

HELLCAT NEWS

The daily news aboard America's Flagship

Sunday, Nov. 5, 2017



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The Chief's Last Stand

**Story by MC2 Janweb B. Lagazo,
USS Ronald Reagan Public Affairs**

The shells whistle dissonantly before geysers of steamy water peppers the seascape surrounding the ship. Metal screams in defiance as the ship shudders, straining under the effort to steam towards safety. A shaky, crackling voice comes over the radio as an allied patrol aircraft reports sighting the Imperial Japanese Navy's Japanese Center Force astern – four battleships, eight heavy cruisers and 11 destroyers. The Native American captain, Cherokee and Creek blood coursing through his veins, ruffles his jet-black hair as he enters the pilot house, immediately spotting the silhouette of the tremendous enemy force closing in through the dawning light.

Cmdr. Ernest "Chief" Evans, commanding officer of the Fletcher-class destroyer USS Johnston (DD 557), part of the 7th Fleet's Escort Carrier Task Unit 77.4.3, known as "Taffy 3," realizes that his group of six escort carriers, three destroyers and four escort destroyers is outmatched, outgunned, and outflanked. His slow moving force – earlier outfitted to shell land targets as part of Army Gen. Douglas MacArthur's return to the Philippines – is now the only defense for the escort carriers in company and the four Army divisions on MacArthur's precarious beachhead after Adm. William Halsey's formidable U.S. 3rd Fleet was lured away from defending the Philippines by a Japanese decoy force.

"All hands to general quarters," barks the Oklahoma native. "Prepare to attack a major portion of the Japanese fleet. All engines ahead flank. Commence making smoke and stand by for torpedo attack. Left full rudder!"

Perhaps, at this time, Evans remembered the immortalized words he spoke during the commissioning of Johnston a year before, "this is going to be a fighting ship. I intend to go in harm's way, and anyone who doesn't want to go along had better get off right now! I will never again retreat from an enemy force!"

Johnston veers port – directly pointing its bow at the enemy force, which is able to make 27 to 30 knots, while his small fleet can only make 15. Round after round brackets Johnston as the enemy sights her laying down a smokescreen to cover the escort carriers' escape. Her only weapon is a 5-inch gun and a cluster of torpedoes.

Lt. Robert C. Hagen, Johnston's gunnery officer, later recalled, "We felt like little David without a slingshot."

Johnston races off alone from the escort making 30 knots, zigzagging across miles of ocean under fire by heavy cruisers and battleships before its own 5-inch gun can enter its effective range.

At 18,000 yards, Johnston unleashes 200 rounds on the nearest heavy cruiser. Then at 10,000 yards, it fires a salvo of 10 torpedoes. Johnston scores several hits and successfully diverts most of the Japanese force away from the carrier escorts. However, the Johnston was shattered – taking a direct hit to one of its engine rooms – cutting its speed in half. The Japanese force surrounds the wounded ship, hitting it with round after round.

A shell hits the port bridge wing, all but undressing Chief with shrapnel. Unimaginable pain shoots through Evan's body. Two of his fingers are missing. All around him, incoherent noise – a mix of curses and orders – as the ship hides in a temporary squall to limp back to Taffy 3.

Along the way, Johnston passes by the rest of the escort



American survivors of the battle are rescued by a U.S. Navy ship on 26 October 1944. (Photo courtesy of Naval History and Heritage Command)

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CNO Presents 2017 Stockdale Leadership Awards

**Story by MC2 Dustin Knight,
Defense Media Activity**

WASHINGTON — The 37th annual Vice Adm. James Bond Stockdale Leadership Award ceremony was held Nov. 3, in the Pentagon Hall of Heroes in Washington, D.C.

Cmdr. Brian M. Drechsler, the Pacific Fleet recipient, and Cmdr. Eric M. Sager, the Fleet Forces recipient, received the award.

The two recipients were nominated by their peers, who were also eligible for the award, and chosen from among eight finalists.

The award is presented annually to two commissioned officers on active duty in the grade of commander or below who are serving in command of a single unit, and who serve as examples of excellence in leadership and conspicuous contribution to the improvement of leadership in the Navy.

Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John Richardson served as guest speaker at

the ceremony and presented the awards to the winners. Richardson received the award in 2001.

"These two leaders distinguished themselves amongst their peers to the point that their fellows felt motivated to stand them out," said Richardson. "That in and of itself is a true testament to just the quality of this award."

Drechsler is the former commanding officer of Sea, Air, Land (SEAL) Team 5.

"Any leader is only as good as his teammates and the Sailors that they serve and any successes are the result of the collective actions of the unit," said Drechsler. "I was absolutely blessed to have a phenomenal crew of people and we were well resourced. The greatest honor that an officer can ever be given is permitted the privilege and responsibility of the command. To the officers, chiefs and petty officers of SEAL Team 5, thank you. This is your award as you truly made my job easy."

Sager is the former commanding officer of USS California (SSN 781).

"I am unbelievably humbled to be

here in the Hall of Heroes and share this honor with a classmate and an incredible combat leader," Sager said. "It is really an honor to be recognized with Stockdale's name. My California team are the true deserving recipients. Their dedication, their perseverance, their drive and their ingenuity inspire me every single day. The recognition of this award belongs to them."

Vice Adm. James Bond Stockdale, for whom the Stockdale Award is named, articulated five roles for a leader -- moralist, jurist, teacher, steward and philosopher.

A Naval Academy graduate and pilot, Stockdale ejected from his A-4E Skyhawk over North Vietnam in September 1965 and was held prisoner and frequently tortured until February 1973. He received the Medal of Honor in 1976 and served as president of the Naval War College from October 1977 until August 1979.

He died in 2005 and is buried at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland. He is survived by his three sons and eight grandchildren.



Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John Richardson presents the 2017 Vice Admiral James Bond Stockdale Leadership Award to Cmdr. Eric Sager. (Photo by MC1 Nathan Laird)

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destroyers ordered to commence a suicidal torpedo run, sacrifice themselves for the carriers. Evans abandons the pilot house but orders Johnston to follow them for a second run at the Japanese.

The ragtag group of escort destroyers square off against the Japanese Center Force. A messy, gritty street fight. The ships get close enough for a witness to see Chief, stripped to the waist and covered in blood, issuing orders to aft steering through a hatch from the fantail. Evans notices that a set of cruisers and several destroyers are cornering the escort carriers.

"Skipper gave me the most courageous order I've heard," said Hagen, "Commence firing on that cruiser, draw her fire on us." We

were now in a position where all the gallantry and guts in the world couldn't save us, but we figured that help for the carrier must be on the way, and every minute's delay might count."

Johnston, limping alone on one boiler, charges the Japanese column, successfully drawing each ship, one by one, towards her. Surrounded and dead in the water, Johnston's unbelievable three hours of heroics was over. As the Japanese bombard and sink her with 186 of her Sailors, an enemy captain salutes her out of respect. Chief, there for a moment helping his crew over the side and into boats, was never seen again.

During the Battle of Samar — one of three battles making up the Battle of Leyte Gulf — one tin can and its captain set itself apart. Evans was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for "his indomitable courage and brilliant professional skills" in

"unhesitatingly...turning back the enemy during a critical phase of action."

"The skipper was a fighting man from the soles of his broad feet to the ends of his straight black hair," said Hagen. "He was an Oklahoman and proud of the Indian blood he had in him. The Johnston was a fighting ship, but he was the heart and soul of her."

Taffy 3 stopped the Japanese Center Force from sailing to Leyte Gulf and harassing troop and supply ships for MacArthur's invasion of the Philippines. After the liberation of the Philippines, the Imperial Japanese Navy lacked the oil-producing resources to sail with such a large fleet for the rest of the war. Evans, his 186 shipmates lost aboard Johnston, and the 1,397 American Sailors of Taffy 3 lost on October 25, 1944 are remembered as the heroes in this turning point in the Battle for the Pacific.

MWR Presents

Metabolic Circuit with FITBOSS in the Hangar Bay
@ 0800-0900

SAILOR OF THE DAY HM3(SW) Jonathan N. Litvak



for November 4, 2017

CMC'S CORNER

Material Condition of the Ship:

When you discover missing parts, such as dogging wrenches or light covers, use the proper channels to order and replace your materials. "Borrowing" parts from other spaces, divisions, and departments doesn't fix the problem; there is still the deficiency of the missing part. Work through your RPPO to order what you need to have the entire ship materially ready.





WEEK IN REVIEW





R

Oct. 30 - Nov. 5

PHOTO LAYOUT BY MCSN FRANK JOSEPH SPECIALE



Comfort's Microbiology Lab Plays Key Role in Puerto Rico's Recovery

Story by MC2 Stephane Belcher

CARIBBEAN SEA — In the microbiology laboratory, located inside the laboratory division aboard the Military Sealift Command hospital ship USNS Comfort (T-AH 20), a lone laboratory technician who specializes in biomedical health sits in her scrubs and personal protective equipment, carefully swabbing bacteria taken from patient wounds into bright red, blood agar plates.

Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Jennifer Andrades Karl, from Naval Medical Center Portsmouth, and the only microbiology laboratory technician embarked on Comfort, isolates pathogenic organisms to diagnose bacteria and determine what medications would be appropriate to treat it.

"They're [surgeons and physicians] extracting extremely resistant organisms that don't like many antibiotics," said Karl. "Because it's a different environment, the doctors and laboratory technicians have to decide what antibiotic and what treatments are going to be best."

Many of the bacteria samples Karl grows are taken from body fluids or from wounds during surgery.

"The patients we've received already have infections which are determined to be multiresistant to common antibiotics," said Lt. Cmdr. David Koch, a laboratory scientist from Naval Medical Center Portsmouth and a member of the Infection Control Committee aboard Comfort. "So the docs have done a great job in identifying that early and allowing us to use different therapies to combat that."

Biomedical health technicians fight a constant battle everywhere and every day, especially with patients living in nursing homes and those who have multiple chronic illnesses.

"Unfortunately, bacteria and other pathogens are smart and they always find a way to survive and beat the great antibiotics already developed," said Koch.

Comfort has processed 213 cultures in

the microbiology laboratory and 12,333 laboratory tests total since arriving in Puerto Rico.

"We would very much like to provide as much help, as much care to the people of Puerto Rico as we can," said Koch. "So long as we're here, we stand ready to assist."

Comfort is a seagoing medical treatment facility that currently has more than 800 personnel embarked for the Puerto Rico mission including Navy medical and support staff assembled from 22 commands, as well as over 70 civil service mariners.

The Department of Defense is supporting the Federal Emergency Management Agency, which coordinates all federal assistance requested by the government of Puerto Rico to help those affected by Hurricane Maria.

Comfort's primary mission is to provide an afloat, mobile, acute surgical medical facility to the U.S. military that is flexible, capable and uniquely adaptable to support expeditionary warfare. Comfort's secondary mission is to provide full hospital services to support U.S. disaster relief and humanitarian operations worldwide.



HM3 Jennifer Andrades Karl prepares an agar plate to diagnose bacteria in the ship's laboratory aboard the MSC hospital ship USNS Comfort (T-AH 20). (Photo by MC2 Stephane Belcher)

Idea Pitch



Sunday Nov. 19th
1930 - FCPOA Mess

SECNAV is looking for submissions NLT 31 JAN for the 2017 awards. This pitch is your opportunity to voice innovative processes or technologies. Open to all.

For more info see SECNAVINST 5305.6 SECNAV 5305/3 (Oct 2016)
Questions?

Contact CTF-70 Innovation Office

CTF70.INNOVATION@CTF70.NAVY.MIL

- Submit your ideas via GipperNet (Project Athena) -



Burn Bags Do's and Don'ts



Do store classified material in approved burn bags.

Do record POC, space number, date and contact information on outside of bag.

Do not use burn bags as trash bags.

Do not dispose of burn bags in dumpsters.

WANT TO RECORD A VETERAN'S DAY SHOUT OUT FOR YOUR HOMETOWN RADIO?

STOP BY GRAPHICS MEDIA PRINT SHOP
DURING NORMAL WORKING HOURS OF
OPERATION (0900-1130, 1230-1600)
AND TELL THE SAILOR AT THE FRONT
DESK YOU WANT TO RECORD A SHOUT
OUT. IT'S AS EASY AS MAKING A PHONE
CALL! STOP DOWN BY 6 NOV TO RECORD
YOUR SHOUT OUT!



Today In Naval History

November 5

1775 — Commodore Esek Hopkins is appointed Commander in Chief of the Continental Navy. Early in 1778, he is dismissed from his position due to dissatisfaction with his service but remains popular in his local community, serving in the Rhode Island legislature.

1915 — Lt. Cmdr. Henry C. Mustin, in an AB-2 flying boat, makes the first underway catapult launch from a ship, USS North Carolina (ACR 12), at Pensacola Bay, Fla. This experimental work leads to the use of catapults on battleships and cruisers through World War II and to the steam catapults on present-day aircraft carriers.

1917 — While escorting a convoy en route to Brest, France, USS Alcedo (SP 166) is torpedoed and sunk by the German submarine UC-71. Twenty-one crewmembers are lost with the ship.

1944 — Aircraft from USS Essex (CV 9), as part of Vice Adm. John S. McCain's Task Force 38's two-day carrier strikes in the Philippines, sink the Japanese cruiser Nachi in Manila Bay.

1945 — Ensign Jake C. West, embarked with VF-51 on board USS Wake Island (CVE 65) for carrier qualifications with the FR-1 aircraft, loses power on the forward radial engine shortly after taking off, forcing him to start his rear engine. Returning to his ship, he makes a successful landing, thus becoming the first jet landing on board an aircraft carrier.

Crossword

ACROSS

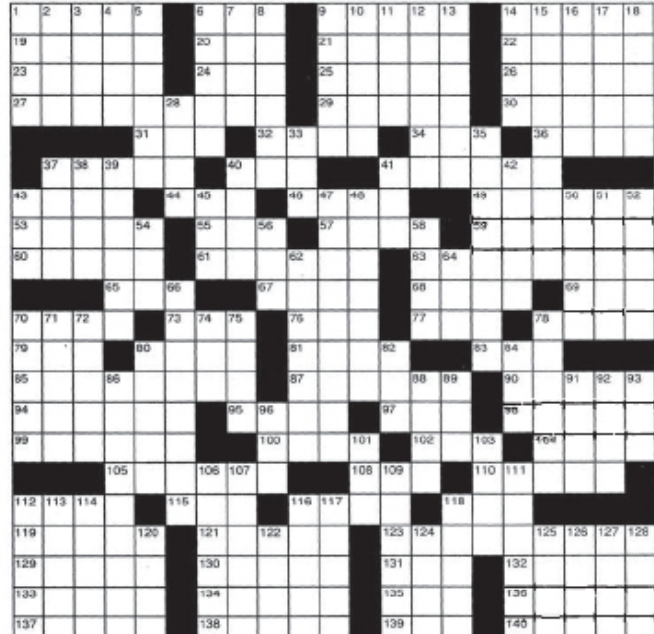
1 Locust bean
6 Boulder, e.g.
9 Guido's love
14 Emotionally detached
19 Elsewhere: Lat.
20 "Xanadu" gp.
21 Shoestring theater
22 Filthy ___ (money, pejoratively)
23 Toughen
24 Echolocating tier
25 Leave undisturbed
26 Exhaust
27 Major successor
29 Plane: Fr.
30 Like a Mr. Universe contestant
31 Posture
32 Glaucus's beloved
34 Eyewash
36 Laura and Quayle
37 "Crocodile Rock" man John
40 Wind dir.
41 Never put on
43 Beast's abode
44 Important time in history
46 ___ as good as

DOWN

1 Hint of a hint
9 Hester of "The Scarlet Letter"
100 Fit for service
102 Fearless pilot
104 Placard
105 Bury
108 Diego or Fernando
110 Feminist Friedan
112 Practice with a pugilist
115 Home of "West-world"
116 Something to reef or luff
118 Sci-fi writer Starlin
119 Sponsor of the NFL Rookie of the Year award
121 Like Adeline
123 Tartan
129 Swashbuckling Flynn
130 Former fashion leather source
131 Admiring cry
132 "Bonanza" star Greene
133 School for élèves
134 Like slugs and okra
135 Mandela's land: abbr.
136 In reserve
137 Units of force

Trigonometry ratios
139 Election add-on
140 Slangy agreements

Channel
40 Neck section
41 McHale's org.
42 Meat carver's target
43 Spanish article
45 Bay ___
47 Back-to-school night, e.g.
48 Orager or kiang
50 Moves about
51 Greens' features
52 Indo-European
54 P.O. course
56 Unconjugated verb form: abbr.
58 Naval heads: abbr.
62 Tony winner Carroll
64 Bad newspaper, slangily
66 Cut items
70 "Bristol ___" (1961 Dovells hit)
71 Shady recess
72 Cabbage variety
74 Exalted poem
75 He beat Maris's record in '98
78 Be persistent
80 Wilson of "The Office"
82 Draft org.
84 Gobble up
86 Tootsie cushioner
88 ___ Old Cowhand
89 Computer exit: abbr.
91 Huff
92 Like challah
93 Lobster's leg count
96 Cribbage card
101 Limerick opener
103 "Desire Under the Elms" character
106 Become fixated
107 Kipling boy
109 Bill Clinton's number-two guy
111 Take on help
112 Expedite
113 Kovacs character Doveltonis
114 Item worn in a home ec class
116 "Come up and ___ sometime"
117 Legal eagles: abbr.
118 Composer Franz
120 Bits of land in a mer
122 Moran or O'Brien
124 Disappoint the fans
125 "M. Butterfly" star John
126 "Carmen" solo
127 Crawl
128 These dot Peppermint Patty's report card



Movies

Movies play on a loop starting at 0800. Movies will be secured during GQ on Tuesday and Thursday at 1800.

Channel 3

OOO Awaiting Repairs

Channel 4

08/22	Think Like a Man Too
10/00	Delivery Man
12/02	Girls Trip
14/04	The Goonies
16/06	Annabelle: Creation

Channel 5

08/01	The Glass Castle
11/04	The Dark Tower
14	All Eyez on Me
17	The Hitman's Bodyguard
22	National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation

Sundays are all requests all day. Check out our movie catalog on the Gippernet: GM/SITE TV and send your request to movierequests@cvn76.navy.mil no later than Thursday @ 1900.

Site TV

Channel 6: Victory at Sea/Health PSA-Emergency Contraception/HIV and Me/Health PSA-Implants/3M Hazmat Spot

Channel 7: Hellcat News/Health PSA-Condoms/Episode 1-CBRN/3M Spot/Health PSA-Fertility Awareness

AFN Sports Listing

0430: College Football — Clemson @ NC State

1000: UFC 217 Prelims — Bisping vs. St. Pierre

1100: UFC 217 — Bisping vs. St. Pierre

1600: College Football — Oklahoma @ Oklahoma State

**Direct-to-Sailor programming is scheduled by AFN and is subject to change at AFN discretion.*