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BUREAU OF MEDICINE AND SURGERY, WASHINGTON DC
PUBLIC AFFAIRS-NAVAL SERVICE MEDICAL NEWS (NSMN) (96-01)

This service is for general distribution of information
And news of interest to Navy and Marine Corps members, civilian
employees, family members and retired beneficiaries of Navy
Medicine.

HEADLINES AND GENERAL INTEREST STORIES THIS WEEK:

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HEADLINE: Navy Medicine Provides Support to Russian Seaman
USS SIMPSON, Mediterranean Sea (NSMN) -- During routine
flight operations in the Western Mediterranean on 29 December, a
helicopter embarked aboard USS SIMPSON (FFG 56) -- a SH-60B
"Seahawk" with the call sign Magnum 453 -- received a distress
call on radio from a Russian merchant vessel. The EKATERINA
BELASHOVA, also operating in the Western Mediterranean, was
requesting medical assistance for a crewman who had severely
injured his hand in a generator accident.

The helicopter, piloted by LT Jack Sheppard and LT Greg
Griffitt, with aircrewman AW3 Brian Wilson aboard, immediately
returned to SIMPSON to refuel and pick up a corpsman, HM1 Keith
Staples. Within a few minutes, Magnum 453 launched to locate the
merchant vessel and provide emergency medical assistance.

The Russian merchant was located approximately 30 nautical
miles to the south of the SIMPSON. While the Norfolk-homeported
guided missile frigate began to close the Russian ship's
position, Magnum 453 arrived on scene. Staples was then lowered
to the ship's deck by the helicopter's rescue hoist.

Once on board, the Navy Corpsman determined that the injury
warranted an immediate medical evacuation (medevac). SIMPSON

notified air operations at Naval Air Station Sigonella, Sicily, about the emergency transportation requirement. Permission was quickly granted to transport the injured Russian crew member to U.S. Naval Hospital Sigonella.

Staples and the injured crew member were then hoisted aboard Magnum 453 and flown to NAS Sigonella. They were met there by an ambulance crew who rushed the crewman to the hospital for surgery.

With the emergency surgery now complete, the Russian crewman will be returned to his ship after a brief period of medical evaluation.

-USN-

HEADLINE: Whenever and Wherever Needed, Navy Medicine is There
BUMED Washington (NSMN) -- At sea or in the air, Navy Medical personnel are standing by, ready to assist. On a civilian airline flight from San Francisco to Osaka, Japan, LT Trent Rasmussen, MC, responded to the call for help. A Navy petty officer complained of stomach pains four hours into the flight and when airline personnel asked for a doctor, both Rasmussen, a Navy flight surgeon, and an internal medicine specialist from the University of California Davis Medical Center responded. They both rendered a probable diagnosis of appendicitis and recommended that the flight divert to Tokyo where the patient was transported by ambulance to the local hospital and underwent immediate surgery.

-USN-

HEADLINE: Corpsman Dramatically Increases Hospital Readiness
NAVHOSP Twentynine Palms, CA (NSMN) -- Naval Hospital Twentynine Palms staff member HML(SW) Eric Ewing, of Staff Sick Call, received recognition from the top recently, when Navy Surgeon General VADM Harold M. Koenig wrote of the corpsman's innovative efforts at increasing military readiness in a recent email, saying "At Naval Hospital Twentynine Palms, HML Ewing is taking Navy Medicine to the deckplate. This Leading Petty Officer is increasing the deployability readiness of the hospital staff by getting a cart and going office-to-office to make sure the hospital staff have their immunizations."

Ewing, an Independent Duty Corpsman, also recently earned a Gold Star in lieu of his third Navy Achievement Medal for his efforts, which increased hospital medical readiness for immunizations from 16 percent to 90 percent in three months.

"I started taking the shot cart to work spaces because I felt that it would save staff members from losing time from their jobs in taking care of patients," Ewing said. "With me going to them at my convenience, it means it's less time wasted for me and them. It also increases our patients' access to care because staff members have more time at their work stations providing care to those patients."

-USN-

HEADLINE: 'Iron-man' of Naval Hospital Groton Saves Shipmate
NAVHOSP Groton, CT (NSMN) -- LT Tony Guerra's outstanding

physical condition coupled with his training as a former hospital corpsman recently saved the day for a choking shipmate in Naval Hospital Groton's cafeteria. Guerra physically lifted the collapsed choking victim, who had turned blue, off the floor and successfully applied the Heimlich maneuver to dislodge a piece of food from the victim's throat.

Guerra, a Health Care Administrator in the Medical Service Corps and head of the Materials Management Department at Naval Hospital Groton, runs up to 70 miles a week, bicycles 400 miles, swims 2000 yards, and lifts weights for "fun." The 35-year-old native of Detroit competes regularly in Iron-man distance triathlons, grueling tests of strength and stamina consisting of a 2.4-mile swim immediately followed by a 112-mile bicycle ride and a 26.2-mile run. This event is no easy task for most of us and is why Guerra trains a strenuous 35 hours a week. The training paid off recently when Guerra took 10th place overall, and first among military competitors, in the Great Floridian Iron-man Triathlon.

Guerra received his first introduction to this ultimate challenge in 1982 when he watched the "Saw Iron-man" on television. He recalled watching a woman, who was about to win the race, collapse to the pavement in exhaustion. Forty feet from the finish line, but still in the lead, she crawled toward the finish in an attempt to salvage her victory, only to have it taken away at the last moment by another contestant. The courage, strength and dedication the woman demonstrated inspired Guerra to take up the sport.

Story by RP3 James M. Schupp, Naval Hospital Groton

-USN-

HEADLINE: Corpsmen Deliver Holiday Happiness

NAVHOSP Pensacola, FL (NSMN) -- 'Twas the Saturday before Christmas and way down South ... two Naval Hospital Pensacola, corpsmen undertook a holiday mission to see that members of an Alabama veterans home received needed Christmas gifts.

HM3 Max Huffman, of the hospital's Labor and Delivery and Inpatient Gynecology department, and HN Merri Wendorf, of the Adolescent Clinic, delivered 255 pairs of socks donated by members of Naval Hospital Pensacola to veterans of the William F. Green Veterans Home in Bay Minette, AL, on 23 December.

Huffman, who is a native of the Whitehouse Fork, AL, community located five miles from the Veterans Home, spearheaded the hospital project throughout December, with the help of Grottoes, VA, native Wendorf. Huffman learned of the veterans' needs and received the go-ahead from Naval Hospital Pensacola's Commanding Officer CAPT Ralph A. Lockhart, MSC.

Huffman, carrying a loaded "Santa bag" complete with wrapped presents, and Wendorf, sporting a "Santa hat," personally made the rounds to each veteran in a four-hour marathon of gift-giving.

"If you could only have seen their faces," said Huffman. "They were very appreciative ... that someone outside their families was thinking about their needs at Christmas."

"Their reactions," said Wendorf, "just broke my heart. Their eyes lit up ... and I even got a kiss of thanks from one of the 90-year-old veterans.

"Sometimes the simple, thoughtful things people do for one another are the most appreciated," said Wendorf. "It made my Christmas a whole lot brighter."

-USN-

HEADLINE: Naval Hospital Guam Boasts "First Born" American Baby
USNH Guam (NSMN) -- At 10 minutes past midnight on 1 January, U.S. Naval Hospital Guam welcomed 8-pound, 2-ounce, 19-1/2 inch long Jackie Lynne Mann into the world. Since New Year's came to Guam, a U.S. territory, 15 hours ahead of anywhere in CONUS, Jackie Lynne was the first American-born baby of 1996.

Electrician's Mate 2nd Class David Mann and wife Donna Mae Mann are the proud parents.

The Mann's new addition arrived only four months after arriving at Guam for their second tour. David is stationed on board USS HOLLAND (AS 32).

"I was hoping she would be born before midnight for tax purposes," said Donna Mae, "but once she was born I just looked her over from head to toe, counted her toes and fingers and then laid back to rest knowing I had a beautiful healthy baby." The baby kept her parents waiting an extra 11 days past her expected delivery date of 21 December 1995.

This is the Mann's second child. Their son, Allen, is two-and-a-half years old. "Allen was a little confused when mommy and daddy were cuddling this new little baby," said Donna Mae. "I said, 'Come here Allen, this is who was in mommy, this is Jackie Lynne.' Allen then came over and gave his new sister a kiss on the forehead."

Story by HMC Filip Carroll, U.S. Naval Hospital Guam

-USN-

HEADLINE: 'Unity through Diversity,' Up and Running in Okinawa
USNH Okinawa, Japan (NSMN) -- Equal Opportunity is a complex issue involving varied cultural, religious, gender and ethnic differences. At U.S. Naval Hospital Okinawa, a Diversity Awareness Team was formed to deal specifically with the issue of diversity awareness. The planning committee incorporated four elements crucial to the fulfillment of presenting diversity issues to the command:

- Develop a mobile training team whose purpose would be to train small groups throughout the hospital and branch clinics on issues regarding diversity.

- Include all ethnic and cultural heritages in regular ethnic celebrations.

- Establish a Diversity Library offering the command a resource of books and journals related to racial, gender, religious and cultural issues.

- Write and distribute a newsletter highlighting diversity related news, cultural vignettes and personal interviews of command members.

Cross-Cultural communications, chosen as the first training

phase, was presented to approximately 400 staff members. Many different ethnic and cultural heritages throughout the year were presented such as Irish-Americans, Italian-Americans, German-Americans, Native Americans and Afro-Americans. The recent "Christmas Around the World" is an example of Diversity awareness at work in the command. A large number of booths were set up, featuring various foods and information regarding various cultures. In addition, several groups performed traditional dances to celebrate the holiday. A Diversity Lending Library was also established providing books and journals highlighting various cultures. Also published is a newsletter every six to eight weeks to inform the command members about important cultural issues.

The Diversity Awareness Team is a useful tool in moving U.S. Naval Hospital Okinawa toward fulfilling its mission.

Story by LT Richard Maffeo, NC, U.S. Naval Hospital Okinawa

-USN-

HEADLINE: Medical Logistics Recognizes People of the Year

NMLC Fort Detrick, MD (NSMN) -- At their annual conference and banquet last month, Navy Medical Logisticians worldwide came together to recognize the outstanding efforts of several of its members. Director of the Medical Service Corps RADM Ed Phillips, MSC, was on hand to present plaques and checks to award winners:

HM1 Larry Shamblin from Naval Medical Center Oakland, CA, was named as the Biomedical Equipment Technician of the Year. Dental Equipment Technician of the Year honors went to DT1 Kenneth DeVincent from Naval Dental Center Camp Lejeune, NC. RADM Dennis Wright, MC, the Medical Officer of the Marine Corps, joined Phillips in congratulating LCDR Mitchell Reading, MSC, from Naval Medical Logistics Command for being selected as the Marine Corps Medical Logistician of the Year. Honors for Civilian of the Year were split between Mrs. Josephine Blas from Naval Medical Center San Diego and Ms. Katheryn Buchanan from Naval Medical Center Oakland. HMCS Todd West, now stationed with the Fleet Marine Force at Camp Lejeune, won the award for Equipment Manager of the Year for work done at U.S. Naval Hospital Naples, Italy. LCDR Steve Hasting, an MSC officer stationed at Fleet Industrial Supply Center (FISC) Norfolk, VA, won honors as Staff Material Manager of the Year. Two other MSC officers, LT Mike Anaya from U.S. Naval Hospital Sigonella, Sicily, and LT Walt Ruggles from Naval Hospital Pensacola, FL, shared the award for Medical Treatment Facility Material Manager of the Year.

CAPT Terry Irgens, MSC, commanding officer of Naval Medical Logistics Command, the command that hosts the annual conference, commented that medical logistics had made unprecedented strides in 1995 to stretch the Navy Medical Department's dollar by implementing new business practices like prime vendor and electronic buying and bill paying. "And thanks to the outstanding efforts of folks like these, we'll do even better in 1996," he said.

Story by CDR Fred White, MSC, Naval Medical Logistics Command

-USN-

HEADLINE: Skip the Trip to the Pharmacy

BUMED Washington (NSMN) -- For the next three months there's no need to worry about running an errand to the pharmacy to pick up that medication you take day after day. Wait until Spring, wait until April. Get up to a 90-day supply at your naval hospital or branch clinic pharmacy. Naval hospitals and clinics now permit dispensing up to a 90-day supply of maintenance medications for chronic illnesses. Previous dispensing varied widely from one command to the next allowing patients to receive 30, 60, or 90 day-supplies of chronic medications. Hospitals and clinics dispensing 90-day supplies have realized greater economic efficiency by reducing unnecessary handling costs and pharmacy workload plus increased patient satisfaction by reducing the number of return visits for refills.

Maintenance medications for high blood pressure, heart disease, birth control, estrogen replacement, and allergies are taken for a long extended period of time and may be available in a 90-day supply. Check with your local pharmacist to see if your prescription is considered to be a maintenance medication in order to receive a 90-day supply, since specific medications provided are determined by the local medical facility. Saving one trip to the pharmacy adds up to extra convenience for the customer. The extended 90-day refill took effect in July for the Navy, Air Force, and Army medical facilities. In the future, mail-order prescriptions will also be filled as written up to a 90-day supply for maintenance medications. Along with offering mail-order prescription refills and providing drive-thru pharmacy service, the extended 90-day refill supply is just one of many ways Navy Medicine has sought to improve access to prescription medication and provide excellent customer service.

Story by Ms. Ann Kirby, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery

-USN-

HEADLINE: Navy Medical Department People Involved in Operations

BUMED Washington (NSMN) -- The Navy Medical Department continues to support the Navy and Marine Corps team through deployments with the fleet and humanitarian operations. Here is the latest update on where our medical people are on assignment.

Medical forces currently on operational assignment are:

Operation Sea Signal Phase V

The Navy Medical Department is in full support of Operation Sea Signal. There are 15 remaining medical and dental personnel assigned to CJTF-160 providing medical treatment for 2,917 Cuban migrants. U.S. Naval Hospital Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, in combination with CJTF-160, is providing a comprehensive program of inpatient, outpatient, mental health and dental care for all migrants. CJTF-160 is projected to "Case the Colors" sometime in the first part of February 1996.

Operation Full Accounting

Navy Medical Corps officers, Physician Assistants and Independent Duty Corpsmen participate in this operation by volunteering to serve tours ranging from just under two weeks to two months to support the teams searching for remains of MIAs and

POWs in Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam. There are currently two IDCs assigned to JTF Full Accounting from Naval Hospital Newport, RI, and COMSUBGRU Nine in Washington. Those who meet the qualifications and wish to volunteer may contact HM2 Salicrup at DSN 762-3427 or commercial (202) 762-3427, at the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery.

Exercise Support

MMART Four from National Naval Medical Center Bethesda, MD, is deployed to provide support for a Mediterranean ARG.

-USN-

HEADLINE: HEALTHWATCH: Guard Against Rabies Infection

NAVHOSP Charleston, SC (NSMN) -- Rabies is one of the most feared animal diseases that can be contracted by man. It is spread to humans by dogs, cats, raccoons, bats, bobcats, horses, skunks and cows. Rabbits, squirrels, chipmunks, hamsters, rats and mice are rarely infected and their bites rarely, if ever, require treatment for rabies.

Rabies is caused by a virus germ entering a wound from a bite or a scratch of an infected animal. The virus attacks the nervous system, causing paralysis, delirium and convulsions. Without medical intervention, the usual duration of symptoms will last two to six days, then will usually be followed by death due to respiratory paralysis.

Worldwide, there are an estimated 30,000 deaths from rabies every year, nearly all in developing countries. From 1980-1989, 12 deaths occurred in the United States, but there have been some recent cases that have made the news, and rabies is increasing in the United States.

How do you avoid rabies? Make sure all your pets' vaccinations are up to date. Try to avoid confrontations with wild animals. If you are ever bitten or scratched by an animal, even if it is your own pet or you know the animal, wash the bite or scratch thoroughly and seek medical attention. There are medical treatments against rabies, but once it sets in, it is almost always fatal.

Story by HM2 James E. Grubb, Naval Hospital Charleston

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3. February Calendar

African-American History Month

American Heart Month, "Don't Die of Embarrassment" (get help if you experience warning signs of a heart attack) -- American Heart Association, 1 800 AHA-USA1

National Children's Dental Health Month, "Discover the Clues to a Healthy Smile" -- American Dental Association, 1 800 621-8099

4 February 1941: United Service Organizations (USO) Founded

19 February: Holiday -- Presidents' Day

23 February 1991: Ground War Against Iraq Began

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HEADLINE: Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday Observance

BUPERS Washington (NSMN) -- Chief of Naval Personnel VADM

Skip Bowman recently released a message urging Navy commands to "join in commemorating the birth and accomplishments of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. As we recognize his leadership and lifetime commitment to challenge racial injustice, we also acknowledge his efforts to achieve equal opportunity for all Americans. At the heart of Dr. King's philosophy is the concept of service. Helping others, in whatever way we can, is one of the most meaningful ways we can serve and keep Dr. King's dream alive.

"This year, Sailors throughout the Navy will join their fellow citizens in making the King holiday a day for national community service by feeding the hungry, caring for the homeless and helping the sick and disabled."

The theme for this year's observance of King's birthday, to be celebrated Monday, 15 January, is "On the King holiday, help somebody! Every American can make a difference."

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HEADLINE: January is Birth Defects Prevention Month

MARCH OF DIMES White Plains, NY (NSMN) -- In January, March of Dimes chapters across the country will focus on the prevention of birth defects by promoting pre-pregnancy awareness. A March of Dimes national health education awareness campaign called, "If You're Ready to Have a Baby ... Think Ahead," educates people about the importance of planning for pregnancy prior to conception.

In life, people plan for many things: weddings, careers, retirement, purchasing a car or a house. College applications are submitted nearly a year in advance. Yet, over 60 percent of all pregnancies in the United States are unintended. Most women discover they are pregnant several weeks into the pregnancy, the most crucial time for the developing fetus.

Pre-pregnancy awareness can increase the chance of a healthy pregnancy and birth outcome. Educating people in their childbearing years about fetal development; genetic history; behaviors that promote a healthy pregnancy -- good nutrition, folic acid consumption, impact of substances on pregnancy; and the need for early prenatal care is teaching people to Think Ahead.

For more information regarding the March of Dimes Think Ahead Campaign, contact your local March of Dimes chapter.

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