

binnacle



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Sunset Beach, Hawaii—

Where you land after a surfboard throws you off means a lot. A PO3 landed on his surfboard's fin after getting dumped and walked away with a cut just above the left knee. He didn't lose any workdays. ❏

Pensacola, Fla.—

A Coast Guard CPO was looking down at his speedometer while riding a motorcycle when the wind blew off his prescription eyewear. Because he couldn't see well without the glasses, he started slowing down and pulling toward the highway median.

The only problem with these actions was that his buddy, another Coast Guard CPO, who was riding several yards behind, didn't realize what was happening. He was only a few feet away when he swerved but not in time to avoid clipping the other motorcycle. Both operators lost control and crashed onto the pavement.

The lead operator suffered minor scrapes and bruises. The other had a mild head injury, dislocated shoulder, sprained ankle, scrapes, and bruises. He spent several days in a hospital for treatment and observation. ❏

Earle, N.J.—

When a bicycle tire wedges alongside railroad tracks, the rider likely is going to take a tumble. That's what happened to a Coast Guard PO1. He was thrown over the handlebars and landed on his upper left side and arm. A helmet protected his noggin, but he walked away with a broken right hand and a sprained left hand. ❏

San Diego, Calif.—

If you need a reason to drink responsibly, consider this case of a young Sailor who had a lot more to drink than he could handle. According to witnesses, he tripped and fell backward, hitting his head on a curb. When he regained consciousness 10 minutes later, shipmates took him back to the ship.

The ship's doctor referred him to a naval medical center, where he had a craniotomy to remove an epidural hematoma. He lost 50 workdays, including 10 in the hospital. ❏

*Pascagoula, Miss.—*A couple of young Sailors had finished their laundry and was headed to their car when they decided to go to dinner. Everything was OK until they stepped off the sidewalk—one wasn't paying attention and injured his ankle. His buddy drove him to an emergency room, where he was hospitalized and had surgery for a broken leg. He lost 16 workdays and spent 21 on light duty. ❏

North Chicago, Ill.—"He was an average student who didn't get into any trouble." That's how an LPO described a young E-1 who made a serious mistake while returning from liberty.

The E-1 had disembarked a train, but, when it started leaving the station, he grabbed an outside handle and leaped onto the train's footboard. As the train picked up speed, he jumped off the footboard but still hung onto the handle. When he finally let go, he was pulled under the train and suffered fractured ribs, amputated toes, and damaged vertebrae (with spinal-cord complications).

He underwent surgery and attended physical-therapy sessions in a hospital's spinal-cord rehab unit. Doctors said permanent, total disability was possible. ❏