plan for such an occurrence (e.g., to have a designated driver or to use a taxi). The script, however, showed the Sailors decided to drive drunk. They subsequently had a wreck, with one victim dying and another suffering life-threatening injuries. Police arrived on the scene, and the Sailors now faced a field sobriety test.

Two officers from the Chesapeake [Va.] Police Department suspected that alcohol was involved and

was the group’s next stop. A dummy with blood flowing from flesh wounds lay on a gurney. Photos of a real victim hung in front of the group, as HM3 Mitchell Perry (a paramedic on the outside) explained, “Because the victim wasn’t wearing a seatbelt, she was ejected through the windshield. You can see where we had to pull her nose and lip over. As a paramedic, it’s my job to keep her alive. She’s awake, but I can’t give her meds. She isn’t breathing, so I have to cut a hole into her throat and trachea to insert a tube.”

Every Sailor in the room stared at the dummy, at the photos, and at Petty Officer Perry. No one said a word. They all were soaking in the message.

“We’re tired of cleaning up your messes,” Perry continued. “As you leave in handcuffs, I have to deal with the families, and I live with the nightmares. I’m fortunate to have the training to heal, but you don’t have the right to take away a life—don’t drink and drive.”

This station moved a lot of people. “Looking at the body and photos was eerie,” said ADAN Labran-

“Looking at the body and photos was eerie,” said ADAN Labrandon Long. “I realized my family could be the ones lying in the morgue dead or in the hospital fighting for life.”

had the Sailors walk a line taped to the deck. It was the same test given on a real stop. The only difference was that the Sailors wore fatal-vision goggles to simulate a 0.17 BAC. “You’re going to place one foot in front of another,” an officer directed. “Take nine steps down, pivot to the left, and return. Hands down by your side. You may begin.”

The other officer gave similar instructions to a second group of Sailors, and the first person in each line then tried to pass the sobriety test. Most wandered off course and failed miserably. The test continued until every Sailor had taken it, with some almost falling over—officers stood nearby, though, to keep that from happening.

“Everyone has a system to try and beat the test,” said one officer, “but seldom does it work. When you make a decision to drink and drive, that impairment is what makes you go through a red light or stop sign. In this example, you hit another car, killing the father of a 5-year-old and causing severe injuries to the driver’s wife. You’re going to jail for the night.”

Meanwhile, the “dead” person was headed to the morgue, and the injured was off to a hospital, which

don Long. “I realized my family could be the ones lying in the morgue dead or in the hospital fighting for life.”

With that, the group moved on to non-judicial punishment at a mock Captain’s Mast. MMCS (AW/SW) John Heidke was the one holding mast. A group of Sailors stood in front of him, and one [*representing the group*] stood directly in front of the “captain.” AO2 Adam Vasquez directed the accused to attention, ordered a hand salute, and ended with a crisp command to uncover. The charges were read, and the Sailor had to explain an unauthorized absence—in this case, the 26 days he spent in jail.

Senior Chief Heidke walked through the incident, reminding the accused that he had taken an innocent life and that families now were feeling the pain and unwanted sorrow from the loss of a loved one. He talked about all the poor decisions made. The Sailor was reduced in rate, lost pay, was restricted to base for 45 days, and was processed for administrative discharge under other than honorable conditions. While this scenario was make-believe, the realism of it was enough to make the Sailor stop and tell the senior



chief it had made him think about the gravity of the situation.

The next stop was a city courtroom, where the accused Sailors faced charges for manslaughter and DUI. Again, the scenario was written to be as real as possible in four minutes. It followed Virginia statutes, and the individuals were found guilty and given jail sentences. They then were escorted to a makeshift cell in the bowels of the berthing barge.

The cell was about the size of a real cell in most prisons, with a simple bed against one wall and a toilet in the corner. The guide at this stop read the one thing that wasn't part of the original plan. It was a story from the local newspaper that included an interview with a stepfather who lost a son in a crash involving a real *Truman* Sailor. The guide also talked with the group about a similar incident that occurred on the same highway in Virginia Beach several years earlier. That mishap killed several innocent victims, including a pregnant mother. At this point, most heads were hanging low, and some people wiped at their eyes before moving on to the final stop: a funeral.

PSCS Ray Huff, an ordained minister, played the role of a minister for the victims in the alcohol-related

mishap. "It's really important to let people know the repercussions of their actions," he said, as he invited the next group in and asked them to take their seats. Huff then commenced another eulogy and service.

Every day for a week, the DUI fair saw at least 100 groups of four people (age 30 and below) each pass through these stations. Was the program a success? As ABHAN Emmanuel Wilbourn commented, "I'm not a drinker, so I'm not worried about getting a DUI, but I did learn to make plans. I can be a designated driver and help friends avoid getting in trouble. It showed me that you don't have to be the driver to be affected, too."

The DUI fair for Sailors aboard USS *Harry S. Truman* was a necessary step to prevent similar incidents. The Naval Safety Center hopes to get a copy of the video that ship's personnel shot of the event so that copies can be made available to ships, squadrons and shore activities around the fleet. To contact the *Truman* safety department, address your e-mail to: safetyo@truman.navy.mil. For more information on traffic-safety best practices, visit the Naval Safety Center website at www.safetycenter.navy.mil/bestpractices/ashore. ■

25-Year-Old History Lesson

By Cdr. Douglas F. Keller,
USS *Nimitz* (CVN-68)

In a few months, we will be done with our planned incremental availability (PIA) and back to the business of getting underway and flying... as it should be. New risks always accompany any change in daily routine—risks that must be identified and managed. As we begin our transition back to operations at sea, we will have a safety stand-down, focusing on these challenges.

I often hear complaints about our drills, even from senior people. “We never will have all our first-line responders taken out,” they say.

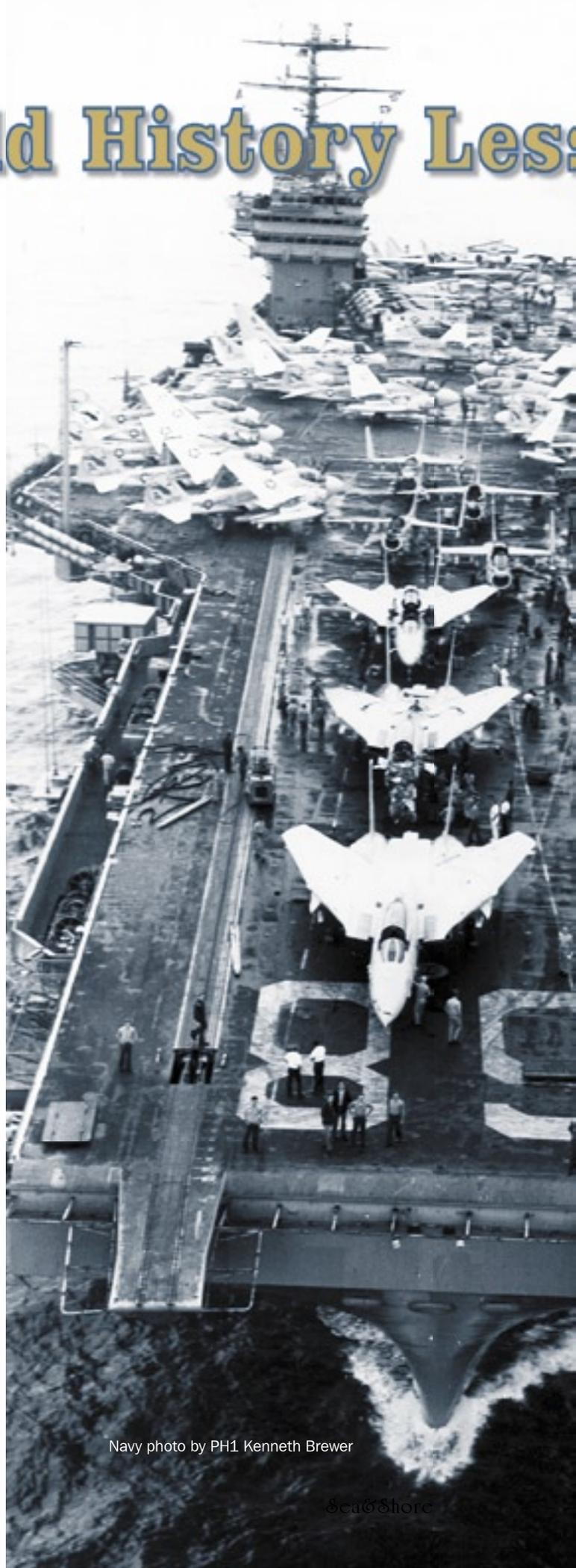
“Not so,” I tell them. “Anything can happen, and it sometimes does.” The other thing I say is that casualties in one area of the ship can affect the whole ship. Everyone has a role to play, and, like a good second baseman, you need to know what to do before—not after—you get the ball.

It was May 15, 1981—25 years ago—when *Nimitz* was completing work-ups for an upcoming deployment. Most of today’s crew members weren’t even born then. Those who were around then, though, may recall this cruise was the one in which *Nimitz* F-14s shot down the Libyan MIGs.

Anyway, it was nighttime, and a USMC EA-6B Prowler was trying to land. It isn’t clear if the pilot failed to maintain lineup, or if the helmsman let the ship drift off course with the aircraft on short final. The result, however, was that the Prowler hit the helos at the base of the island and skidded up the bow, hitting a tractor and other aircraft along the way.

Luckily, the flight-deck sprinkler system worked as advertised, and the flight-deck firefighting team quickly doused the flames. Firefighting efforts then were halted, and, just as the call was made to begin the salvage operation, the hose teams approached the damaged aircraft. At this point, there was lots of damage but no serious injuries.

No one knew that a Sparrow missile lay covered in the wreckage, and, even though the fire was out, enough heat was being generated to cause the missile warhead to cook off and explode. This explosion caused a fuel fire that engulfed the bow and another 14 aircraft. With the out-of-control fire, three more warheads exploded. Firefighting efforts continued for the next few hours, and,



Navy photo by PH1 Kenneth Brewer

son Still Valuable Today



USS Nimitz steams toward Norfolk, following the May 26, 1981, nighttime crash of a Marine Corps EA-6B Prowler on the ship's flight deck. The three F-14 Tomcats parked on the bow were damaged in the crash.

when the battle had ended, 14 Sailors were dead, and 45 more were injured seriously. Three aircraft also had been destroyed and nine seriously damaged.

I go into a bit more detail during the safety stand-down by showing some pictures [see the accompanying photo] of what happened. The point I try to make is that, although unlikely, really bad things can happen, and everyone must know their procedures and be prepared to act when the time comes.

From the ship's bridge, where Sailors turn the ship so the winds cross the flight deck from the right direction, to the engineers, who ensure fire-main pressure, we all have a part to play in supporting the ship's operations. It's time now to ask, "What if?" What would I do if a catastrophe occurred somewhere on the ship?

The flight deck is the first place people usually think about when it comes to potential danger, but danger exists all over—from propulsion spaces to weapons spaces to the hangar bay. That's the reason firefighting equipment is spread all over the ship. If you aren't prepared to fill in somewhere when the first responders disappear, then you're not ready. Now is the time to think about this stuff—not after you find yourself in the middle of a conflagration.

A lot was learned from this 1981 mishap, which, among other things, became the catalyst, or reason, for the Navy's zero-tolerance policy for drugs. Autopsies of the 14 dead Sailors revealed that six had used illegal drugs. That's just a snapshot, of course, but, if almost 50 percent of the Sailors were high on pot or other drugs, you have to believe that safety surely was compromised. Congress thought so, and the results of the inquiry led directly to the Navy's policy on illegal drugs.

There's a saying in the Marine Corps, "Everyone is a rifleman," and that really is the heart of the way Marines think. We don't have that mantra in the Navy, unless you hang out a lot with damage controlmen. But, I would argue that everyone in the Navy is a firefighter. Whatever your job is, think now about what you would do if trouble showed up in your spaces. Don't wait.

So, as always, take care of yourselves, and help me by taking care of your shipmates. ■

The author is the ship's safety officer.

Attack of the Stack-Beastie

By BM2 Michael R. Kelly and John Mapp,
MARMC

Once upon a time, a large-deck amphibious ship was going through pre-underway work-ups. The ship was one week shy of getting underway, and a lot of work remained to be done. That work included replacing a faulty antenna and op-testing the boilers—ordinarily, minor issues, but not with this particular “gator freighter.”

It seems the amphib’s faulty radar antenna was located just a few feet forward of the forward smokestack. Our heroes, whom we’ll call Stan (an experienced CPO) and Ollie (a civilian contractor), arrived and spoke with the CSOOW (combat systems officer of the watch) before going aloft. They learned that engineers would be lighting off the aft boiler and that the working-aloft chit already had been run. The Kilo flag was flying, and the word was being passed over the 1MC. There would be no problem unless the forward plant was lit off.

Unbeknownst to Stan or Ollie, the CSOOW, and the EMO (electronics material officer), the engineer officer already had lit fires in the forward boiler. The stalwart maintenance techs apparently didn’t notice the smoke and steam until they were on the top platform of the forward mast, starting to disconnect the antenna. Here’s what our heroes might have sounded like when they noticed something wrong.

“Gee, Ollie. There seems to be steam and smoke coming out of that smokestack right there.”

“Impossible, Stanley. The CSOOW would have told us if the forward boiler was lit off.”

“Um, Ollie—steam and smoke definitely are coming out of that stack.”

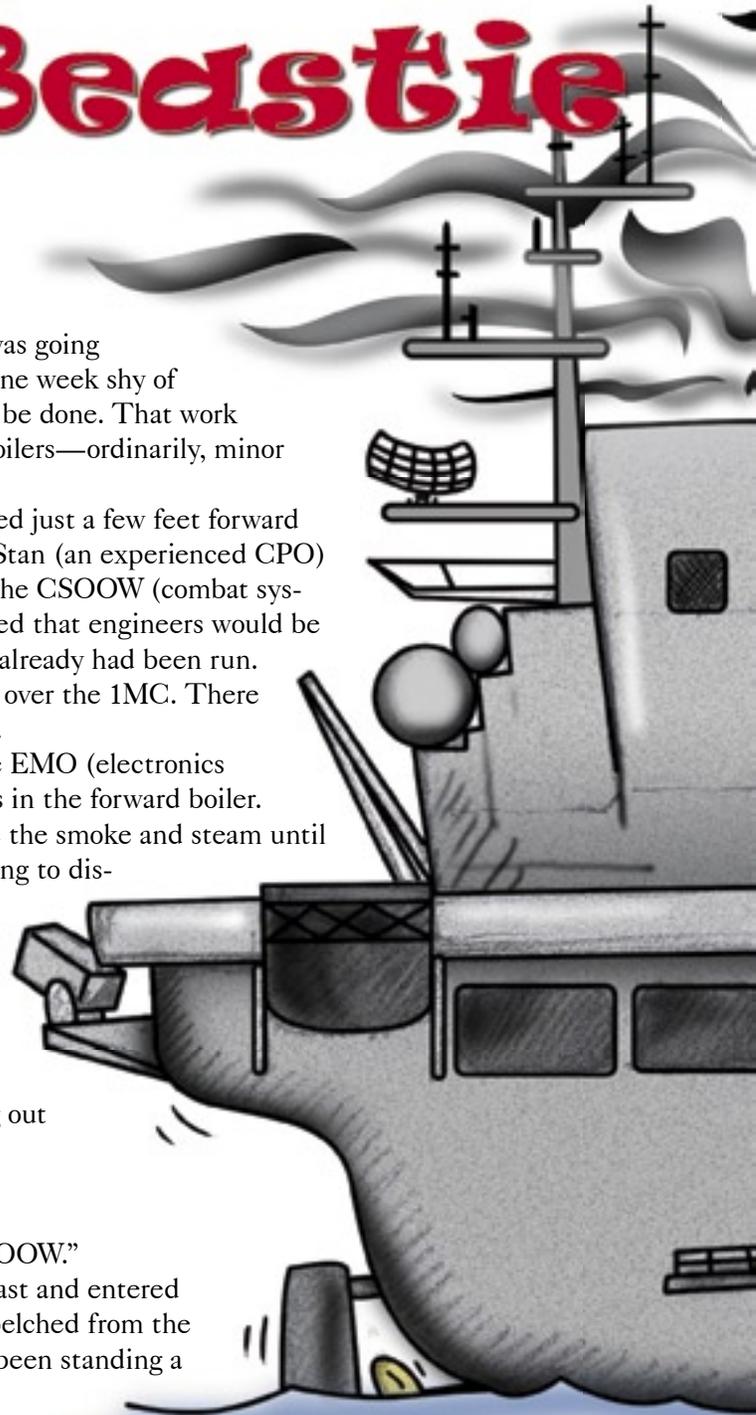
“Stanley, that just can’t be.”

“But...”

“Oh, very well. Let’s climb down and talk to the CSOOW.”

No sooner had our heroes climbed down from the mast and entered the skin of the ship than a large spray of scalding water belched from the smokestack, soaking the platform where our heroes had been standing a few minutes before.

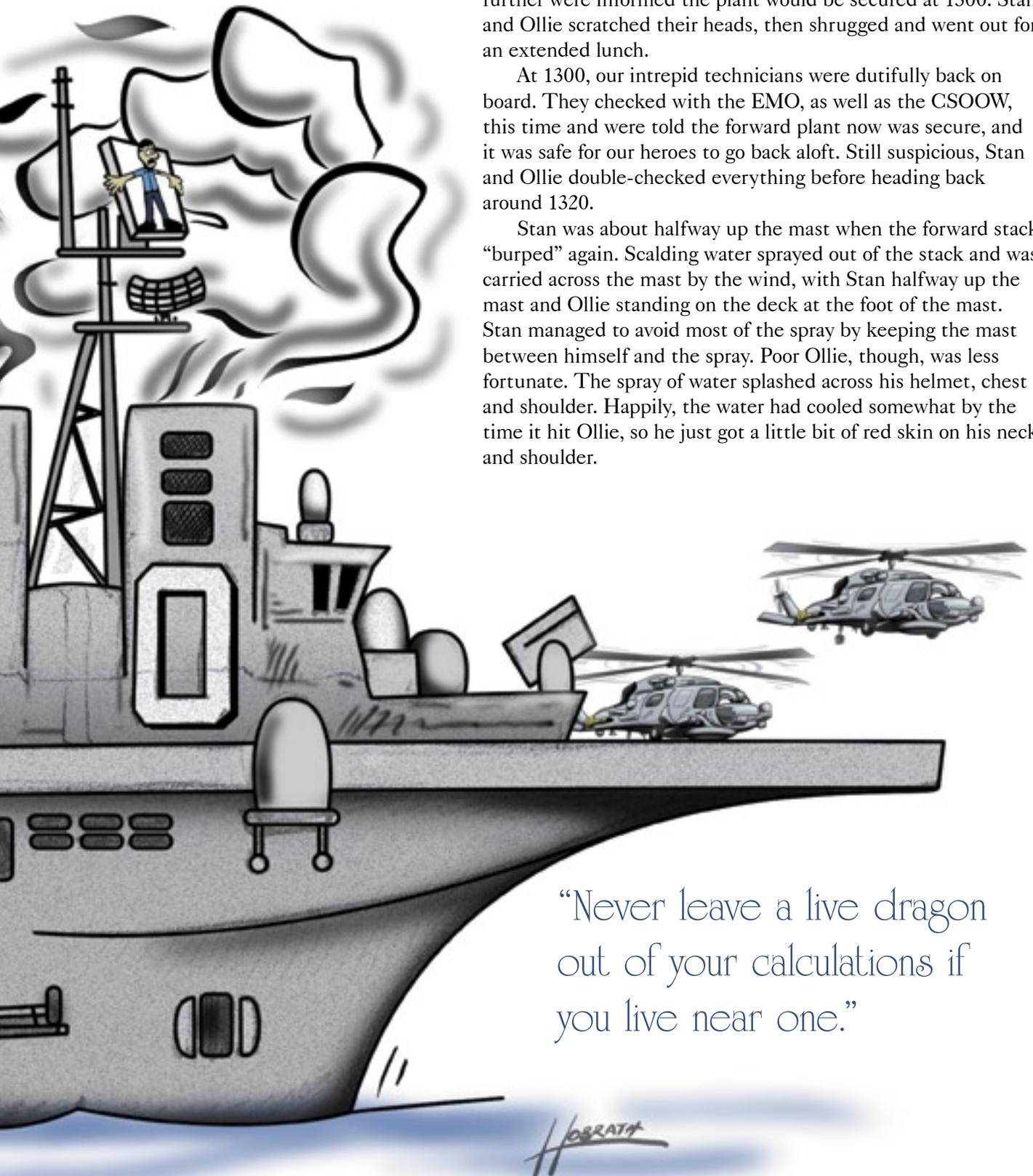
This made Stan and Ollie somewhat agitated (heaven knows why). They immediately got hold of the CSOOW, who repeated that only the after plant was scheduled for light-off. Once our heroes had explained the problem



in detail, the CSOOW contacted the EMO, who said the engineers had lit off the forward plant around 0730 that morning. Apparently, this news was a surprise to him as well. They further were informed the plant would be secured at 1300. Stan and Ollie scratched their heads, then shrugged and went out for an extended lunch.

At 1300, our intrepid technicians were dutifully back on board. They checked with the EMO, as well as the CSOOW, this time and were told the forward plant now was secure, and it was safe for our heroes to go back aloft. Still suspicious, Stan and Ollie double-checked everything before heading back around 1320.

Stan was about halfway up the mast when the forward stack “burped” again. Scalding water sprayed out of the stack and was carried across the mast by the wind, with Stan halfway up the mast and Ollie standing on the deck at the foot of the mast. Stan managed to avoid most of the spray by keeping the mast between himself and the spray. Poor Ollie, though, was less fortunate. The spray of water splashed across his helmet, chest and shoulder. Happily, the water had cooled somewhat by the time it hit Ollie, so he just got a little bit of red skin on his neck and shoulder.



Needless to say, our heroes were past agitated at this point. After hopping up and down and issuing a series of vile invectives in the general direction of the forward stack, Stan and Ollie took cover and hid behind something solid. They stayed put until they were sure the hideous stack-beastie wasn't going to attack them again. After bolting down the new antenna, our heroes went back to the office and told their boss about their adventures.

This misadventure (like most) had plenty of fathers. The combat systems and engineering departments apparently didn't speak to each other, so the CSOOW didn't know about the forward boiler being lit. Neither did the officer of the deck; the boiler condition wasn't noted in the Deck Log. Nearly everyone in the ship's safety office was on leave, and the one safety petty officer on board was so busy taking care of MWR problems he wasn't even aware a near-mishap had taken place. Interviews with the ship's MPA revealed that personnel on this amphib routinely worked aloft near active stacks. Stan and Ollie should have realized that the forward boiler was lit and insisted on wearing proper PPE.

Chapter C8 of OpNavInst 5100.19D requires the commanding officer's written permission before

personnel work aloft near active stacks. Even with the CO's permission, working near active stacks requires the use of respirators. The "man aloft" message is supposed to be passed over the 1MC—in full—every 15 minutes.

Follow-up interviews with the EMO showed that the ship was violating these aspects of the "man aloft" procedures (as outlined in OpNavInst 5100.19D). These violations are being corrected. Oddly, the "corrections" being implemented merely bring the ship's procedures back in line with the instruction.

This near-mishap could have had a much more serious ending. Stack gases are bad enough, but the possibility of getting steam-broiled and asphyxiated while working 50 or 60 feet over a hard, steel deck is a bit more hazardous than our heroes were ready for. Stan and Ollie's supervisor secured all work aboard that amphib until the near-mishap was reviewed thoroughly and steps were taken to prevent future incidents. The ship's CO (who understandably is peeved with the whole misadventure) has ordered a review of man-aloft procedures to prevent future incidents of this type.

Tolkien wrote, "It does not do to leave a live dragon out of your calculations if you live near one." If you're going to be working near any sort of engine exhaust, replace "dragon" with "boiler" in that quote. That way, even if the ship is taking dangerous shortcuts with safety regulations, you can avoid getting burned. ■



Navy photo by JO2 Brian P. Biller

Bicyclist Has Eye-Opening Ride

By Bill Heath,
USNH Yokosuka

After completing a half marathon around Lake Yamanaka near Mt. Fuji and getting a good night's rest, Lt. Raul Barrientos was focused on a new challenge. He planned to go bike riding, part of his training to qualify for a future Ironman competition.

The weather was favorable as the lieutenant emerged in his sharp, blue and white biker jersey, which contrasted his bright yellow, semi-professional bicycle. After doing a thorough pre-ride inspection (e.g., checking tire pressure, brakes, cables, wheels, and frame) and finding all systems go, he donned his helmet and snugged the strap. A wonderful June Saturday lay ahead—or so he thought.

The descent from Uraga-oka (oka = hill) town felt exhilarating—Lt. Barrientos was off to a fast start. He was about five minutes past a gradual bend in the road when his problem began. A small, gray vehicle suddenly passed on the right and then swerved back toward the bicycle. The lieutenant immediately turned the bike sharply to avoid a crash. He subsequently hit a curb.

The lieutenant subsequently went airborne, and both he and the bike skimmed along the sidewalk with force until coming to a stop against the wall of a concrete house three feet away. The victim's first instinct was to see if all his body parts were intact. The adrenaline was pumping so hard he felt no pain, but he noticed one hand was twisted awkwardly, and a large bump on the lower arm indicated a broken bone.

Realizing that shock and pain would set in within the next 30 to 60 minutes, the lieutenant knew it was important to get prompt

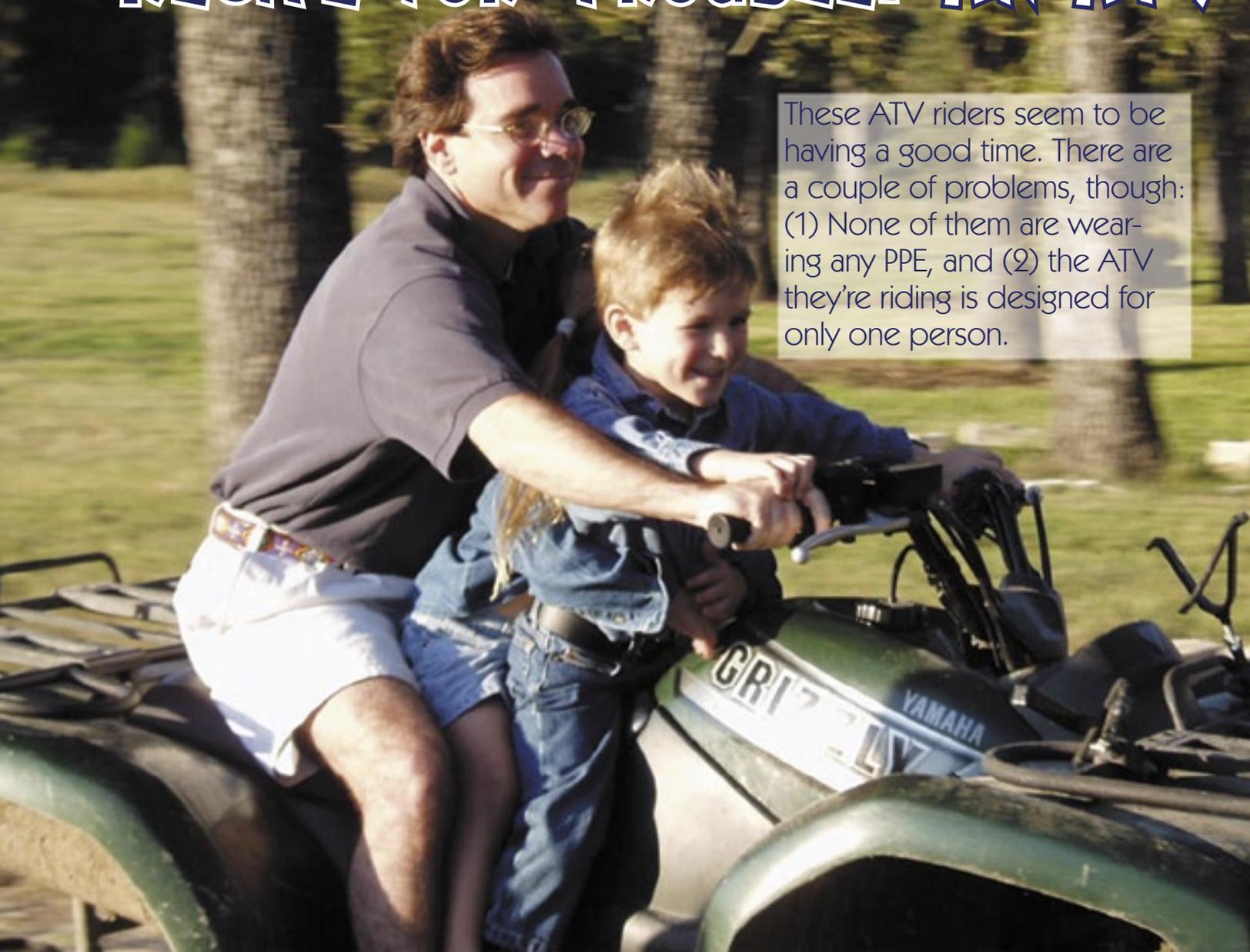
medical care. He had a problem, though: No one was stopping to help. He decided to look for a nearby home, but that option created a new problem: the language barrier. Luckily, he knew a few words in Japanese. He knew if he spoke the words "Tasukete kudasai" with much emotion and mixed in some sign language with the sight of his bloodstained clothing, he ought to be able to get his message across.

When the lady of the house went to call a taxi for him, the lieutenant realized he faced yet another problem: He had no base ID card. Neither did he have a lick of Yen to pay for the taxi. He uttered "Yokosuka Naval Base" to the driver, who took him to the gate. There, an ambulance was called, and the lieutenant was taken to an emergency room.

Doctors expect a full recovery from the broken arm and road rash, which is important to the victim because he uses his arms and hands in his profession: general dentistry. If the victim hadn't been wearing the proper type and size of helmet, with the chinstrap fastened, this story could have had an altogether different ending. ■

Some general advice from this experience, aside from the basic bicycle-safety rules, is good for several scenarios. Always have your identification card (even if only a copy of it) and an emergency card (with a local phone number for the quarterdeck and a request for help in the local language, which is provided during the area orientation brief). Also carry some cash with you. Finally, use the buddy system when possible—invite others to join you, those who know you or can assist in case of an emergency.—Bill Heath, USNH Yokosuka safety manager

RECIPE FOR TROUBLE: AN ATV



These ATV riders seem to be having a good time. There are a couple of problems, though: (1) None of them are wearing any PPE, and (2) the ATV they're riding is designed for only one person.

By "Mondo" DeGuzman,
HX-21

Visiting relatives in New Jersey proved to be a little more exciting this past Memorial Day weekend. My wife, Sue, told me ahead of time that her parents had purchased two ATV four-wheelers for hunting and getting around their farm since our last visit. Our arrangements were for Sue to drive up with the kids—David, age 2, and Joshua, age 4—one day, and I would follow the next day.

I arrived an hour before noon to find Grandpa Gilbert, who said the family had gone to the grocery

store and would be back in time for lunch. That left enough time for him to introduce me to two of the largest ATV four-wheelers built: a camouflaged 500 Polaris and a 700 Kawasaki. We quickly checked them out, donned our helmets, and headed around the farm's perimeter—my first ever ride on an ATV four-wheeler.

I was impressed with the riding stability, simple throttle-lever operation, and, of course, the power. We returned to the farmhouse just in time to see the

AND A CHILD'S QUICK HANDS

family jeep pulling up the driveway. As I pulled alongside the jeep, my boys quickly unbuckled themselves, opened the doors, and hopped out, asking to go for a ride on the four-wheelers.

Gilbert helped Joshua onto the seat of his Kawasaki, and I leaned over to pick up David and place him on the seat in front of me. My attention was split between talking to my wife and getting David situated comfortably on the seat. As I was holding him, he leaned forward and pushed that simple throttle lever to maximum. The Polaris immediately lunged forward, and my thighs quickly squeezed the seat, causing my whole body to tense. I managed to slap his hand away from the lever while simultaneously applying the foot brake.

My heart still was pounding in my chest as I calmly asked wide-eyed Sue to please take the kids in for lunch so we could put away the ATVs. What I didn't know was that, earlier in the day, my boys had ridden the ATVs. They also had been introduced to the throttle lever at that time.

As I would learn the following workweek, we had been lucky. My co-worker, Dan Brock, had a very different story to tell about his Memorial Day experiences. Here's how he described the events to me, while I looked at his bruised, scraped and scabbed face:

"The weekend started out beautifully. Our family was having a big cookout and pool party at my son's house. I recently had purchased a Yamaha Grizzly 660 four-wheeler and decided to take it along because my son has about five acres. He also has three four-wheelers that we usually ride around on; sometimes we give the grandkids a ride around the yard.

"Kayla, my 4-year-old granddaughter, wanted to ride with me—her Pop Pop—so I sat her in front of me and was just riding slowly around the yard. We stopped near my son, who was grilling at the time, and talked with him for a couple minutes. We were about 20 or 25 feet away from his garage's cinderblock back wall. With the Grizzly having an engine brake and my foot firmly on the rear brake lever, I hadn't bothered to take the four-wheeler out of gear.

"I asked Kayla if she was ready to ride some more, and, sooner than I could react, she reached and pushed the throttle wide open. The sudden lurch of the 660 Grizzly threw me back, but, as luck would have it, my grip on the handlebars was strong enough to keep me on. The sudden speed, though, coupled with our closeness to the garage wall and my lost balance, left me with only one option: I had to turn the handlebars hard left. I managed to avoid a head-on collision with the cinderblock wall, but the four-wheeler's front fender and front rack caught the corner of the building and slammed me face-first into it. Meanwhile, the right handlebar speared me in the solar plexus.

"The impact threw me off the Grizzly; I also had the wind knocked out of me and lost consciousness. Fortunately, the hard turn had positioned my body between Kayla and the wall at impact, which protected her from a full, face-on body slam into the wall. However, she did slide off the four-wheeler and scrape her face along the wall.

"In only a matter of seconds, our nice family cookout had turned into a fiasco. Everyone was horrified by what had happened, and they became unnerved with having to watch the paramedics attend to my granddaughter and me. An ambulance took us to an awaiting Maryland Trooper Seven helicopter, which flew us to a Washington, D. C. hospital. Kayla was lucky to have only scrapes and bruises. After extensive tests and X-rays, I was released with a minor concussion and a banged-up face."

The moral to these two incidents is simple: Little people are cute and fun to be around, but you have to watch their quick little hands very carefully. Otherwise, you may be in for at least a surprise and, worse, some painful injuries. ■

Slippery Rock *Sends Hiker Into Rapids*

Story and photos courtesy Friends of Yosemite Search and Rescue

What began as an innocent day hike to view one of Yosemite's natural wonders ended in a traumatic experience at the edge of a waterfall. Here's the victim's story in his own words:

"A bead of sweat rolled off the edge of my nose as I rested a moment and listened to the sounds coming from the most magnificent forms of Mother Nature I ever had seen. I couldn't help wondering what beauty lay ahead when I reached Upper Yosemite Falls, my temporary destination.



“Continuing along the trail, I found my strides growing with my excitement, but I soon had to take another short rest. I was sitting under a tree, enjoying its shade, when my attention became drawn to a powerful hum. A brightened grin then spread across my face—I realized I was close to reaching the top. I shook off my backpack and pulled out a water bottle to quench my thirst. As I sipped the mountain water, my pores simultaneously opened, allowing the water to exit my body.

“While feeling my body cool down, I watched a group of teenagers make their way from the trees, returning to the main trail. The leader and I exchanged smiles, and he noted how good a cool, misty spray would feel right about now. I responded with a slight nod of the head. He then explained that he was a regular traveler in this park and that, behind the tree I was sitting under, a narrow path led to the base of the upper falls. He went on to say it’s a great place to cool off. With a strong wind creating a cool, misty atmosphere, it seemed like an innocent plan. I thought, ‘I’ve been hiking for a few hours, and it’s almost noon, so why not take a break?’ I gathered my things and headed down the narrow path.

“A thunderous roar deafened my ears as I approached the sight of the waterfall. Standing next to a boulder, I set down my bag and let the cool mist saturate my skin. I couldn’t believe my eyes. I felt so small standing in the presence of Yosemite Falls. I almost felt as if I was trespassing by invading Mother Nature’s territory. Suddenly, I felt very cold. I knew it was time to get on my way, but I decided to capture this moment with a picture. Once I had snapped the shot, I started to walk back to my bag.

“The first step, however, proved the path was prone for disaster. My foot lost its traction on the wet, slimy rock, and I fell on all fours. I then slowly slid down a long stretch of wet, algae-covered rock on my hands and knees. My mind couldn’t even respond, as my speed quickly increased. My body was sliding out of control toward the base of the upper falls. Before I even could let out a scream, I plunged into the strong rapids, heading for the lower falls of Yosemite’s main attraction. My body now was part of the water, and I



honestly couldn’t tell you how I was feeling. I basically was waiting for the unexpected.

“Submerged in the water for no longer than a few seconds, I was tossed onto a rock right in the middle of the waterfall. I stood up, praying for a rescue and thanking the Almighty that I had been given a chance. For several hours in hypothermic conditions, I waited.

“My positive and optimistic feelings had started drifting away until a rescue crew appeared. Their energy awakened me and gave me a new sense of hope. Although I felt relief, I wondered what they could do in these conditions. I thought the rescue would require a miracle. I tried to keep my eyes open, watching them prepare to set up equipment. I regretted not staying on the main trail as I tearfully watched these people risk themselves for me.

“Their courageous efforts are the reason I’m here now. I cannot adequately express my heartfelt appreciation... .”

This victim was cited in court for creating a hazardous condition, and a U.S. magistrate found him guilty. His sentence was to pay restitution and to submit an article to the National Park Service (NPS), summarizing his experience so that others might learn.

Yosemite’s wilderness encompasses more than 800 miles of designated trails. Accordingly, it’s no surprise that most of the national park’s search-and-rescue missions are spent helping an injured hiker or searching for a lost person in the backcountry. To avoid becoming injured or lost, would-be hikers are urged to follow these tips from John Dill of NPS search and rescue:

Before You Leave

- Know your route and the forecast (mountain weather often is unpredictable).
- Leave your plans with a friend.

What To Take

Basic items for each person, even for a short hike, should include the following:

- Flashlight (plus spare batteries and bulbs)
- Rain/wind/cold-weather wear (can be very lightweight)
- Plenty of water (at least three liters of water per day per person)
- Food
- Watch
- Pen and paper
- Whistle
- First-aid items (band-aids, elastic bandages, etc.)
- Medicine
- Decent footwear
- Compass (and know how to use it)
- Fire starter (matches, fire ribbon)
- Knife
- Emergency shelter
- Map

(Note: Each hiker should carry his/her own stuff. Let the smaller children carry their own light, whistle, etc., and teach them skills and responsibility, just like showing them how to dial 911 or explaining why they shouldn’t talk to strangers.)

How Not To Get Lost

Know the common pitfalls; watch for examples on the hike, and show these to your kids. Get into the habit of periodically checking behind you to recognize

your back trail. Learn to watch for the first hint of disorientation.

If You Become Lost, How To Get Found

- Leave the following with a friend: your plans, route, vehicle description and license number, recent photo, sole pattern and size, scent articles, gear description, and who/when to call (and your cellphone number).
- If separated, yell, whistle, stop, and listen.
- Kids: Hug a tree.
- Adults: Stop. Learn your surroundings, explore carefully, and be able to return to the last known point (pick something nearby that you can recognize at a distance, e.g., a tall, dead tree).
- Sometimes it’s better to stay put, sometimes to move, but know when to turn around or stop, and be willing to do so. Downhill or downstream isn’t always the way out (there often are cliffs and waterfalls).
- Check your own pulse; recognize haste. Be willing to sit all night if you have no light; even with one, off-trail travel at night can be risky. If you have to find or make a shelter or gather firewood, do so before dark or before a storm comes in, not during.

If You Cannot Get Out on Your Own

- Stay near an open area, for the sake of visibility.
- Make a signal: a brightly colored pack; artificial patterns, such as tracks in the snow; a signal mirror (not any old mirror); a flashlight; an aerial flare; or fire at night and smoke by day (but watch that fire).

If a Member of Your Party Is Missing

- Search for him or her, but preserve tracks, scent articles (clothing, pack, etc.), belongings, witnesses, point last seen, camp, items in car, etc.
- Send for help, with a clear, complete, accurate report. Your report should include an exact location, what happened, if there is an injury, the missing person’s medical background, if he/she is conscious, able to walk, etc.

Keeping Perspective

The vast majority of hikers never get into trouble, and we’re not advocating that you carry a 50-pound pack every time you go out in your backyard. Agencies like ours (NPS) may have a warped perspective because we only meet the unfortunate minority. But, in most cases, just a few pieces of gear and/or lessons learned might have made a big difference. ■

Some parts of this story were edited from the way they appear at <http://bluebison.net/yosar/safety.htm>.—Ed.

How I Nearly Killed Some Shipmates

By DC3 Lloyd Horton,
USS *Abraham Lincoln* (CVN-72)

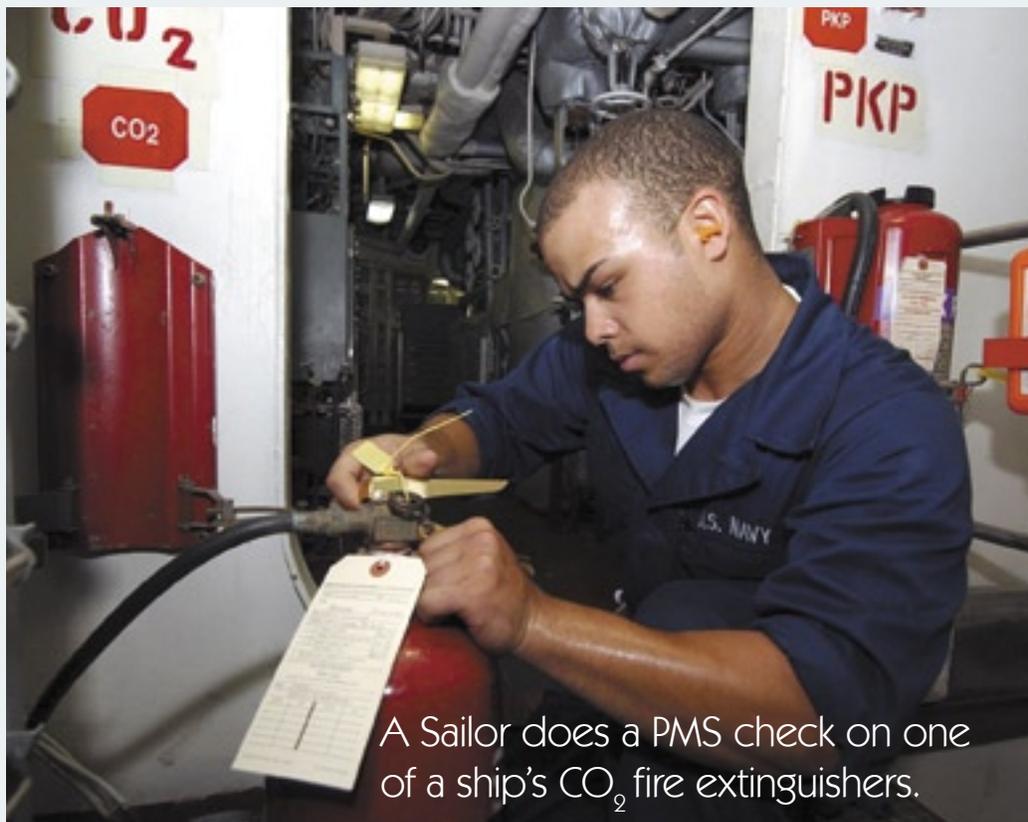
I had been told to empty all the CO₂ (carbon dioxide) bottles and to store them for the upcoming INSURV inspection. Unfortunately, I spent the day doing various other jobs, and it wasn't until about 1900 I remembered the earlier task.

I saw there were four bottles and knew I didn't want to carry them up four decks to the main deck. Instead, I decided to discharge them in their current storage space: a void on the fourth deck. Did I mention I forgot to consider the fact this void doesn't have any supply or exhaust ventilation?

In the blink of an eye, I forgot everything I had learned about CO₂ in three years of service and started discharging the four bottles inside the void. To make matters worse, I didn't post a sign or tell anyone what I had done afterward. I simply failed to think about the dangers of CO₂ or what could happen if someone entered that space.

Ten minutes after I had left, three shipmates went to the void to get some door parts stored there. They immediately started feeling dizzy and realized something was wrong. Luckily, they escaped without injury.

When the fire marshal arrived on the scene and did a four-gas analyzer test, he got readings between 14 and 16 percent oxygen at chest level and 0 to 2 percent at deck level. Oxygen levels less than 19.5 percent are unsafe and require the use of a SAR/SCBA. All the CO₂ I had released in the void had reduced the amount of oxygen to an unsafe level. Had the three shipmates not left the space when they did, they could have died within minutes.



Navy photo by PH2 Michael Sandberg

A Sailor does a PMS check on one of a ship's CO₂ fire extinguishers.

It's because CO₂ displaces the oxygen in a space, especially a confined one, that makes it such a highly effective firefighting agent. When introduced into a space, the carbon dioxide, which is 1.5 times heavier than air, stops a fire's chain reaction and, thus, extinguishes it. The carbon dioxide, however, stays in the space until another source forces it out. Any space with more than 30 percent CO₂ will cause a human to lose consciousness in 16 to 35 seconds, and death can occur within minutes.

Because of the dangers of carbon dioxide, anyone who has to work with it always must be careful. No matter how much you know or think you know, there's always a chance you may get distracted when working around CO₂. Make sure you read and understand all the safety precautions to avoid harming yourself or others. I've certainly learned my lesson. 📌

How To Prepare for InSurv

By Robert Strait,
Board of Inspection and Survey

InSurv... mere mention of this acronym has struck fear and anxiety in the minds of enlisted and officers for well over a century. While the inspection process has changed and evolved over the years, one ground truth remains: The main purpose of the inspections is to validate the material condition of ships and their systems and to ensure ships and submarines at sea are maintained combat ready.

Established in 1868 under Adm. David Farragut, the Navy's Board of Inspection and Survey is an independent, unbiased entity tasked to conduct trials and material inspections of all Navy ships periodically as prescribed by Title 10 of the U.S. Code. These inspections are thorough, and, while individual systems are graded, no overall grade is given to a ship as the result of an inspection or trial. However, InSurv is responsible for recommending acceptance of new-construction vessels and reporting to the secretary of the Navy those ships not fit for further service. In reality, the latter doesn't occur very often.

Surface ships are inspected at least once every five years and submarines at least once every seven. Preparation for an InSurv inspection can be organized in two categories: tasks that should be accomplished routinely and those that should be accomplished within six months of the scheduled event.

There are seven routine tasks, starting with planned-maintenance-system (PMS) actions, which must be accomplished consistently and correctly. No ship will do well during a material inspection (MI) unless it maintains a robust PMS program. The vast majority of all material deficiencies discovered by the InSurv Board can be attributed directly to PMS shortcomings, including checks that aren't accomplished at all or improperly.

The second routine task is operational-sequencing-system (EOSS, CSOSS, BOSS, etc.) actions, which must be used and followed consistently. A strong correlation exists between proper operation of equipment and the material condition of that equipment.

Third, ships need to assess themselves to ensure that systems meet technical specifications (PMS, OSS, Naval Ships' Technical Manuals, etc.) and operate within prescribed parameters. When they don't, the fourth task comes into play: to document all known deficiencies. The best place to document these deficiencies is in the Current Ship's Maintenance Project (CSMP).

The fifth task is to pursue an active discrepancy-correction process as outlined in the Joint Fleet Maintenance Manual (JFMM). In an austere maintenance-funding environment, it may not be possible to fix everything. However, everything should be documented so that deferred maintenance becomes a conscious decision, rather than something left to happenstance.

Sixth, senior, knowledgeable personnel must conduct zone inspections. A quality zone-inspection program is an essential ingredient to a successful MI. Finally, the ship must be kept clean. While cleanliness is not graded specifically, a clean ship usually reflects adherence to higher standards, and it complements an effective zone-inspection program.

Once a ship is within six months of an MI, the following actions are helpful:

- Visit the InSurv website (<http://www.spawar.navy.mil/fleet/insurv/>) and download either InSurvInst 4730.1E (Trials and Inspections of Surface Ships) or InSurvInst 4730.2E (Trials and Inspections of Submarines), as well as applicable check sheets. Registering with the MI data warehouse enables access to all InSurv deficiencies written during the past 10 years. From these, it becomes easy to glean the types of deficiencies the Board finds, which may help to focus the ship's departments on common problems.

- Schedule an in-brief with the InSurv Board to match shipboard leadership and maintenance personnel with their inspector counterparts. Ask questions. There need not be any surprises since this is an "open book" inspection.



Navy photo by PHAN Geoffrey Lewis

A member of an InSurv team checks the condition of a ship's safety equipment.

- InSurv check sheets need to be distributed to the leading petty officer/workcenter supervisor level. These checklists are the same ones the InSurv team will use. Again, there should be no surprises.

- Perform the checks ahead of time. Rehearsals can uncover both maintenance and integration problems that otherwise might not have been apparent.

- Check all potential "restrictive" discrepancies (e.g., repair before operate or RBO of significant equipment) until there is confidence in this area.

A ship cannot get underway safely without minimum required systems performing to standards. As mentioned earlier, the purpose of the MI is to document the material condition of the ship. Data derived from the inspections will be used both to help the individual ship or submarine and to build trending data to measure the material health of specific ship/submarine classes and the fleet in general.

Following this checklist is the best way to ensure a successful material inspection:

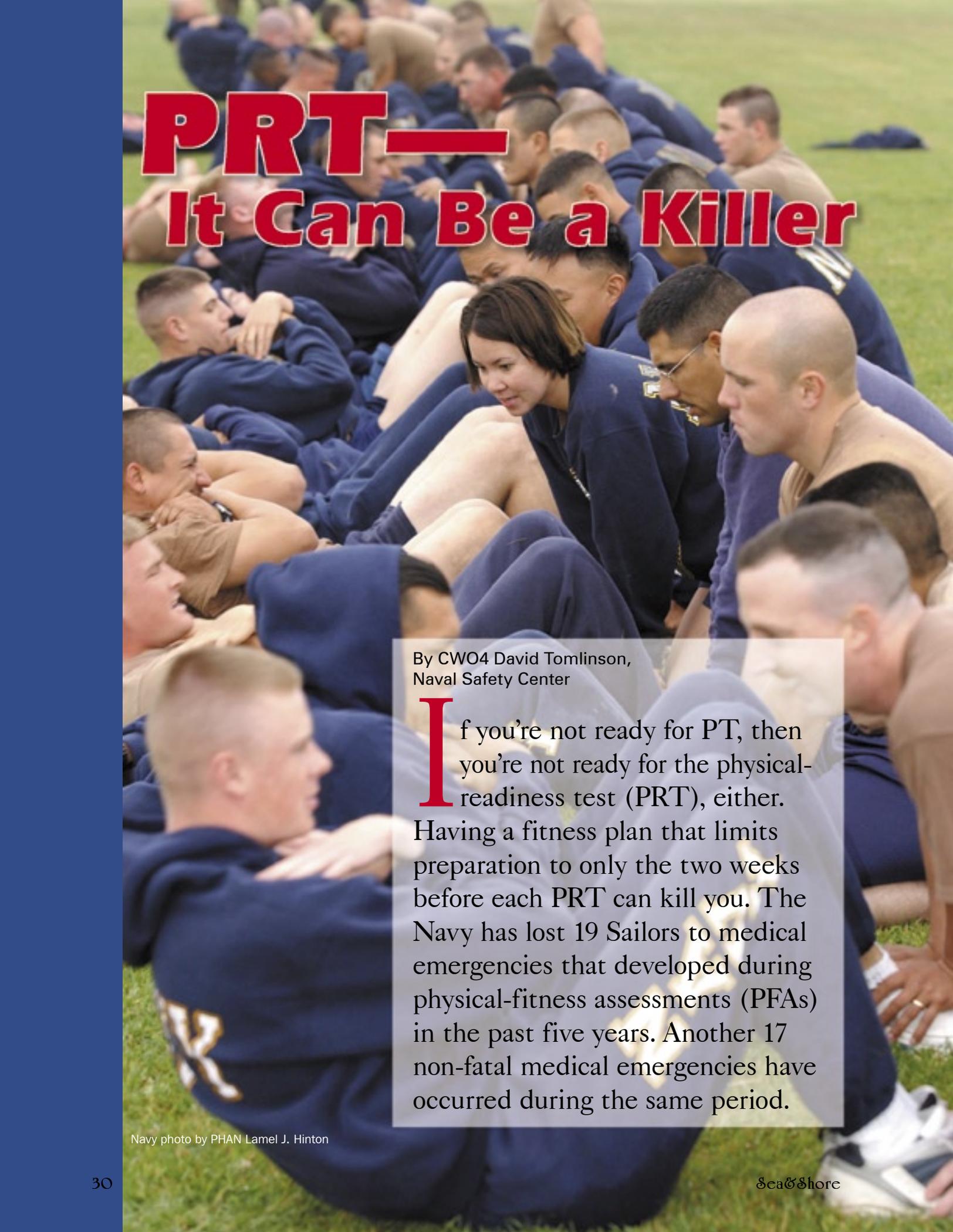
Recurring Actions

- Do PMS.
- Use OSS.
- Self-assess.
- Document deficiencies.
- Pursue deficiency correction.
- Conduct zone inspections.
- Keep the ship clean.

Timed Actions

- Visit the InSurv website (six months).
- Schedule an in-brief (two to three months).
- Distribute the check sheets (two months).
- Rehearse (one month).
- QA restrictives (two weeks to one month).

Remember, a ship or submarine that is ready for InSurv is a ship that is materially ready to take its Sailors into harm's way. 🚩



PRT— It Can Be a Killer

By CWO4 David Tomlinson,
Naval Safety Center

If you're not ready for PT, then you're not ready for the physical-readiness test (PRT), either. Having a fitness plan that limits preparation to only the two weeks before each PRT can kill you. The Navy has lost 19 Sailors to medical emergencies that developed during physical-fitness assessments (PFAs) in the past five years. Another 17 non-fatal medical emergencies have occurred during the same period.

Navy photo by PHAN Lamel J. Hinton

Two of the Sailors who died this year had medical waivers but were participating anyway. Why? What constitutes a medical waiver? Whose responsibility is it to obtain one? Who monitors the process? The answers to all these questions and more can be found in OpNav Instruction 6110.1H (Physical Readiness Program Policy). What's important is that all hands understand their piece of the physical-fitness pie.

Fitness Goal

The main goal of the physical-fitness program is to enhance people's ability to meet mission demands. However, a properly organized and maintained fitness-enhancement program (FEP) ultimately will support more than just the mission. It will improve the well-being of the people and their longevity and also will reduce related health-care costs.

OpNav Instruction 6110.1H directs commanding officers to aggressively integrate physical fitness into the workweek in the same manner as other mission or operational commitments. The instruction also directs all Navy personnel to

maintain their personal physical fitness through exercise and nutrition. Despite these requirements, though, only 56 percent of Navy personnel report exercising three or more times each week.

A recent Department of Defense survey of health-related behaviors shows too many Sailors are engaged in behaviors that degrade readiness. Between 21 and 37 percent of all Sailors are overweight—the highest percentage of any service.

Command-fitness leaders (CFLs) have their hands on the helm. They and the executive officer have a direct responsibility to the CO to implement the physical-fitness program. Once cleared by medical, personnel use a fitness-progression plan designed by the CFL to maximize and enhance participation in the PRT. Normal clearance to participate in the PRT comes from annual preventive-health assessments (PHAs), usually completed during the Sailor's birth month, and the physical-assessment risk-factor questionnaire (PARFQ), completed before each official PFA.

When individuals answer "yes" to any question on the PARFQ, CFLs must refer them for further medical assessment. The decision to



Navy photo by PH3 M. Jeremie Yoder

participate in all or some of the PRT shall be at the discretion of the medical department and only by those members of the medical staff certified to do so.

Resources

Physical-fitness program resources are readily available at <http://www.nehc.med.navy.mil/hp/fitness/index.htm>. This website includes a host of downloadable publications, handouts, guides, and related instructions.

As the Navy is called on to intensify operational tempo, based on current worldwide mission requirements, it's imperative for Sailors to

Having a fitness plan that limits preparation to only the two weeks before each PRT can kill you.

be physically fit. Leaders should encourage their people to evaluate their existing personal exercise programs and identify ways to improve physical-fitness activities and participation (e.g., aerobic fitness, muscular fitness, flexibility, or balance and agility training). Many world-class Navy facilities are available to serve Sailors.

Hitting the Streets

Once committed to fitness training, exercise safely. Avoid exercising where rights-of-way aren't provided. Command PRTs only should occur in roadways or street-connected areas after completing a thorough ORM assessment of the proposed site. Use of roadways will require an altered traffic pattern, road guards, and constant change analysis to keep personnel safe.

An assessment also is required because of the risks of injury from exertion and the environment. Don't forget to ask the "what if" questions during your initial assessment, and, once into your fitness routine, follow up with continual change analysis.

Here are some general tips to follow, but also don't forget to check base regulations:

Do...

- Perform an ORM assessment.
- Hydrate regularly before, during and after exercise. Don't wait until you're thirsty to drink water. When you thirst, you've already lost 1 to 3 percent of your body fluid. A good rule of thumb

is to weigh yourself before and after exercise; drink 16 ounces of water for every pound lost.

- Warm up and continue to stretch throughout the exercise routine.
- Wear proper clothing (in light colors), footwear, and reflective vest or belt (or clothing with reflective qualities).
- Wear weather-appropriate gear.
- Inspect the area, and learn the route.
- Comply with heat stress ("black flag") recommendations.
- Exercise with a partner when available, or in plain view of people.
- Have qualified medical personnel available for organized PT.

- Test emergency-response teams.
- Gradually cool down after exercise.
- Report injuries, and follow the medical-care orders.

Don't...

- Wear music or phone headsets in unauthorized areas.
- Exercise in unauthorized or isolated areas.
- Push through the pain. Seek medical attention if you feel ill.
- Ignore persons in distress.
- Use tobacco products for 30 minutes before and after exercise.
- Run in the streets and roadways where rights-of-way are not provided.
- Ignore your doctor's orders.
- Give false information on the screening questionnaire.

For Additional Information

Visit the Navy Knowledge Online (NKO) home page at www.nko.navy.mil. Go to the Center for Personal Development's "My Health" webpage. Links to all primary Navy physical-fitness websites can be accessed via the NKO website.

The Global War on Terrorism requires everyone to have the highest level of operational readiness. Physical readiness is an essential part of combat readiness, both in efficiency and productivity. Support your team; get fit, but do it safely. ■



CNP Amplifies Fitness Policy

Navy photo by PH3 Clark Desire

By Lt. Sarah Self-Kyler,
CNP Public Affairs

NavAdmin 120-06, released by Chief of Naval Personnel, VAdm. John C. Harvey, Jr. to augment OpNavInst 6110.1H, gives COs the authority to submit waivers for Sailors showing progress or whose loss they determine would significantly reduce a command's readiness.

"These rules elevate the accountability for our COs to enforce the established standards," Harvey said. "We must adapt our policy to reflect the demands of a worldwide deployable force and demand that our Sailors always are physically fit and ready to deploy."

The naval message authorizes COs the opportunity to submit two types of waivers: a waiver for progress or a waiver for readiness. To show reasonable progress, Sailors must be enrolled in their command's fitness-enhancement program (FEP) and must demonstrate an increase in the number of push-ups and curl-ups they can do. They also must demonstrate a decrease in the time required for the run or swim.

A waiver for readiness may be requested for a Sailor whose loss may impact fleet, unit or a specific community's readiness.

"Fitness is a readiness issue," said Harvey. "Commanders have been challenged to foster a positive fitness culture, and Sailors will be challenged to live this culture and help their shipmates meet the standard."

Beyond giving commanders authority to initiate administrative-separation procedures for those who fail the PFA, the OpNav instruction, released in August 2005, stresses the importance of leadership's role in the physical-readiness program. It also encourages Sailors to pursue fit lifestyles. The instruction further calls for time for physical training during the

workweek and evaluation of the program to ensure compliance with testing and reporting, FEP, and other aspects of the program.

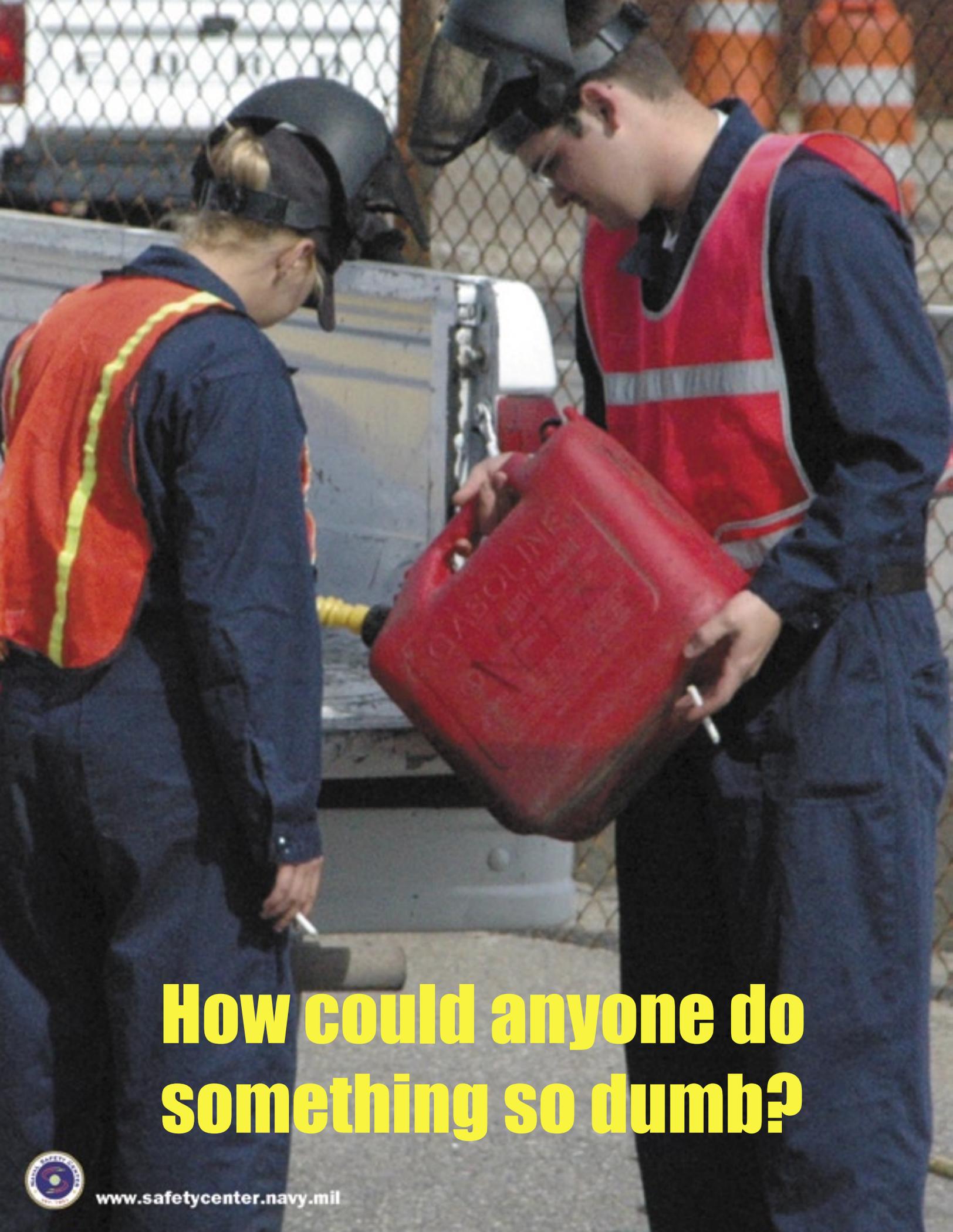
Commanders are directed to treat physical readiness as they do retention and attrition in fitness reports on their subordinate officers and senior enlisted leaders. Officers and enlisted who fail a PFA are ineligible for promotion, advancement or frocking under these policy changes. They also must enter into the FEP until the next official PFA. Monthly mock-PFAs provide opportunities to regain eligibility for promotion or advancement, which is reinstated once a Sailor meets PFA requirements. Enrollment in FEP remains mandatory until the Sailor passes the official PFA.

Commanders also have the authority to waive body composition up to the Department of Defense maximum standard of 26 percent for males and 36 percent for females who score "outstanding" or "excellent" overall, with no sub-scores below "good." The Sailors also must present a neat, professional military appearance.

The detailed changes reflected in OpNavInst 6110.1H are available on the Navy physical readiness program website at www.npc.navy.mil/commandsupport/physicalreadiness. This site also contains other fitness, nutrition, and weight-management references. 

The contents of NavAdmin 120-06 were incorporated into change 1 to OpNavInst 6110.1H, dated May 19, 2006.

This article is adapted from a story that appears on Navy Newsstand.



How could anyone do something so dumb?

