

Ethos

ISSUE 19
NAVAL SPECIAL WARFARE



USS MICHAEL MURPHY COMMISSIONED



ISSUE 19

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On Our Cover

The guided-missile destroyer USS Michael Murphy (DDG 112) arrives at its homeport of Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam for the first time.

Photo by: MC2 Jon Dashach



Year 1 Complete

As we close 2012, Admiral McRaven, commander, USSOCOM, looks back on his first year in command and shares his plans for the future of SOF.

This issue takes a comprehensive look at the commissioning of the USS Michael Murphy on page 6, from christening, commissioning and eventual arrival at its new homeport in Hawaii. We continue to highlight 50 years of SEALs on page 14, looking at the evolution and accomplishments throughout their history. Lasers enhance training; learn how on page 12. The military career of a great

leader is almost complete. Page 18 looks at the remarkable 45-year career of Rear Adm. Garry Bonelli. In addition to having the best warriors, NSW also has some of the best medical care available. LOGSU Medical's staff and equipment are beginning to make a big impact on the Force on page 22. In 2012, five warriors sacrificed their lives in defense of our freedom and we recognize them on page

24. The Jamaican Defense Force received training from NAVSCIATTS. The story on page 26 details the importance of expanding SOF partnerships throughout the world. We wrap up this issue with commentary from retired Capt. Roger Herbert answering the question, "Why would I follow you?" on page 28.

How has your perspective about U.S. Special Operations changed since taking over the leadership of SOF a year ago?

I don't think my perspective about SOF has changed. I believe SOF has and will continue to play an exceedingly important role in our Nation's security. And while I don't think the role will change much, I do believe the challenges we face will. One emerging challenge entails learning how to adjust to operating in an era of economic austerity; something many of us after 11 years of war are not used to.

I think this era of austerity will impact the Services, which indirectly affects us because of the inter-relationship between our communities. However, from a strictly SOF sense, I think we will remain very relevant to the Nation. I base this on the Defensive Strategic Guidance which calls for a force that is agile, innovative, low-cost, small in footprint and capable of conducting counter-terrorism and security force assistance. In my opinion, this describes SOF.

The Naval Special Warfare Community is 50 years old. What does that mean to you?

It means a great deal to me, as I am proud to be part of the community. At the USS Michael Murphy commissioning this October, I had the opportunity to reflect upon Murph's life and the sacrifice he made for his Teammates. His story is similar to many others in the community - a legacy of selflessness that has permeated from one generation to the next.

Additionally, I remain impressed with the incredible courage and sacrifice the men, the women and most importantly, the families have made over the last 11 years. It truly is remarkable and I think that we need to remember our lineage and these sacrifices.

What if anything do today's NSW operators need to do better or differently?

The SOF and NSW community provide me, the Nation and our senior decision-makers an exceedingly important warfighting capability - believe me I know. However, there is always room for improvement. In particular, I think we need greater emphasis on maintaining our credibility. Honestly speaking, this issue affects the entire community - not just NSW and not just operators. For NSW the answer is simple - follow the Ethos and remember each of us must earn the privilege to wear the Trident and be a part of the community everyday.

What do you see as the operational imperatives/priorities for the Navy SOF component in the short/near term (1-3 years)?

I think our priorities are clear. Primarily, we need to continue our focus on supporting operations in Afghanistan. I just returned from there and I was very pleased with the overall progress - especially in how SOF supports General

Allen and International Security Assistance Force. We need to sustain this across the SOF enterprise. Additionally, we need to continue to build and further develop the force to effectively support the Defense Strategic Guidance and address current and future challenges to our Nation's security while simultaneously ensuring the preservation of its force and its families. The last is very important because our men and women - and their families deserve it. And ultimately, we will not be able to sustain this great capability in the future without them.

What do you see as long term priorities (5-15 years) in order for NSW to adequately plan for future threats and new or different operational environments?

Overall, I think we need to continue to select the right people and then provide them with the right skills to be successful. We have a great track record of finding and selecting problem solvers and people who are adaptable and we will need this to continue into the future. We also need to ensure they have the right skills - language, critical thinking, problem solving, amongst others. This will help our ability to build enduring partnerships - especially as we draw down from Afghanistan and begin to meet the demand for SOF in other locations.

In the long term, I also think we need to increase our support to the Theater Special Operations Commands which really serve as the SOF centers of gravity within the Geographic Combatant Commanders AORs. To do so, all of our SOF communities have to start looking at the problem with a SOF Enterprise perspective. We are already moving in that direction, but over the long term, it has to be institutionalized and not just a conceptual framework. This ultimately provides us with better capabilities to support the Geographic Combatant Commanders which is clearly why we exist.

Are there any parting thoughts, Admiral?

After a year in command, I can still say that everyday I learn about a feat, an accomplishment or an exploit carried out by the men and women of this great command. They make up arguably the greatest Special Operations Force the world has ever seen and I am honored to represent each and every one of them. ☺



SEALs, SWCC Address Students and Veterans

WASHINGTON D.C.—Five U.S. Navy officers and a chief petty officer assigned to Naval Special Warfare (NSW) addressed a group of military veterans, academy cadets, and high school students at the American Veterans Center’s 15th Annual Conference and Awards Gala Oct. 26.

The conference invited the SEAL and SWCC representatives to speak in an effort to raise public awareness about NSW and provide direct interaction between students, veterans and Special Operations Forces (SOF) personnel.

“I consider serving in NSW as living the dream,” said a chief warrant officer who represented the SWCC community. “I joined as an enlisted Sailor, worked my way into NSW and never looked back.”

The NSW representatives each offered a brief career background and shared some of their experiences working in the SOF community.

“One of the best things about being an officer in the SEAL community is that from the moment you accept your commission, you are leading some of the most highly trained troops in the military,” said a U.S.

Navy lieutenant who represented the SEAL community. “I have been extremely honored to have the opportunity to be a leader among some of the most professional and highly educated Sailors you will ever see.”

The audience was given the opportunity to ask the NSW representatives questions, which included the number and locations of SEAL Teams currently in the Navy’s inventory.

“There are currently eight SEAL Teams, four stationed in Coronado, Calif. and four in Little Creek, Va., a SEAL lieutenant responded. “SEAL Teams 1, 3, 5 and 7 are in California. and Teams 2, 4, 8 and 10 are in Virginia.”

The lieutenant junior grade added information about the non-SEAL Team commands that make up NSW.

“There are three special boat teams, SEAL delivery vehicle teams and logistics and support units which make up the NSW community, said the lieutenant junior grade. “When it is all broken down, the actual number of SEALs in our community are outnumbered by the support staff who are the folks which make it possible for us to get our job done.”

The audience members were curious as to how often SEAL team members deploy.

“The goal is to be forward deployed for six months every two years,” said another SEAL lieutenant member of the panel. “The reality has been that world events have required us to deploy more than that.”

The lieutenant added that even when a SEAL Team is not deployed they spend a lot

of time in different locations training.

“When we are talking about deployments in a post 9/11 world, it is important to remember that flexibility has been key to our success,” added the senior chief petty officer SEAL panel member. “One of the greatest advantages we have in the war we are currently fighting in is the ability to change our tactics and deploy rapidly as situations unfold.”

One audience member asked what makes the NSW community different than other SOF communities.

“The main difference between NSW and other SOF organizations is the maritime element,” replied the NSW lieutenant. “We bring the aspect of waterborne warfare to the SOF community.”

The lieutenant added that since 9/11 the NSW community has been required to support missions that are not traditional for SEALs or SWCC teams.

“The SWCC teams traditionally are all about operating on boats,” added the chief warrant officer. “Current operational needs mean the SWCC teams are also taking on missions such a managing convoys and dog-handling. Basically we do whatever is needed to get the job done.”

The panel members provided the audience with some information about becoming a SEAL and offered insight into the training requirements.

“Potential SEAL candidates are able to sign a SEAL or SWCC contract with their recruiter when they are joining the Navy, said the SEAL lieutenant. “Basic Underwater

Demolition/SEAL (BUD/S) is now an ‘A’ school. So by signing a contract with the recruiter, one goes straight from recruit training to BUD/S.

The lieutenant added interested candidates who are already in the Navy should contact their command career counselor for information about becoming a SEAL or SWCC.

“For those who are interested in becoming a SEAL or SWCC, focus on physical fitness and increasing your Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) scores,” said the Lieutenant. “The opportunities to join NSW are there and we need quality candidates to keep SEAL and SWCC teams rolling.”

The American Veterans Center is dedicated to preserving the legacy and honoring the sacrifices of those who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces. 

MCC Bill Mesta
NSWG-2 Public Affairs

Wounded Warriors Finding Jobs within NSW

CORONADO, Calif. – Service members injured while on active duty often struggle to find employment once their military career is over. According to U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the unemployment rate for disabled veterans is currently 10.6 percent.

In 2010, the Department of the Navy Assistant Secretary for Manpower and Reserve Affairs established the Department of the Navy Wounded Warrior Hiring and Support Initiative. The program assists veterans with a disability rating of 30 percent or more by connecting them with local hiring officials and ensuring they have access to training and employment opportunities.

“Being a wounded warrior or a veteran with a disability rating can be very hard,” said Anibal Padilla Jr., a disabled Navy veteran and financial technician with Naval Special Warfare Group 1 (NSWG 1). “The Navy’s Wounded Warrior Initiative helps service members, past and present, in a significant way by finding them careers when a lot of companies aren’t helping.”

Every week the Department of Veterans Affairs sends a list of wounded warriors to hiring managers around the Navy. The list gives a brief explanation of a warrior’s training, skills and qualifications.

“When I receive the list of wounded warriors, I send it to our department heads that are in the process of backfilling positions,” said Sylvia Benitez, the civilian personnel programs manager for NSWG 1.

“This lets them know that there are qualified



A member of the Navy parachute team, the “Leap Frogs,” performs an aerial display during a demonstration at the National Navy UDT-SEAL Museum in Ft. Pierce, Fla., Nov. 10.



Senior Chief Special Warfare Operator Joe Jones encourages a young man during a set of push ups during a festival in the Baltimore, Md. area. The Scout Team creates awareness for careers in Naval Special Warfare in a variety of community settings.



A panel of Navy Special Warfare representatives answers audience questions during the American Veterans Center’s 15th Annual Conference and Awards Gala. The conference hosted the NSW representatives to raise awareness about SEAL and SWCC communities.

2012 Standouts

Two NSW commanders were selected as finalists in the 2012 edition of the Vice Adm. James Bond Stockdale Award for inspirational leadership.

The outstanding work and leadership of Cmdr. Michael E. Hayes, commanding officer, SEAL Team 2 and Cmdr. Matthew D. Rosenbloom, commanding officer, SEAL Team 7 led to their selection.

The award was established in honor of Vice Adm. James Bond Stockdale, whose distinguished career symbolizes the highest standards of excellence in both personal example and leadership.

The award is presented annually to two commissioned officers on active duty who are, or were, in command of a single ship, submarine, aviation squadron or operational warfare unit at the time of nomination. Candidates are nominated by peers who themselves must be eligible for the award.

Cmdr. Chase D. Patrick, former commanding officer, USS Chafee (DDG 90) and Cmdr. Brian L. Sittlow, commanding officer, USS Boise (SSN 764) were the 2012 award recipients. The award ceremony was held in the Pentagon “Hall of Heroes” Nov. 27.



Cmdr. Michael E. Hayes,
Commanding Officer, SEAL Team 2



Cmdr. Matthew D. Rosenbloom,
Commanding Officer, SEAL Team 7





Capt. Frank Wingate observes the shadowbox of a deceased Navy SEAL during a ceremony hosted by the National Navy UDT-SEAL Museum in Ft. Pierce, Fla., Nov. 11. The event was part of the 27th Annual SEAL/Underwater Demolition Team reunion held at the museum to raise awareness of Naval Special Warfare and as a reunion for veterans of the Scouts and Raiders, Underwater Demolition Teams and SEAL teams.



Active-duty Navy SEALs perform small-unit tactics during a capabilities demonstration at the National UDT-SEAL Museum in Ft. Pierce, Fla., Nov. 10.



Retired Capt. Steve Gilmore, director of the Navy Special Warfare Family Support Program, speaks during the Coronado Middle School 4th annual Take a Vet to School Day. The event was sponsored by the History Channel and Time Warner Cable and gave Veterans a chance to interact with students, tell a few stories about military service and explain the significance of Veterans Day.

wounded warriors that are in need of a job. It's a good way to give back to them for serving their country."

NSWG 1 isn't alone in hiring wounded warriors. Since 2010, approximately 90 different positions were awarded to wounded warriors and disabled veterans in Navy Region Southwest alone.

"When it comes to hiring disabled veterans there are many benefits," said Gloria Rodriguez, the NSWG 1 comptroller. "Let me give you three different benefits that help the organization: understanding the military culture, speaking the language and understanding our procedures. They know how to get the job done."

Beyond their valuable experience and benefits in the workplace, Padilla strongly believes we need to take care of our wounded warriors and veterans who have proudly served when our country needed them.

"We must never forget those service members who have given their lives to defend our way of life, and we must honor them by helping their families and incorporating them back into society."

MC2 Adam Henderson
NSWG-1 Public Affairs

UDT-SEAL Museum Hosts 27th Annual Muster

FORT PIERCE, Fla. -- The National Navy UDT-SEAL Museum in Fort Pierce, Fla., hosted the 27th Annual Muster honoring former Underwater Demolition Teams and current Navy SEAL operators, Nov. 11-12.

More than 10,000 people attended the two-day event which featured a capabilities demonstration by an East Coast based SEAL Team and guest speakers including Adm. William H. McRaven, commander, U.S. Special Operations Command, U.S. Representative Allen West and retired Navy SEALs and Congressional Medal of Honor recipients Michael Thornton and Thomas Norris.

The capabilities demonstration included a SEAL Team performing a helicopter assault, simulated sniper shot and the use of a military working dog. The Navy Parachute team, the "Leap Frogs," were also part of the demonstration and performed various aerial displays.

Tommy Norris, a retired Navy SEAL, described the difficulties that the original UDT and SEAL teams faced during Vietnam.

"Through the efforts and the heroic courage of the members of those two units,

legends were born within the teams," said Norris. "Some of those legends are in the audience with you today ... they won't tell you who they are, but the team members know and I'm humbled to be in their presence."

The ashes of eight fallen SEALs were laid to rest during a dedication ceremony on the beach adjacent to the museum. Active-duty SEALs swam the ashes out to sea.

The museum also hosted a 5km run/walk on the beach next to the museum, a skeet shoot and a live auction.

McRaven said that the number of attendees had doubled since the previous year.

"Twenty-seven years have passed since this museum opened," said McRaven. "Back then there was some angst and curiosity as to whether this relatively small facility could even survive."

He said that in the same way that the museum has grown and flourished, the Navy SEAL teams have expanded.

He remarked that the SEALs performing the demonstration exemplified the qualities that warriors require.

"The author Henry Stanley Haskins once said 'what lies before and behind us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us,'" said McRaven.

MC3 James Ginther
NSWG-2 Public Affairs

Coronado Middle School Observes Take a Vet to School Day

CORONADO, Calif. -- Coronado Middle School honored approximately 70 veterans for their service during the 4th annual "Take a Vet to School Day" Nov 9.

Take a Vet to School Day is a national program developed and sponsored by The History Channel and Time Warner Cable to link veterans with students nationwide.

The program was launched in 2007 and thousands of schools nationwide have participated every year. From single class visits to all-school assemblies, these events provide a way for students to learn more about the history and significance of Veterans Day.

"It's something that seems natural for our community, 40 percent of our students are military connected," said Jay Marquand, principal of Coronado Middle School. "It's a great way to honor our service men and women."

Coronado Middle school began the day with a breakfast for the vets held in Granger Hall. Following the breakfast, attendees



Special Warfare Operator 1st Class Justin Gonzales, a member of the U.S. Navy parachute demonstration team, the Leap Frogs, races past the audience during a performance jump at the Stuart Air Show. The Leap Frogs are based in San Diego and perform aerial parachute demonstrations around the nation in support of Naval Special Warfare and Navy recruiting. America's Sailors are Warfighters, a fast and flexible force deployed worldwide. Join the conversation on social media using #warfighting.

watched a live news broadcast featuring the schools' broadcast team and veteran speakers, as well as the Commanding Officer of Naval Base Coronado, Capt. Gary Mayes.

Following the broadcast, the veterans spoke to the homeroom classes of many of the teachers to discuss their military experiences with the students.

"It feels good but also kind of feels weird," said Easton Haller, a CMS student whose father attended the event. "My dad is going to talk in my homeroom and I think my friends will be excited."

After the classrooms, students and veterans moved to the Coronado High school's Niedermeyer Field for a special parachute demonstration by the Navy Parachute Team, the Leap Frogs. Students, teachers and veterans watched as parachutists glided through the air and landed in the center of the field.

Throughout the day, veterans and students were able to interact giving both parties a different perspective.

"It's a great experience, it's really emotional. You don't really get the kids' perspective all of the time," said Chief Cryptologic Technician (Maintenance) James Summers, a parent of two Coronado students. "They're sacrificing something, too, the kids are affected as well."

MC2 Steven D. Doyle II
Navy Public Affairs Support Element West

Leap Frogs Showcase Skills at Two Florida Shows

STUART, Fla. -- The Navy Parachute Team, the Leap Frogs, performed a double-header in Florida Nov. 9-11, jumping at both the National Navy UDT-SEAL Museum Muster in Ft. Pierce and appearing at the

Stuart Air Show in Stuart.

The five-man jump team made five performances over the weekend, including practice jumps and one night jump at the air show.

The performance at the Muster was done in conjunction with a capabilities exercise performed by an East Coast SEAL team.

After they demonstrated insertion, firefight, and extraction techniques, the Leap Frogs wrapped up the show with a demonstration of aerial capabilities as the team's four SEALs and one parachute rigger dropped in from 5,000 feet.

"It was awesome," said 10-year-old Ethan Thorn. "I'm definitely going to be a Navy SEAL."

The air show performances began Friday night with a rare night jump involving jumper-mounted pyrotechnics streaking through the nighttime sky, only the fifth such performance in the 2012 schedule.

"I never imagined such a thing," said first-time Leap Frogs audience member Sue O'Dea, "especially at night."

"Jumping at night uses completely different senses as a day jump," said Aircrew Survival Equipmentman 1st Class Thomas Kinn, a three-year veteran of the team. "It's very peaceful and surreal."

The Stuart Air Show was the last air show on the 2012 schedule.

The Leap Frogs perform aerial parachute demonstrations in support of Naval Special Warfare and Navy recruiting.

MC1 Fletcher Gibson

A Fitting End, New Beginning to a

Click to view the USS Michael
Murphy Commissioning ceremony
(May not work on some government computers)

The events of Operation Red Wings are well-known throughout the special operations community. The bravery and heroics displayed in Afghanistan on June 28, 2005 will be remembered for generations to come. Lt. (SEAL) Michael Murphy, Gunner's Mate 2nd Class (SEAL) Danny Dietz, Sonar Technician 2nd Class (SEAL) Matthew Axelson, eight additional SEALs and eight Army Night Stalkers gave their lives that day. They have been honored in many ways in the seven years since they laid down their lives. Memorials have been built in their honor, communities and states have recognized their sacrifice with ceremonies, memorials, street dedications and days of remembrance. Their names have not only been etched in stone, but inscribed in special operations history. The men of "Red Wings" will not be forgotten. They have most recently been memorialized throughout the passageways of the Navy's newest ship, USS Michael Murphy (DDG 112).

"Michael Murphy's name, which will be forever synonymous with astonishing courage under fire, will now be associated with one of the U.S. Navy's most technologically advanced, most powerful, and most capable warships," said former Secretary of the Navy, Donald C. Winter.

May 7, 2011, on what would have been Lt. Murphy's 35th birthday, the ship bearing his name was christened in Bath, Maine. Just 18 months later, on Oct. 6, 2012, the guided-missile destroyer was commissioned in Manhattan, N.Y., near his hometown of Long Island.

USS Michael Murphy is the 62nd ship in the Arleigh Burke class of Navy destroyers and the last of its class. It is 509 feet in length, has a waterline beam of 59 feet and has a navigational draft of 31 feet. The 9,200-ton Michael Murphy was built by General Dynamics Bath Iron Works and is manned by a crew of 279 officers and enlisted personnel.

"This is a real tribute to our son and he would be really proud to see this beautiful ship that bears his name, as well as the Sailors who man her," said Dan Murphy, Michael's father. "It's important to our family that this ship not only embodies Michael's name, but the spirit of 19 very special operators; men who were heroes in their own right. For as much as Michael fought and died for his men, his men fought and died for him. So we are pleased that within this grand ship, there are displays of the heroism of those 18 other special operators who lost their lives."

"Our Heritage Hallway and the Wall of Heroes in the galley are there to honor Lt. Murphy and all of his teammates," said Cmdr. Thomas Shultz, the first commanding officer of USS Michael Murphy. "The story is much more than Lt. Murphy. There were 18 other teammates that sacrificed their lives that day and one thing that we have really come to understand and be blessed with, is to meet their families, their friends, and understand who those people were. It just makes us stronger; having the strength of all those people that we have now come to know."

Resting on the longest bulkhead of the ship's mess deck, is the Wall of Heroes, which is made up

Historical Journey

of individual plaques inscribed with each operators' biography and photo, honoring their sacrifice and instilling in the crew the history of the ship's namesake.

The Murphy family has always been humbled by the sacrifice of the men who came to aid the four-man SEAL team.

"When Michael made the radio call, they answered that call. They didn't wait," said Dan. "They knew Michael and his team needed their assistance and they were prepared to do what they needed to do and as a result, sacrificed their lives."

In addition to the memorabilia throughout the ship, the crew reserved a special honor for Murphy's fallen teammates. The ship's two rigid-hull inflatable boats, used for rescue and reconnaissance, were named Axelson and Dietz, respectively.

"I love the idea that they have named the two rescue boats after Danny and Matt," said Maureen Murphy, Michael's mother and ship sponsor. "I think that's wonderful, because Mike was a team player and he would have wanted to include them."

As the ship's sponsor, Maureen has taken much of her personal time to spend with the crew. While living in New York, she was separated from the ship by hundreds of miles while it was being built in Maine, but she has made the most of her visits and has grown to love the crew and her responsibilities.

"I'm very proud and honored to be the sponsor of the ship," said Maureen. "The ship sponsor's duty is to get the personality and the spirit of the namesake within the ship and I think that has worked out well, because collectively, the crew has taken on so many of Mike's characteristics. They work hard, they are smart and they are all about teamwork."

"This is a special crew," said Shultz. Every single Sailor has looked at Michael Murphy's story and understands it. It's a true honor for all of us to be a part of this. And now, it's time for us to do our part in upholding Lt. Murphy's legacy, carrying on his story and his sacrifice for another generation. It's truly inspiring and an honor for us."

Honoring the Namesake

Upon the ship's arrival in N.Y., a week-long celebration of events began. The first of those events was a visit to the New York City Fire Department Engine 53/Ladder 43 firehouse in Spanish Harlem.

The ship and firehouse are connected through a friendship that dates back to the early 2000s.

Lt. Murphy began wearing the firehouse's patch on his arm during deployments in honor of one of his good friends, Owen O'Callaghan, who was assigned to the firehouse. O'Callaghan reciprocated by wearing

Murphy's SEAL Team patch and would meet up with him when he visited his family in N.Y. Murphy was wearing the patch the day he died in Afghanistan, and Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class (SEAL) Marcus Luttrell, the lone survivor of the battle, used it to identify Murphy as he slid down a mountain during the gunfight that claimed his life.

The firehouse now has USS Michael Murphy logos on its fire trucks and a wall within the firehouse dedicated to his memory. The wall displays several photos of Murphy, his team, his citation for the Congressional Medal of Honor, patches from his SEAL team and photos of the ship bearing his name. The firehouse has extended their welcome to any and all Navy SEALs and encourages them to visit the firehouse when they are in town.

The next morning, Maureen, Shultz and 30 members of the crew were greeted with a standing ovation as they entered the floor of the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE). Maureen and Shultz rang the opening bell to begin the day's trade. The experience was a day many of the crew will remember for years to come.

"The most amazing thing about our trip to the NYSE was seeing and feeling the overwhelming appreciation for our service that the folks at the NYSE had for us," said Command Master Chief Matthew Danforth. "As soon as we walked on to the floor, the applause and handshakes nearly choked me up."

"The applause died down, Danforth belted a solid "Hooyah Michael Murphy!" Like something scripted in a movie, everyone bellowed back "Hooyah Michael Murphy in response. "That shook me to the core with pride," Danforth said.

On the morning of Oct. 2, rain poured down as Maureen, Dan, Michael's brother John and more than 90 crew members entered a charter bus to visit sites in Murphy's hometown of Long Island, N.Y.

"Today is somewhat similar to the day Maureen broke the champagne bottle on the bow of the ship to christen it," said Shultz. "Just like we started the ship, we are all now starting down a new path and it's important to know where the path began – and it all started with Michael."

The first stop of the day was to Northport Veterans Affairs Medical Center

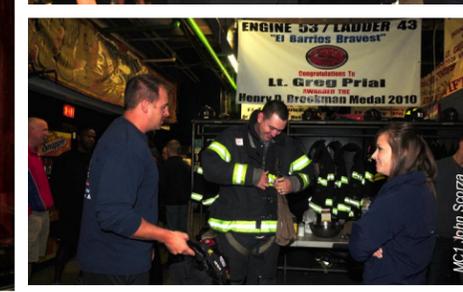
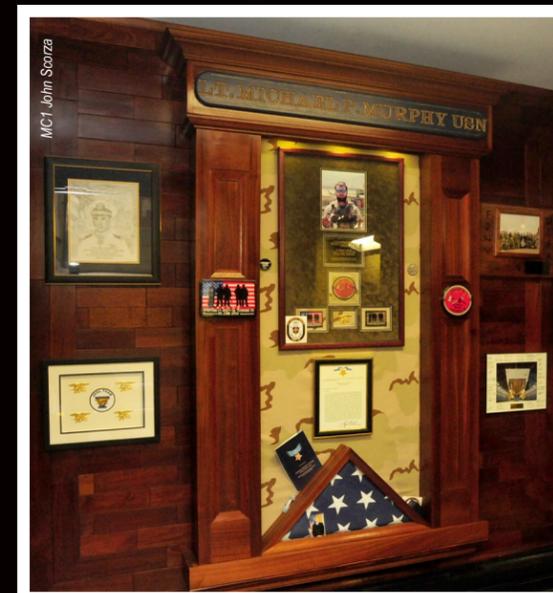


(Above) Sailors assigned to the guided-missile destroyer USS Michael Murphy (DDG 112) salute as the ship passes the 9/11 Memorial and makes its way through New York Harbor.



"El Barrios Bravest"

Engine 53/Ladder 43 Firehouse



"When a brother gets stuck you gotta go get 'em"

in Stony Brook, N.Y., where Michael's mother works. The Sailors played games with veterans and bonded over shared military experiences.

"The best part of the day for me was meeting and talking to the veterans," said Culinary Specialist Seaman Apprentice Lee Broyles. "Hearing all their stories and getting to see Maureen interact with the veterans was a unique experience. I really appreciate all of our veterans."

After the hospital visit, the crew traveled to Murphy's gravesite at Calverton National Cemetery to pay their respects. Of the 230,000 men and women buried in the cemetery, Murphy is the only Medal of Honor recipient.

As everyone exited the buses, the relentless weather continued. Within seconds of being in the elements, everyone was soaked, but carried on as if it was a sunny spring day. Michael's father was the first to speak.

"I come here every other day," said Dan. "Michael was a teammate, and he rests with 11 other fallen heroes from Iraq and Afghanistan. As a family, Maureen and I are very happy that he rests with his teammates."

"Michael had a lot of great attributes," said Maureen. "He was smart, funny and had a knack for bringing people together. He still does to this day. He isn't here physically, but in my heart he still lives."

Shultz then addressed the crew.

"This is a significant time for us," said Shultz. "Michael made a tremendous sacrifice. He's someone who can make us a better person, and for us as a crew, a better shipmate. Leave from here understanding that Michael is still with us and inspiring us."

The visit concluded as one of the roads in the cemetery was dedicated to Murphy and named "Lt. Michael Murphy Way."

The back of Murphy's headstone is unlike any other in the cemetery, adorned with an intricate, golden SEAL trident, compliments of a headstone engraver from Calverton National Cemetery.

During an interview, Michael's father Dan said that of all of the medals, awards and accolades his son earned as a SEAL, it was the Trident on his chest that he was most proud of.

After hearing Dan's remark, a headstone engraver from Calverton National Cemetery went to Michael's grave and on his own time, using his own equipment and funded out of his own pocket– stenciled a gold SEAL



(Above) Maureen Murphy, ship sponsor of the guided-missile destroyer USS Michael Murphy (DDG 112), rings the opening bell at the New York Stock Exchange with the ship's commanding officer, Cmdr. Thomas Shultz and members of the crew. (Below) A Sailor assigned to USS Michael Murphy places a wreath at Lt. (SEAL) Michael Murphy's grave site at Calverton National Cemetery.





MC1 John Scorza

(Above) Sailors assigned to the guided-missile destroyer USS Michael Murphy (DDG 112) run aboard to man the rails and bring the ship to life during its commissioning ceremony at Manhattan's pier 88. (Top Right) The crew of USS Michael Murphy man the rails during the ship's commissioning ceremony. (Bottom Right) USS Michael Murphy (DDG 112) conducts a pass-in-review by the USS Arizona Memorial during the 71st Anniversary Pearl Harbor Day Commemoration ceremony at the Pearl Harbor Visitor Center.

trident on the back of Murphy's headstone.

"When I go out to visit my son and I see the trident, Michael's connection to the community really hits me more than anything else," Dan said.

After paying their respects, the crew headed to Lake Ronkonkoma, where Murphy served as a lifeguard before joining the Navy. The park near the lake is now named "Navy SEAL Lt. Michael P. Murphy Memorial Park." In 2008, at the same park, then-Secretary of the Navy, Donald C. Winter announced that the Navy's newest guided-missile destroyer would bear Murphy's name and his mother would be its sponsor.

To conclude the day, crew members visited Murphy's Purple Heart monument and Serenity Plaza, ate dinner and watched a fireworks display over the lake. The crew members sang "Anchors Aweigh" as the fireworks lit up the sky.

In the final days leading up to the commissioning, the Michael Murphy crew attended the "Late Show," the "Daily Show," New York Jets and Giants football games, participated in the annual "Tunnel to Towers" run and enjoyed other sites in the New York area.

The Commissioning

On the morning of Oct. 6, thousands of spectators, veterans and invited guests gathered in front of the ship to witness the ceremony, which included distinguished guests such as the Honorable Michael Bloomberg, Mayor of New York, Adm. Jonathan Greenert, Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) and Adm. William McRaven, commander, U.S. Special Operations Command.

The Honorable Ray Mabus, Secretary of the Navy, delivered the principal address and spoke of the ship, her crew, and her namesake's heroic actions.

"This ship honors the courage, service and sacrifice of Lt. Michael Murphy, his Red Wings brothers, fellow SEALs, special operators and

service members around the world who answer the call of duty every day," said Mabus. "It is absolutely fitting that the USS Michael Murphy bears a SEAL trident on her crest because, much like Michael and every Navy SEAL who has earned the honor of wearing the trident, this ship is designed to counter threats from above and below the surface of the oceans, in the air and on land."

Greenert reflected on the ship's massive power and ability to protect our nation's freedom.

"USS Michael Murphy, the most flexible, lethal and multi-mission capable ship of its kind, represents the backbone of our surface combatant fleet," Greenert said. "It is one of the best destroyers in the world. This ship will operate forward around the globe, assuring allies, projecting power and defending our nation and like its namesake, Lt. Michael Murphy, this ship will serve to protect, influence and win in an era of uncertainty."

At the conclusion of the remarks, acting as the ship's sponsor, Michael's mother fittingly gave the order "man our ship and bring her to life!"

The crew responded by saying, "Aye, Aye Ma'am" and began to double time up the brows and manned the ship as the Navy band played "Anchors Aweigh." Crew members stood shoulder-to-shoulder, manning the rails as the ship's systems came online. Radars, weapons systems and other parts of the ship began moving to symbolize her "coming to life."

Bringing Murphy Home

Following the commissioning ceremony, the ship was scheduled to visit several ports before transiting to its homeport of Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. In many ways, the family, friends and crew of Michael Murphy feel that the new homeport of Hawaii is a fitting one, considering the four-man SEAL team, for which Murphy and his men were assigned, was based in Hawaii.



MC1 John Scorza

Before completing the final leg of their Hawaiian voyage, the crew steamed toward the city where Murphy's career as a SEAL began - San Diego, Calif., home of the Naval Special Warfare Center (NSWCEN) and Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL (BUD/S) training.

More than 40 members of the crew toured NSWCEN. The crew, including Shultz and Danforth, watched the command video, observed BUD/S training, toured the facilities and obstacle course. Two visiting Sailors completed the obstacle course from start to finish, noting that it would most likely be their first and only opportunity.

"Visiting today was really great," said Engineman 3rd Class Derek Potter. "After running the course, I can see how people could have a hard time getting through SEAL training. This visit has put a lot of things in perspective. It's one thing to read about SEALs and watch videos, but seeing everything in person has been eye-opening."

For Danforth, the visit to the center was more than a tour of the facilities. He realized that although the mission of a U.S. Navy destroyer is quite different from SEAL operations, many of the traits emphasized to SEALs are attributes needed by all Sailors.

"I think everything we've done so far is not just connecting with our namesake, but understanding the aspect of teammates, camaraderie, and most importantly, what I'm taking away from this visit - resiliency. Every person in the Navy has to have it whether they are a Navy SEAL or an engineman stationed on a U.S. Navy ship."

Murphy's parents have always been appreciative of the support they have received from the NSW community. To them, the NSW community has been unwavering since they lost their son.

"The SEAL community has attended or been a part of every event or ceremony [leading up to the commissioning] along the way," said Maureen. "Through the seven years since Michael passed, they have never forgotten him, ever, and that has brought me comfort."

"I think the Sailors that man this ship are under a lot of pressure," said Dan. "The ship is known throughout the special operations community. They will be keeping their eye on it, as to what it does and when it's in port and I'm quite sure they will visit."

And as Dan predicted, SEALs did visit the ship - and didn't wait long. As the ship pulled into Hawaii, more than 30 personnel assigned to Murphy's former SEAL Team stood at the pier in their service dress whites waiting to welcome the USS Michael Murphy home.

"For us, the journey continues," said Danforth. "We are now the legacy of not only Lt. Murphy, but the 18 others that lost their lives; we're going to carry that forward. We have a special bond with [the SEAL community] and we want that to continue to grow." 

MC1 John Scorza



MC3 Diane Quillian



Lt. (SEAL) Michael Murphy's Medal of Honor Citation



FOR SERVICE AS SET FORTH IN THE FOLLOWING CITATION:

FOR CONSPICUOUS GALLANTRY AND INTREPIDITY AT THE RISK OF HIS LIFE ABOVE AND BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY AS THE LEADER OF A SPECIAL RECONNAISSANCE ELEMENT WITH NAVAL SPECIAL WARFARE TASK UNIT AFGHANISTAN ON 27 AND 28 JUNE 2005. WHILE LEADING A MISSION TO LOCATE A HIGH-LEVEL ANTI-COALITION MILITIA LEADER, LIEUTENANT MURPHY DEMONSTRATED EXTRAORDINARY HEROISM IN THE FACE OF GRAVE DANGER IN THE VICINITY OF ASADABAD, KONAR PROVINCE, AFGHANISTAN. ON 28 JUNE 2005, OPERATING IN AN EXTREMELY RUGGED ENEMY-CONTROLLED AREA, LIEUTENANT MURPHY'S TEAM WAS DISCOVERED BY ANTI-COALITION MILITIA SYMPATHIZERS, WHO REVEALED THEIR POSITION TO TALIBAN FIGHTERS. AS A RESULT, BETWEEN 30 AND 40 ENEMY FIGHTERS BESIEGED HIS FOUR-MEMBER TEAM. DEMONSTRATING EXCEPTIONAL RESOLVE, LIEUTENANT MURPHY VALIANTLY LED HIS MEN IN ENGAGING THE LARGE ENEMY FORCE. THE ENSUING FIERCE FIREFIGHT RESULTED IN NUMEROUS ENEMY CASUALTIES, AS WELL AS THE WOUNDING OF ALL FOUR MEMBERS OF THE TEAM. IGNORING HIS OWN WOUNDS AND DEMONSTRATING EXCEPTIONAL COMPOSURE, LIEUTENANT MURPHY CONTINUED TO LEAD AND ENCOURAGE HIS MEN. WHEN THE PRIMARY COMMUNICATOR FELL MORTALLY WOUNDED, LIEUTENANT MURPHY REPEATEDLY ATTEMPTED TO CALL FOR ASSISTANCE FOR HIS BELEAGUERED TEAMMATES. REALIZING THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF COMMUNICATING IN THE EXTREME TERRAIN, AND IN THE FACE OF ALMOST CERTAIN DEATH, HE FOUGHT HIS WAY INTO OPEN TERRAIN TO GAIN A BETTER POSITION TO TRANSMIT A CALL. THIS DELIBERATE, HEROIC ACT DEPRIVED HIM OF COVER, EXPOSING HIM TO DIRECT ENEMY FIRE. FINALLY ACHIEVING CONTACT WITH HIS HEADQUARTERS, LIEUTENANT MURPHY MAINTAINED HIS EXPOSED POSITION WHILE HE PROVIDED HIS LOCATION AND REQUESTED IMMEDIATE SUPPORT FOR HIS TEAM. IN HIS FINAL ACT OF BRAVERY, HE CONTINUED TO ENGAGE THE ENEMY UNTIL HE WAS MORTALLY WOUNDED, GALLANTLY GIVING HIS LIFE FOR HIS COUNTRY AND FOR THE CAUSE OF FREEDOM. BY HIS SELFLESS LEADERSHIP, COURAGEOUS ACTIONS, AND EXTRAORDINARY DEVOTION TO DUTY, LIEUTENANT MURPHY REFLECTED GREAT CREDIT UPON HIMSELF AND UPHELD THE HIGHEST TRADITIONS OF THE UNITED STATES NAVAL SERVICE.

SIGNED GEORGE W. BUSH

TRAINING OF THE FUTURE

Photos Courtesy of SAAB Training USA



The lightweight small arms transmitter (SAT) brings troops as close to the experience of live fire as possible. The unique laser lobe shape forces the user to aim properly.

The equipment provides efficient tools for exercise planning, set-up, execution and review.



The Medical Treatment Simulator is a handheld computer which determines the seriousness of a soldier's wound from the hit location and ammunition type.



Range targets can be integrated and used in conjunction with laser-based training. The target lifter reacts as if using live rounds.

For decades the military has used live fire, training rounds and proctors to conduct training. These have always been effective practices that afford operators the most realistic training possible to prepare them for missions. Over the past six years, Naval Special Warfare (NSW) has been working toward implementing an alternative to training rounds and live fire. The new program allows SWCC and SEAL teams to shoot, dodge grenades and master tactics, while utilizing laser technology.

NSW is incorporating high-tech simulation to insure safe, state-of-the-art training is available.

This 21st century equipment allows realistic training with eye-safe lasers, which helps prepare troops for combat zones, prevents friendly fire incidents, improves tactics and conserves ammunition.

"The teams are able to practice moving, shooting and communicating with real people and do so safely," said Frank Richard, modeling and simulation program manager for Naval Special Warfare Command. "Safety is the real key, especially during SEAL Qualification Training. No bullets equals no accidents."

One advantage of using this particular system is that the operator uses his normal weapon during the training. A device attaches onto the operator's

weapon, which projects a laser. The laser is initiated and recorded each time the trigger is squeezed. This pin-point laser system does not require safety goggles and is 100 percent safe to the eye.

In addition, each operator is also assigned a lightweight vest that correlates with each laser attachment. The lasers can be used during training in any scenario and on any kind of weapon or vehicle.

"As long as you match the ballistics of the rifle, you are able to get a sensor for training with it," said Richard. "The sensors are used on actual vehicles to know when they are hit; they can simulate any weapon 600-800 yards away and are used for snipers during final exercises of training."

The sensors allow students to train as individuals, teams or against each other. If the training involves two teams, each team will be assigned different color vests in addition to vest numbers in order to track friendly fire.

The reviewing process is what makes training with lasers so valuable to the warfighter. Instructors are able to see what happened with each weapon at any time during training. Every weapon firing is digitally recorded and can be displayed much like a video game, providing a play-by-play of each training scenario. This is when the numbers on the vest come into

play. Reviewers can see who was shot by whom, when they fired and if there was friendly fire involved. During the after action report, teams review tactics, placement, unnecessary shots, as well as injuries and fatalities.

"Since the time, location and player number is synced, you are able to watch it on a big screen hours after the exercise and do an after action brief," said Bob Clydesdale, business development manager for Saab Training USA and military contractor. "You are able to visually show the teams what they did right and wrong – then the instructor can run the exercise again."

The injuries and fatalities are also recorded digitally. If the player is shot, the vest will communicate with the player and instructor that the operator has been hit. A hospital corpsman (HM) assigned to the team will also use this time to train. When the vest signals that an operator has been hit, an HM then performs an assessment of the injury based on the sensor reading.

"Another reason this training method is beneficial, is because the system can see everything happening day and night," said Clydesdale. "In a night ambush or operation, the observer is not able to see everything that is happening, because it's too dark or the view is obstructed; that will not happen with this system."

The move to laser sensor training is benefitting the NSW team by

improving tactics, getting better feedback and providing increased safety.

Moving to laser simulation will also save money. In the past, NSW leased this equipment, but now will own enough systems for five exercises in five different locations – outfitting as many as 400 players. Although NSW now owns the equipment, technical support to monitor the training sessions and provide equipment upkeep for replacements or repairs is still available to the operators.

Purchasing the equipment rather than using live rounds will save NSW approximately \$750,000 per year. One place the laser equipment will make the biggest financial impact is at Naval Special Warfare Group 4 (NSWG 4).

"Saab is currently working with NSWG 4 to use the lasers aboard the boats," said Richard. "They spent a lot of money on ammunition last year and this equipment will help identify where the rounds are going and how to shoot more accurately, conserving ammunition and money."



MC3 Geneva Brier

being the officer in charge of the swimmer recovery team for Apollo 14. [It gave us] the opportunity to work with the astronauts in Houston and we trained them how to egress from the command module. We formed a team of eight enlisted, along with myself, and created the Apollo 14 recovery swim team."

Later, the space program and Navy SEALs would further intertwine their histories as Capt. Bill Shepherd made history as the first Navy SEAL in the program to go into space and later became commander of the International Space Station. Shepherd's success in the program paved the way for another SEAL, Cmdr. Chris Cassidy, to later enter the program. Both attribute their success to the dive and underwater training they received as SEALs.

"You have to figure out your problems under water," said Cassidy. "Once the pilot or navigator of an SDV make their dive and submerge under water, it's the two of them executing the mission by themselves and that translates very well to here - what we do at NASA."

After their success in Vietnam, the evolution of SEALs and the missions they were assigned continued. Their training became more advanced and missions more dangerous. In 1989, they were called upon for Operation Just Cause in Panama. This mission was a joint effort to capture Gen. Manuel Noriega, the Panamanian government leader at the time. SEALs used diving and land tactics to destroy Noriega's private jet and a gunboat.

In the 1990's SEALs were called to Europe, Africa and the Middle East. In Europe, SEAL Teams completed successful missions in Bosnia where they safely escorted international troops into the country. In Africa and Liberia, SEALs led more than 2,000 people to safety when the country erupted into civil war. In Somalia, once the country descended into anarchy, operators participated in a rescue effort to evacuate U.S. Embassy personnel for Operation Eastern Exit in the country's capital of Mogadishu. Later, SEALs and U.S. Special Forces supported Operation Restore Hope, a United Nation's sanctioned operation that included protection of humanitarian assistance and other peace-enforcement operations in Somalia and Kenya.

Later in Operation Desert Storm, operators carried out special reconnaissance missions along the Kuwaiti coastline in the build up to the ground war. When allied ground operations began, SEALs swam ashore and planted a series of explosive devices. The detonation of these explosives, coupled with machine gun fire from Special Boat Teams, convinced the Iraqi defenders that an amphibious landing was imminent, causing them to commit men to defend the coast. This deception resulted in the Marine Corps thrust, which went by land instead of by sea, meeting with less resistance from the Iraqi troops than it otherwise might have. They continued operating in the Middle East during Desert Storm, completing

"It's a challenge and SPECWAR guys will always push the limit and make you work for it, but when you can tap into the creativity and energy of our young men, absolutely great things happen."

*- CAPT. ADAM CURTIS
USN, RET.*

more than 200 successful missions. After Sept. 11, 2001, SEALs were sent into Afghanistan to conduct special missions that helped pave the way for the establishment of Camp Rhino - the first U.S. land base built during Operation Enduring Freedom. Since then they have been key components in Iraq and Afghanistan with successful missions to include rescue missions, training of security forces and the elimination of high value targets. Over the years, the NSW force has expanded to include six group commands supporting 14 teams of both active and reserve operators. With each successful mission, SEALs established themselves as a leading elite special operation force, but not without a price. Since Sept. 11, 2001, NSW and its force have lost more than 65 KIAs.

NSW has shared several victories and losses during this decade long war. In 2005, the SEAL and special operations community lost 19 men in Operation Red Wings in Afghanistan. In 2011, a few short months after the death of Osama Bin Laden, the NSW community mourned for the lives of 17 SEALs and five NSW support personnel lost in Extortion 17, the largest loss of life in the community's history.

At a memorial dedication honoring the one-year anniversary of Extortion 17, Rear Adm. Sean Pybus expressed the character of the SEALs and Sailors involved in the operation and like so many before them, they answered the call when the nation needed them.

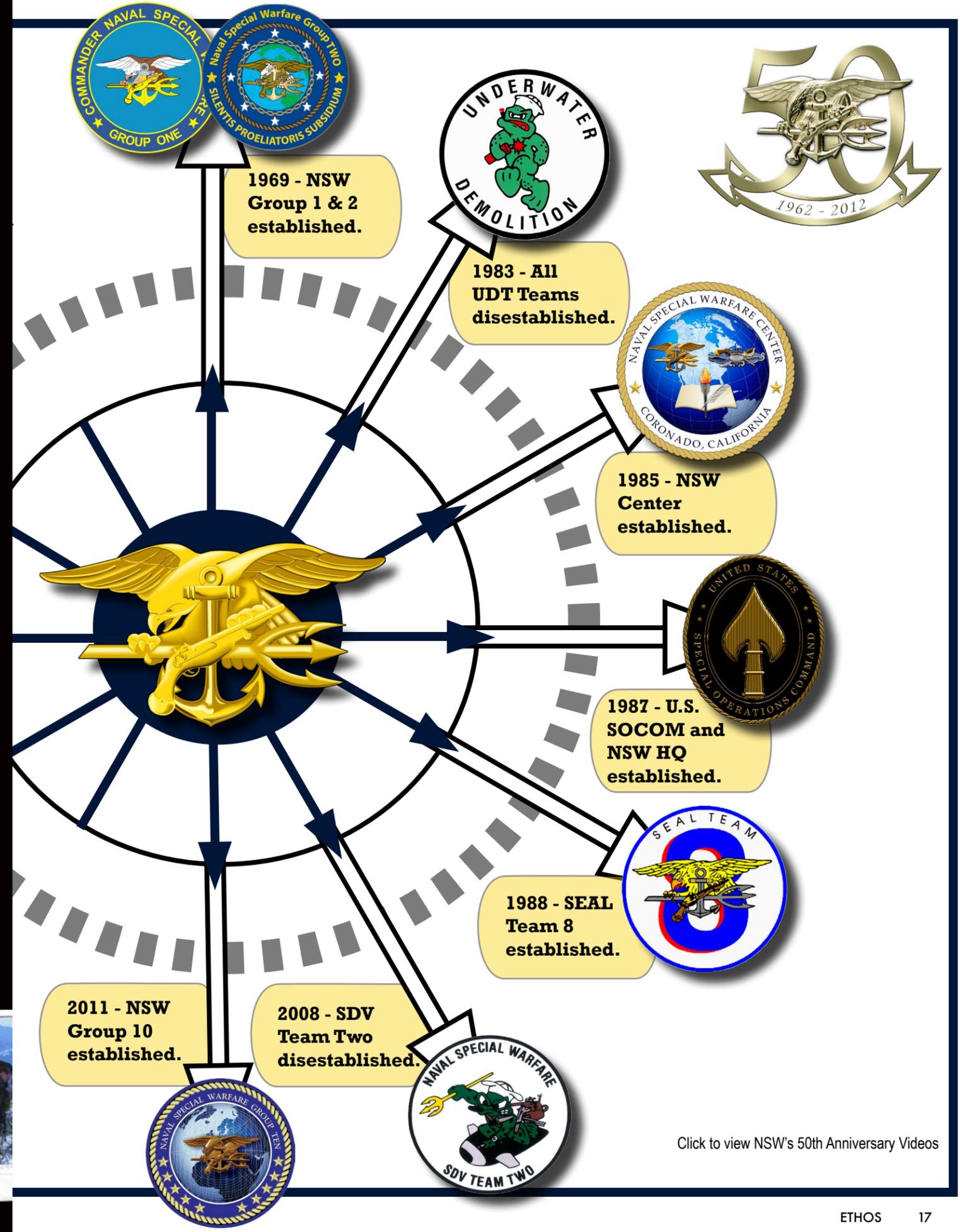
"Extortion 17 was years of combat experience; men and teams that knew only success, who conducted the most difficult missions, who loved defending our freedom," said Pybus.

At the annual UDT-SEAL Muster at Fort Pierce, Fla., Vice Adm. Joseph Kernan, BUD/S Class 117, spoke about remembering the community's successes and its fallen teammates.

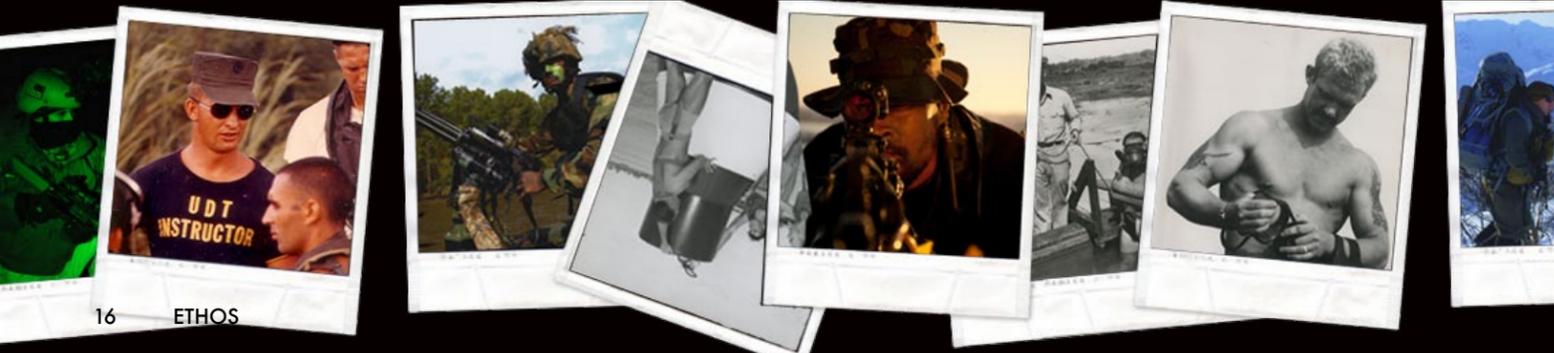
"Maybe an ironic aspect of this combat is that years later, what people remember most are the people we lost, as it should be," said Kernan. "We remember less the successful missions and more the sacrifices that made them possible. As a community we don't leave teammates behind, we don't forget those who went before us and we honor them with the commitment and courage that we all strive to emulate every day, on and off the battlefield."

With every graduating class, the talent and wealth of knowledge grows. According to former SEAL, retired Capt. Adam Curtis, the community can be a challenge but the operators' potential seems to be limitless. ☞

MC1 Dominique Canales



Click to view NSW's 50th Anniversary Videos



From Seaman

There are a finite number of Navy admirals who began their careers at the bottom of the rank totem pole, navigated their way through the enlisted ranks, earned a commission and rose to the top. One of the select few, who went from being the newest of new guys to earning ruffles and flourishes, walks amongst the NSW ranks – actually leading the community he has served for more than four decades.



“We graduated from boot camp in greens, jump boots, and black berets... We all thought we were Navy SEALs. Little did we know the real and only test was BUD/S.”

to
Admiral

Former Commander, Naval Special Warfare Command, Rear Adm. Garry J. Bonelli is a Bronx street urchin and proudly claims his native New York City. He grew up in a predominately Catholic Italian/Irish neighborhood known as Woodlawn and McLean Heights.

On Nov. 26, Bonelli turned over the reigns as NSW's deputy commander to Rear Adm. Scott Moore. Bonelli's career is not only full of occupational milestones, but historical ones as well. He has served in every major U.S. conflict since Vietnam and has worn a variety of Navy hats over the years. He served as an undesignated seaman, a commissaryman, now known as culinary specialists, an enlisted SEAL, a public affairs officer and a SEAL officer. As he has watched the NSW enterprise evolve during the last 45 years, his perspective, goals and outlook on life have changed as well, making him one of NSW's most diverse commanders.

“Ad astra per aspera” is Latin for “To the stars through difficulty.” This is the motto of Mount Saint Michael Academy, an all-boys high school in the Bronx where Bonelli spent his teen years. It serves as a fitting maxim for a Sailor who chose a challenging path and became a Navy SEAL flag officer, although initial signs might have pointed to a life as a man of the cloth.

“The Marist Brothers who taught at the Mount had me seriously thinking about the priesthood; however, I discovered girls by my sophomore year,” Bonelli said.

After high school graduation, Bonelli began college at Pace University in New York, and at the time, had never given the military much thought. He began college and after two semesters he, in his words, “flunked out” as an

accounting major in 1968. By that time, the Vietnam War was raging and the U.S. had instituted the draft. Not knowing if he would be drafted or not, Bonelli decided to join the Navy. Years later he discovered that his number would not have been selected in the draft.

“I had two neighborhood buddies, Paddy O’Keefe and Bobby Geary, who enlisted in the Army. Both men made the ultimate sacrifice,” he said. “So to avoid the Army, I decided to join the Navy to see the world.”

After shipping off to boot camp in Great Lakes, Ill., he was there less than 24 hours before a Chief showed his boot camp company a grainy 16mm film depicting Navy frogmen SCUBA diving.

“It never dawned on me that the Navy could teach a Sailor how to dive. I was into the frogman program hook, line, and sinker,” he said. “I took the PT test and became a member of the first ever UDT/SEAL boot camp company. We graduated from boot camp in greens, jump boots, and black berets much to the consternation of our other boot camp company contemporaries who wore service dress blues. We all thought we were Navy SEALs. Little did we know the real and only test was BUD/S.”

Bonelli classed up with BUD/S Class 50 to begin training. On the very first day, the instructors addressed the entire class and ordered all the members of Bonelli's former boot camp company to fall out and form up separately. Bonelli and his counterparts proudly strutted away from the rest of the class. Little did they know that the instructor cadre's only intention was to identify them.

“Being in that first ever UDT/SEAL boot camp company really kind of worked against us,” said Bonelli. “The instructors went down the line and

memorized every one of our names. Most of the guys dropped within a few weeks.”

One week after completing “Hell Week,” Bonelli broke his collar bone during an obstacle course mishap and was rolled back to Class 51. Much to his chagrin, after recovering from his injury and being deemed fit for duty, he was placed at the beginning of the training pipeline and had to survive Hell Week a second time.

“With solid student officer and enlisted leadership, I made it through training and graduated with Class 51. As it turns out, when I started day one again, I was in a lot better physical and mental shape the second time around,” he said.

In the spring of 1969, seaman apprentice Bonelli reported to Underwater Demolition Team (UDT) 12 and immediately deployed to Vietnam. Once in country, he began asking questions about the Navy's promotion process. He remembers asking one of the petty officers how to earn a crow and chevron on his sleeve. The petty officer responded by saying, “Well, you got to make seaman first.” After making the joke, he explained to Bonelli that he would have to pick a rate and test to advance. After looking at the three available rating manuals there, Bonelli picked the thinnest book and began studying to become a commissaryman.

By the end of 1971, Bonelli had completed two deployments in Vietnam and was proud of his service in the war.

“I listened to my LCPO and platoon commander and felt I had made a difference for my country. Many of my civilian peer group at that time, including some of my boyhood friends who completed college saw the world

and the war in Vietnam quite differently,” he said. “It took a lot of years but most of my enduring childhood friends now have a deep appreciation and respect for the military service of Vietnam vets, as well as today's vets.”

After four years of active duty service, Bonelli left the Navy in 1972 as a commissaryman 2nd class and returned to college using his Vietnam-era GI Bill to earn two undergraduate degrees in journalism and marketing. He would later earn a Master of Science degree in mass communications from San Diego State University.

“It never dawned on me before to be a Navy officer because officers had college degrees – something I had failed to achieve,” he said. “Toward the end of my first enlistment that perspective changed. In fact, the responsibilities and decisions given to junior officers didn't seem much greater than those of senior enlisted – the only difference was the college degree.”

In 1974, Bonelli volunteered for the first ever Reserve augmenting unit in NSW and began asking how he could get a commission to become an officer.

“I asked many times, to as many Navy people who would listen to me if I could get a direct commission as a Navy SEAL and the answer was always, ‘No!’ At the time, there was no such program; however, I kept asking,” Bonelli said. “Finally, a yeoman master chief at the Reserve Center took me under his mentorship. The master chief told me that with my educational background and experience, he could get me a direct commission as a public affairs officer (PAO). I was stupid enough to tell the master chief that I wanted to be a SEAL officer not a PAO. He took me by the scruff of my



"I remember walking across the Quarterdeck and Master Chief Radiomen (SEAL) Chuck Miller handed me a big ladies hat pin. I said 'What's this for Master Chief?' He said, 'to poke you in the head if it becomes too inflated.'"

- Rear Adm. Garry Bonelli,
WARCOM Deputy Commander

collar and let me know that once I became a PAO, he could change my designator to a Naval Special Warfare officer. That's all I needed to hear, and in four months, I went from an E-5 SEAL to O-1 PAO to O-1 NSW officer in the Naval Reserve," he said.

Bonelli's aspirations as an Ensign were very straightforward – he looked forward to drill weekends so he could dive, jump, shoot, blow things up, and most importantly, hang out with his teammates. Advancement however, was not high on his priority list.

"My goal was to be promoted to the rank of lieutenant and retire from the Navy Reserve with 20 years of combined active and reserve service," he said. "However, the world would change for all of us in 1990. Many of us reservists were mobilized to join our active duty teammates for the first Persian Gulf War."

In response to that crisis, Bonelli received a call to return to active duty and returned to SEAL Team 5 after leaving there 18 years earlier as an E-5. This time, as a commander, Bonelli would report as the commanding officer.

"I remember walking across the Quarterdeck and Master Chief Radiomen (SEAL) Chuck Miller handed me a big, ladies hat pin. I said 'What's this for Master Chief?' He said, 'to poke you in the head if it becomes too inflated,'" said Bonelli.

As a Navy captain, Bonelli was called upon once again. The Global War on Terror was in full swing and he was requested by Rear Adm. Joe Maguire to take the position as Naval Special Warfare Command's (WARCOM) chief of staff. That four-month job morphed into a seven year tour that saw Bonelli promoted to rear admiral, take over as WARCOM's deputy commander and eventually Force Commander, and rise to the rank of rear admiral (upper

half).

During the course of a 45-year career, Bonelli has much to be proud of, but he is most pleased by the evolution of NSW's Reserve component, which he helped shape into what it is today.

"Since 1990, our Reservists have answered the call time and time again," he said. "They have forgone their jobs and professions to man our ranks at all echelons. Our Reservists are combat proven, seamlessly integrated and value-added. The NSW Reserve is a model every reserve component seeks to emulate."

As an officer, the time spent in command is often a special one. For Bonelli, it's no different.

"Two active duty command tenures truly stand out - serving with teammates as the commanding officer of SEAL Team 5 during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm in 1990/1991 and having the SOCOM Commander, Adm. Eric Olson, fleet-me up from the deputy position to serve as the ninth force commander of NSW for a brief duration in 2008."

After four and one-half decades of service, Bonelli is on the brink of retirement and has no regrets. He has treasured his time spent in the community and the experiences that have shaped him.

"I wouldn't do anything different. Every day in the teams has been special. Whether hot or cold, wet and sandy, exhausted, just plain miserable or scared out of my whits; it's been a blast," he said. "Few have felt the exuberance derived from a successful mission. Few have felt the depths of sorrow during a memorial service when handing an American flag to a mother who has lost her son in combat. It's been a lifetime of experiences few can truly understand and fewer can live guided by our SEAL Ethos." 

MC1 John Scorza



Rear Adm. Garry Bonelli's

Parting Thoughts

How has your perspective changed regarding the community over the years?

As a young team guy, I had the wrong-headed notion that if you weren't a SEAL, you weren't much. Today, the professionalism and pride now imbued into all NSW military and civilian personnel clearly manifests itself on the battlefield because we are all about "teams." The team truly encompasses our mission specialists – combat support and combat services support NSW personnel. The team includes our civilian subject matter experts, who help provide continuity and enhance our professional relationships across the joint, combined and interagency arenas.

But I definitely have a new hero – the Navy SEAL and SWCC wife. These magnificently courageous women will never truly be appreciated for the sacrifices they make daily on behalf of our Nation. NSW wives are the bulwark that keep our operators resilient and in the fight, time and time again. They bear the children who will raise their hands to defend our freedoms in the future.

In addition, NSW now enjoys and cherishes the benevolence of civilian, non-profit support organizations such as the Navy SEAL Foundation, the SOF Care Coalition and the NSW Family Foundation. Made up of mostly volunteers, these organizations help our teammates and their families during casualties, with educational support and promote our rich history and heritage.

What would you say are the strongest leadership traits in today's NSW operators?

For SEALs and SWCC it's to be a culturally-attuned warrior, diplomat and problem-solver; a military professional who continually hones his education and training and actively learns from his real-world experiences.

What would you like the community to know about you as a SEAL?

As SEALs, we set the bar very high – physically, mentally and academically. I've had to conscientiously hone my skills and learn new things just so I could barely touch that bar and keep up. I am "Rudy" from the Notre Dame football movie. I love being part of the team with guys who today are still larger than life to me after nearly 45 years of service.

What advice would you provide the youngest SEAL in the community today?

Show up 5 minutes early to musters, ready to go, with the right gear, in the right uniform, no matter how much it hurts. Listen to your Chief and carry out his orders; ask why later. As the beer commercial says – "stay thirsty!" Remember, the Trident you have to earn every day has an American bald eagle with a bowed head. It's good for a SEAL to be humble.

What advice would you provide to a young officer?

Listen to your Chief. Then lead from the front. Take care of that junior enlisted SEAL in your platoon. Who knows - he may someday become the NSW Force Commander.

What message or messages would you like to send to the Force today?

In our Navy, and especially in the teams, it's all about opportunities: opportunities to serve our country in places most Americans only see on TV; opportunities to get to know people who see the world differently from us; opportunities to make a real difference for our national security; opportunities to have a blast!

From your perspective, has the community changed during your tenure?

Yes and no. Yes - the teams have evolved to become a more complex, dynamic and recognized component of our national security, which can be both good and bad. Building on our 70-year legacy of frogmen and SEALs who served before us, the American people expect more of us both on and off the battlefield. We now are required to "stay connected" to strategic and operational commanders around the globe.

No – in that the composite "naked warrior" has to still have the tenacity, intelligence, integrity and "teamability" to accomplish arduous tasks under stringent time constraints in extreme environments that no one else can do.

A big part of our NSW future is back in the water in the maritime environments and especially underwater.

What has it meant to you to be a part of the community throughout the years?

Your greatest gift is your teammates. Your teammates will become your lifelong friends, your best man, the godfather of your children. No matter where life takes you, if you stay true to our Ethos, you will always have teammates there for you.

Do you have any parting thoughts?

Today, the teams have never been better resourced, equipped, trained, and led. Our Force commander, Rear Adm. Sean Pybus, Force Master Chief Steve Link and new deputy commander, Rear Adm. Scott Moore, form a leadership triad and brain trust that will keep Naval Special Warfare at the forefront of our National Security Strategy.



MC2 Megan Anuci

STEPPING UP THE MEDICAL GAME

LOGSU 1 TAC-SM is now bigger and better equipped

In sports, a competition can be won or lost long before the big game. The quality of an athlete's training regimen can ultimately define performance in the moments where it counts. A failure to train and prepare properly can sabotage even the most talented competitors – every athlete knows that you get what you give. Optimal sports performance can only be achieved if an athlete is in peak physical and mental condition the day of the race, game or match. Unfortunately, the best of training programs and preparation can be temporarily nullified and an athlete's performance can be significantly limited or even sidelined by injury.

Involvement in any sport or activity requiring physical exertion, like the lifestyle of a SEAL or SWCC, possesses an inherent danger of physical injury. While injury is an inevitable consequence of a Naval Special Warfare operator's line of work, they need not recur and become a lifelong 'bad

back' or 'bum shoulder.' Injuries that are treated effectively in both the short and long term have a good chance of healing completely and permanently.

The most common basic sports injuries are muscle tears and 'pulls' such as quad strains, hamstring strains, pulled calf muscles, as well as sprained

ankles, acute and chronic shoulder or rotator cuff injuries. Later on in the recovery stage, each of these injuries will require different approaches and different rehabilitative strategies.

For instance, during a professional football game, if a player came off the field with a pulled shoulder muscle he would be transported to a hospital or other care facility. His pulled muscle would be treated with medication for swelling and pain, and possibly a sling or other device to help stabilize the injury. After initial care is provided, the player would go through rehabilitation with a personal trainer or physical therapist until he is fully recovered. In the professional sports world, this extensive injury care is the standard expected by players, coaches and fans.

Due to the arduous nature of SEAL training, the sports medicine provided to NSW warriors is unique and exceptional to the community. More than 1,800 personnel, SEALs and enablers, are treated by the Logistics Support Unit 1 Tactical Athlete Center Sports Medicine Clinic (LOGSU 1 TAC-SM), and the program within it, the Tactical Athlete Program (TAP).

The TAP first took off in 2010. Within the TAP, there are two separate entities: sports medicine and human performance.

“When we start **WORKING** out of the same **FACILITY**, WE WILL HAVE A MORE **efficient** SOURCE OF MAN POWER AND HAVE A **BETTER TEAM** to help our operators.”

- Mark Rogow, NSWG-1 sports medicine program manager

The sports medicine side handles the initial evaluation of a patient's injury, prescribes treatment and advice and works with and monitors a patient's progress during the rehabilitation process. Three on-staff physical therapists work one-on-one with each patient to customize a rehabilitation program to specifically suit that person. Once the operator is functional enough to perform normal physical activities, he is transferred over to the human performance side of TAP. It is here, where operators are brought back up to the high physical standards of the community through personalized diets, stretching programs and other health related classes.

“It's important to remember that the programs do not start and abruptly stop,” said Zachary Weatherford, Naval Special Warfare Group 1 (NSWG 1) TAP manager. “The programs are blurred together and grey in between. We coordinate our efforts between both sides to make sure people don't slip through cracks.”

At the LOGSU 1 TAC-SM clinic, SEALs and enablers come with injuries varying from sprains and strains to those requiring surgery. The facility's capabilities have expanded to include state of the art equipment and various treatment techniques not widely known or used in basic military healthcare channels.

One highly effective technique being implemented at the LOGSU-1 TAC-SM clinic is dry needling, a form of acupuncture, that is used to help a muscle relax. This technique isolates a specific muscle and when used in conjunction with massage, helps relieve built up tension within a muscle.

“Dry needling isn't a new technique, but very recently it's become popular for the military,” said Lt. Sarah Thomas, LOGSU-1 TAC-SM physical therapist. “It is also a credential for physical therapists. They look at how we train our therapists and we have to get specialized training from an outside source to perform this technique. We're tested and have to have 200 hours signed off and supervised. There's an entire process to be able to have this credential.”

“There isn't any pain with dry needling,” said a West Coast based SEAL, a patient at the LOGSU 1 TAC-SM clinic. “All you can feel is a small prick, but the needle is so small that it doesn't hurt and my shoulder muscle loosens up.”

A new, state of the art machine at LOGSU 1 TAC-SM clinic is the diagnostic ultrasound. This highly effective tool is used to expedite the diagnosis of a patient with a muscle injury and help to speed up rehabilitation and recovery. By using this machine, therapists don't need to send the patient to a hospital for

tests and diagnosis, as it can all be performed in the clinic.

“They can walk in here and we can take a look at their shoulder and have a pretty good understanding of their injury,” said Thomas. “But we would send them to the hospital if we suspect the injury is great enough for someone to have surgery. A lot of these injuries don't require the time it takes to put someone through those measures, so this way we can get a faster answer and start treatment earlier.”

In early 2013, the TAC-SM clinic will add a hydrotherapy pool to their gym. This therapeutic pool will aid in pain control and be another place patients can exercise with low impact.

“We've never been able to have this at our command,” said Mark Rogow, NSWG 1 Sports Medicine program manager. “This pool is a very unique and very impressive. It's a state of the art and a tremendous feather in the cap, because it's going to do a better job at rehabilitating ankles, knees, hips and backs. It has an underwater treadmill, video capabilities and jets that allow you to swim against a current; it will sit in our hydrotherapy area here in the gym.”

The TAC-SM clinic and the TAP have come far since being created two years ago. Patients rave about its effectiveness and it is continually expanding, both in the number of care providers and equipment. In the next five to 10 years, there are plans to co-locate the sports medicine and human performance clinics, so they can work in better harmony and provide patients with second to none care.

“Anytime you see an amateur or professional sports team, there is sports medicine and human performance tied together in the same facility,” said Rogow. “There's regular communication with staff members from both sides to help the athlete. When we start working out of the same facility, we will have a more efficient source of manpower and have a better team to help our operators. We are part of a support unit and here to do whatever we can for the preservation of force and families.”

MC2 Megan Anuci

Killed IN Action

SO1 PATRICK FEEKS

SO2 DAVID WARSEN

SO2 MATTHEW KANTOR

SO1 KEVIN EBBERT

SO1 NICOLAS CHECQUE

LCDR JONAS KELSALL

SOCM LOUIS LANGLAIS

SOCS THOMAS RATZLAFF

SOCS ROBERT REEVES

SOCS HEATH ROBINSON

EODCS KRAIG VICKERS

SOC DARRIK BENSON

SOC BRIAN BILL

SOC CHRISTOPHER CAMPBELL

SOC JOHN FAAS

SOC KEVIN HOUSTON

SOC MATTHEW MASON

SOC STEPHEN MILLS

EODC NICHOLAS NULL

SOC JON TUMILSON

SOC AARON VAUGHN

SOC JASON WORKMAN

IT1 JARED DAY

MA1 JOHN DOUANGDARA

SO1 JESSE PITTMAN

CTR1 MICHAEL STRANGE

SO2 NICHOLAS SPEHAR

SO1 CALEB NELSON

LT (SEAL) BRENDAN LOONEY

HONORING THE Fallen

IN 2012, America recognized the 11th anniversary of 9/11 and as many years of consecutive combat in the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility. We celebrated the one year anniversary of the withdrawal from Iraq and solemnly remembered the one year that has passed since Extortion 17, an operation in Afghanistan that claimed the lives of 17 Navy SEALs, five NSW Sailors, eight U.S. Army aircrew and U.S. Air Force para-rescue and combat controllers as well as eight members from an Afghan security element. This year we also celebrated a golden anniversary within the NSW community, as we commemorated 50 years of Navy SEALs defending America's freedoms. While we spent the year reflecting on NSW's history and recent success, we have also been planning for its future. As we move into 2013, we'd be remiss if we didn't honor and remember our teammates who laid down their lives in the line of duty this year. These pages are dedicated to their memory and their sacrifice will never be forgotten.

SO1 Patrick Feeks

On Aug. 16, 2012, SO1 Patrick Feeks, 28, of Edgewater, Md., was one of seven American service members who were killed in action during a mission to push out insurgents and improve security in an area northeast of Kandahar, Afghanistan. The helicopter he was traveling in was struck by a rocket propelled grenade, killing all members onboard. He was assigned to a West-Coast based SEAL team.



SO2 David Warsen

On Aug. 16, 2012, SO2 David Warsen, 27, of Kentwood, Mich., was one of seven American service members who were killed in action during a mission to push out insurgents and improve security in an area northeast of Kandahar, Afghanistan. The helicopter he was traveling in was struck by a rocket propelled grenade, killing all members onboard. He was assigned to a West Coast based SEAL team.



SO2 Matthew Kantor

On Nov. 1, 2012, SO2 Matthew Kantor, 22, of Gillette, N.J., died while supporting stability efforts in the Zabul province of Afghanistan. He was killed by a gunshot wound sustained in combat during Operation Enduring Freedom. He was assigned to an East Coast based SEAL team.



SO1 Kevin Ebbert

On Nov. 24, 2012, SO1 Kevin Ebbert, 32, of Arcata, Ca., died while supporting stability operations in Uruzgan Province, Afghanistan. Ebbert was assigned to an East Coast based Naval Special Warfare Unit in Virginia Beach, Va.



SO1 Nicolas Checque

On Dec. 8, 2012, SO1 Nicolas D. Checque, 28, of Monroeville, Pa. died of combat related injuries sustained in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in Sorobi District, Kabul, Afghanistan. Checque was assigned to an East Coast based Naval Special Warfare Unit in Virginia Beach, Va.

CTRCS DAVID MCLENDON

SO3 DENIS MIRANDA

SO2 ADAM SMITH

SOC COLLIN THOMAS

SOCS ADAM BROWN

SO2 RYAN JOB

EOD2 TYLER TRAHAN

SOC JASON FREIWALD

SOCS JOHN MARCUM

SO1 JOSHUA HARRIS

EOD1 LUIS SOUFFRONT

SOC NATHAN HARDY

SOC MICHAEL KOCH

SOC MARK CARTER

CT1 STEVEN DAUGHERTY

MC1 ROBERT MCRILL

SO2 JOSEPH SCHWEDLER

MA2 (SEAL) MICHAEL MONSOOR

AO2 (SEAL) MARC LEE

LT (SEAL) MICHAEL MURPHY

STG2 (SEAL) MATTHEW AXELSON

GM2 (SEAL) DANNY DIETZ JR.

LCDR (SEAL) ERIC KRISTENSEN

LT (SEAL) MICHAEL MCGREEVY JR.

ITCS (SEAL) DANIEL HEALY

FCC (SEAL) JACQUES FONTAN

ET1 (SEAL) JEFFREY LUCAS

HM1 (SEAL) JEFFREY TAYLOR

MM2 (SEAL) SHANE PATTON

QM2 (SEAL) JAMES SUH

BM1 (SEAL) BRIAN OUELLETTE

PH1 (SEAL) DAVID TAPPER

IC1 (SEAL) THOMAS RETZER

HMC (SEAL) MATTHEW BOURGEOIS

ABH1 (SEAL) NEIL ROBERTS

JOINING FORCES



SOCSOUTH AND JAMAICAN PARTNERS PARTICIPATE IN TRAINING EXCHANGE

Located in the middle of the Caribbean Sea, Jamaica is surrounded by beautiful beaches and tropical weather making it a popular destination for tourists from all over the world.

However, the small island, like much of the region between North and South America, is a potential location for illicit traffickers to use as a transit point to move illegal drugs across the region and into the United States. It is a concern for many across the island nation who see this activity as a threat to their security.

So when Special Warfare Combatant-craft Crewmen (SWCC) assigned to Special Boat Team (SBT) 22, in support of Special Operations Command South (SOCSOUTH) and members of the Naval Small Craft Instruction and Technical Training School, better known as NAVSCIATTS, participated in a Joint Combined Exchange Training (JCET) event in Jamaica in September, members of the Jamaica Defense Forces, simply known as the JDF, welcomed the group of American Sailors.

The primary focus of the month-long JCET for NSW components was to gain regional knowledge and improve their teaching abilities, while training with members of the JDF.

JCETs also benefit U.S. Special Operations Forces (SOF) because they allow SOF personnel to train in friendly nations, like Jamaica, and hone their military tactics and skills in unfamiliar settings, while also improving bilateral relations and interoperability with other militaries.

For the JDF, this event also proved to be helpful. Although the JDF's size is small compared to other nations across the Western Hemisphere, their military continues to expand into a well-rounded force with multiple skill sets, regardless of branch of service, in an effort to deter illicit traffickers from its borders and waterways.

During this event, more than 20 Jamaican servicemembers, mostly from their Army and Coast Guard services, saw this JCET as a great opportunity to train and enhance their maritime operations and boat maintenance skills with U.S. servicemembers.

"It is hard for the [Jamaican] Coast Guard to be tasked to do everything. We can do some of these operations and take the load off of them," said

a Jamaican army officer, who serves as a troop commander. "We see ourselves in the future being capable of operations and interdictions in the water."

As part of SOCSOUTH's theater security cooperation program, these JCET programs enable partner nations to increase their capacity to conduct security operations. SOCSOUTH, based in Homestead, Fla., is responsible for all U.S. Special Operations activities in the Caribbean, Central and South America; it serves as a component for U.S. Southern Command.

For U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Timothy Piccin, who serves as the SOCSOUTH country officer for Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, this JCET is vital in the continued training of all U.S. Naval forces working in the region, but also serves as an essential piece for the development of the JDF, specifically its maritime capabilities due to its geographic location.

"This program allows our [U.S.] forces to get excellent training in the region and it serves as a great benefit for our partner nations to increase their military capacity in a very unique platform where exchanging tactics and procedures benefit everyone involved," he said. "From boat maintenance procedures to tactical training, this event allows everyone to train and learn from each other."

During the first few days of the JCET, members assigned to NAVSCIATTS trained with their Jamaican counterparts on basic watercraft maintenance skills and procedures. The maintenance portion of the JCET ended with members of the JDF breaking down a boat engine piece by piece in order to learn standard boat engine components and putting it back together.

The final two weeks of the JCET focused more on military tactics using boats as SWCC personnel trained with their Jamaican partners on specialized techniques, such as Visit, Board, Search and Seizure, a maritime boarding action designed to capture hostile vessels and high value targets onboard a water craft. The U.S. Sailors also instructed members of the JDF on boat interdiction and extraction techniques, boat handling maneuvers on small tactical boats, long-range navigation and close-quarters defense.



Jamaican army soldiers patrol the ocean on a Zodiac inflatable boat during a scenario based boat interdiction exercise with Special Warfare Combatant-craft Crewmen.

"This event is very **important** for us because it takes us away from our **comfort zone** and presents us with a different **challenge.**"

- U.S. Special Boat Operator Chief in charge of JCET

For the SWCC members assigned to SBT 22, this JCET allowed them to learn new skills in a variety of different areas outside of their normal routine.

"This event is very important for us, because it takes us away from our comfort zone and presents us with a different challenge," said the U.S. Special Boat Operator Chief in charge of the JCET. "We typically operate in rivers, so working with the JDF in the open ocean really put us in conditions we are not used to, but it helped us learn how to work in those environments."

For the SWCC members, this JCET was also valuable because they built a strong partnership with members of the JDF.

"We have a great relationship with these guys, and we have learned a lot from them," said the Special Boat Operator Chief. "From working out together to talking about our experiences, it has been great working with them."

JDF members expressed the same sentiments following a small closing

ceremony where each participant received a certificate of training from their American counterparts.

"I wish the training was longer, but they covered a little bit of everything and it is now our job to not lose what we learned and stay current," said the Jamaica troop commander. "It was really great working with [SBT 22], and I wish we could have this type of event twice a year. We clicked right away and it was really fun to be with them."

Piccin hopes to replicate this experience with a similar event sometime next year.

"There is no doubt this exchange greatly benefits both the U.S. and JDF in order to learn new techniques to protect the region from the threat of transnational organized crime," he said. "We hope to continue to work with our JDF partners and are planning to do this again next year."

Army Sgt. 1st Class Alex Licea
Special Operations Command South Public Affairs



Jamaican Army Soldiers maneuver a boat to intercept a "suspicious vessel" during a scenario-based boat interdiction exercise with Special Warfare Combatant-craft Crewmen members assigned to Special Boat Team 22.

18.1315° N, 77.2736° W 18.1315° N, 77.2736° W 18.1315° N, 77.2736° W 18.1315° N, 77.2736° W



1 Serious Question:

Why would you follow me?

How would you respond to an Ensign, fresh out of SEAL Qualification Training (SQT), who asks you this question: "What makes a good leader?"

Before you read on, think about it for a moment. What would you say?

Anyone whose job description includes mentoring junior officers (which is another way of saying anyone E-7 and above) should have a ready answer for this question. And it needs to be a good one; that ensign, after all, is our future. Soon he'll be a platoon commander, an XO, and, in no time at all, we'll be calling him "Skipper" or "Commodore." Our opportunity to influence this officer is fleeting, indeed. We need to get this right.

I'm writing this essay because I've recently landed on what I believe is a truly exceptional approach to this important question. I must disclose, however, that I deserve no credit for originality. More troubling still, my source is a Marine!

I participate periodically in a wonderful leadership and ethics forum for first-class midshipmen at the Naval Academy: the Capstone Moral Leadership Seminar. This past November, the keynote speaker was Col. Art Athens, a retired Marine who now directs USNA's Stockdale Center for Ethical Leadership. Almost as soon as Athens started speaking, I realized this was going to be something special. I grabbed a handful of napkins and started scribbling notes.

The organizing theme of his remarks was a vignette about a brand new Marine second lieutenant reporting to his first command. When the second lieutenant met his platoon sergeant, a highly decorated Marine whose battlefield accomplishments were known throughout the Corps, he was appropriately awed. After introducing himself, he asked the platoon sergeant this question: "Why would you follow me?"

What a remarkable question! It speaks volumes about the lieutenant's character. It also reflects the same angst that our new SQT graduates must—indeed should—feel when they walk for the first time into platoon huts crowded with veterans of multiple combat deployments. I still recall, as a "new guy" in the 1980s, feeling great discomfort whenever I approached an NCO wearing a Vietnam campaign ribbon and a Bronze Star or two. I felt like a phony. "Why would you follow me?"

What made Athens' vignette so memorable was not the lieutenant's question, but rather the platoon sergeant's response. He and the platoon would follow without hesitation, he replied, as long as the lieutenant could answer three questions in the affirmative.

Question 1: Do you know your job and are you striving hard to learn it? The first part of that question is unremarkable; obviously it's preferable to follow a competent leader than an incompetent one. The second part is key. It acknowledges that no one expects the young officer to be Chesty Puller on day one. The platoon sergeant does, however, expect him to strive in that direction: to train with purpose, ask thoughtful questions and read books. He expects the officer to make mistakes, but he also expects him to man up ... to acknowledge his mistakes, own them, learn from them and then move on.

Question 2: Will you make the "hard but right" decision, even if it costs you personally? The platoon sergeant is looking for alignment between the officer's values, words and actions. The first two are easy. We all generally know right from wrong and we can all "talk the talk." But when it comes to turning moral knowledge into moral action, even the virtuous stumble. The courage to align our actions with our values, I believe, is the consummate expression of courage. I honestly can't recall an instance in which I wasn't able to muster sufficient physical courage to do what I had to, no matter how frickin' scared I was. But I can

vividly recall—with some shame—occasions when I failed to translate my moral intuitions into actions. We all make bad calls, but these are the ones that stick with us. There are no do-overs.

Question 3: Do you care as much about us as you do about yourself? This one's brutal. Turns out even the most selfless among us care a whole hell of a lot about ourselves. Sometimes we treat our colleagues and subordinates not as we should, as ends unto themselves, but merely as means to selfish ends. Yet as demanding as this virtue may seem, we all know people in our community who routinely put others before self. For evidence, we need look no further than the Medal of Honor and Navy Cross citations that have honored our teammates. Read these closely and you'll see they are honoring precisely this virtue. These men, during the actions cited, cared as much about their brothers as they did about themselves ... perhaps more.

Reflecting on these three questions, my gut tells me the platoon sergeant got it right. The virtues implicit in these questions—which Athens summarizes (correctly, I think) as "competence, courage and compassion"—do indeed constitute the foundational virtues of ethical leadership.

So if an aspiring leader asks you, "what makes a good leader," I hope you'll consider Athens' vignette and these three questions. For experienced leaders, the platoon sergeant's questions may also offer an excellent framework for self-critique. Leaders at all levels should aspire at all times to be able to answer these questions in the affirmative. We should also be prepared to forgive ourselves when we inevitably fall short. But we should then double down on our efforts to ensure we get it right the next time. ↩



Roger Herbert, a retired Navy SEAL Captain and former commanding officer, now works for the University of Virginia in the Woodrow Wilson Department of Politics.

tactical decision



The following is a Tactical Decision Exercise – a role playing drill in which you will be asked to make a combat decision in a limited amount of time. The goal is to improve your tactical decision making, pattern recognition and communication skills. There is no right answer.

OVERVIEW

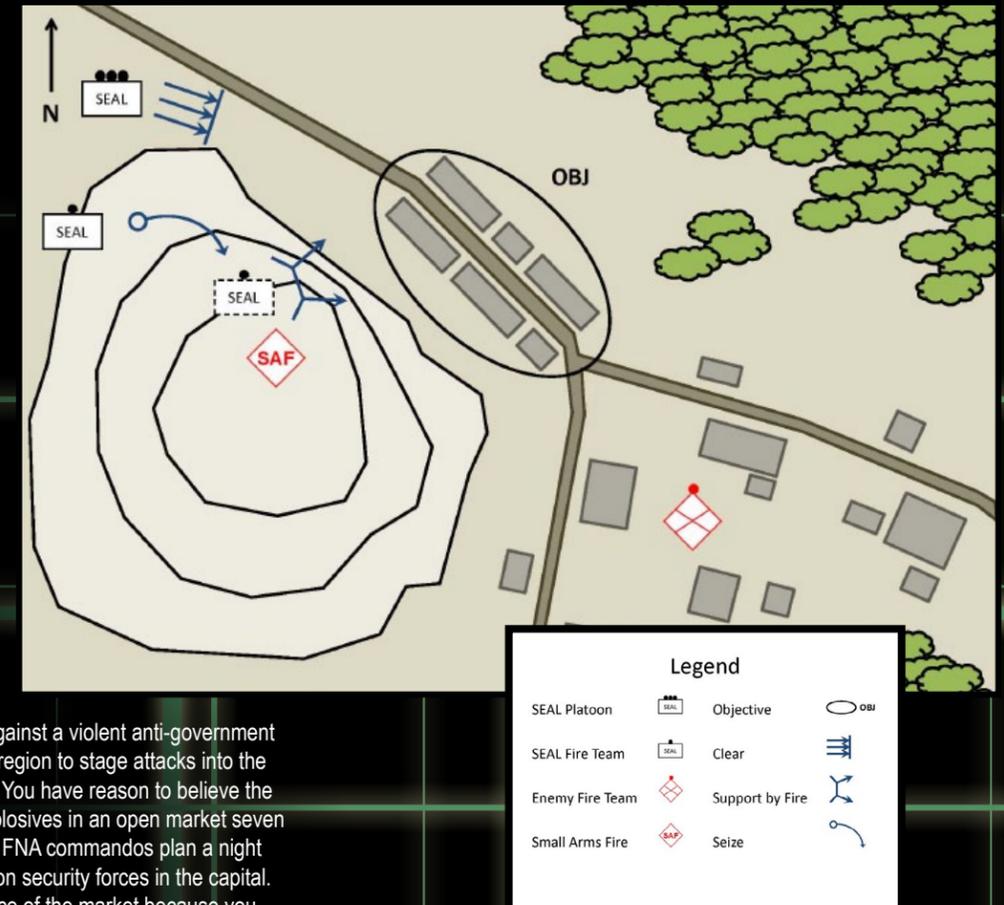
In each issue of Ethos, the reader's position in the patrol will change. However, the specified title does not exclude others from completing the exercise – every leader in the patrol should be familiar with all levels of command. Additionally, the scenarios are intentionally vague so make any assumptions that are essential to complete the exercise. Read the situation as many times as needed before moving on to the requirement.

As stated previously, there is no right or wrong answer. Good luck.

SITUATION

You are the platoon commander of a SEAL platoon deployed to a remote region of Feniche. From a small fire base, you combat-advise and assist a company of Feniche National Army (FNA) commandos against a violent anti-government insurgency. They are using the surrounding region to stage attacks into the provincial capital 40 kilometers to the south. You have reason to believe the insurgents are storing their weapons and explosives in an open market seven kilometers to the west. Your platoon and the FNA commandos plan a night raid of the market in order to disrupt attacks on security forces in the capital. Your intent is to conduct a deliberate clearance of the market because you suspect the cache is well guarded.

From the objective rally point (ORP), you release a fire team to establish a support by fire position on the hill overlooking the objective. Ten minutes later you hear gun fire erupt and turn to see muzzle flashes on the north side of the hill. While you wait for a report from the fire team leader, a SEAL in the ORP reports seeing men moving tactically in the village just past the objective. When the fire team leader finally checks in, he informs you he has two SEALs with gunshot wounds: one is in critical condition and the other is stable but not ambulatory. He tells you his medic is providing tactical combat casualty care and you can hear the other members of his fire team returning fire.



REQUIREMENT

In two minutes, write down the actions you would take as the squad commander. Provide the rationale for your plan of action.

This Tactical Decision Game does not intentionally represent any previous, current, or planned United States military operations.

Have an idea for the next TDE? Send your input to tde@navsoc.socom.mil.

make your choice

