



*** USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT ***

ROUGH RIDER

DECEMBER 15, 2019

TIGHTROPE

TR HEADS HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

A CURIOUS
MIND

7

CHILLIN' WITH
A. CORONA

|

GOING
HOME

TR Contents

On the Cover

Photo by AN D.J. Schwartz

CO's Holiday Message

CAPT Crozier shares his holiday message with the crew

3

4

A Curious Mind

Psych Boss shares his fascination with the human mind

6

8

Home for Holidays

Sailors share the importance of the holiday season and the sacrifices they make

10

Week in Review

Highlighted photos from TR's Media Department

Chillin' with A. Corona

AGC Robin Day's journey from a difficult past reveals a resilient spirit

Staff

COMMANDING OFFICER
CAPT Brett Crozier

EXECUTIVE OFFICER
CAPT Pete Riebe

COMMAND MASTER CHIEF
OSCM Michael Hackley

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER
LCDR Julie Holland

ASSISTANT PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER
LT Caleb Pavlus

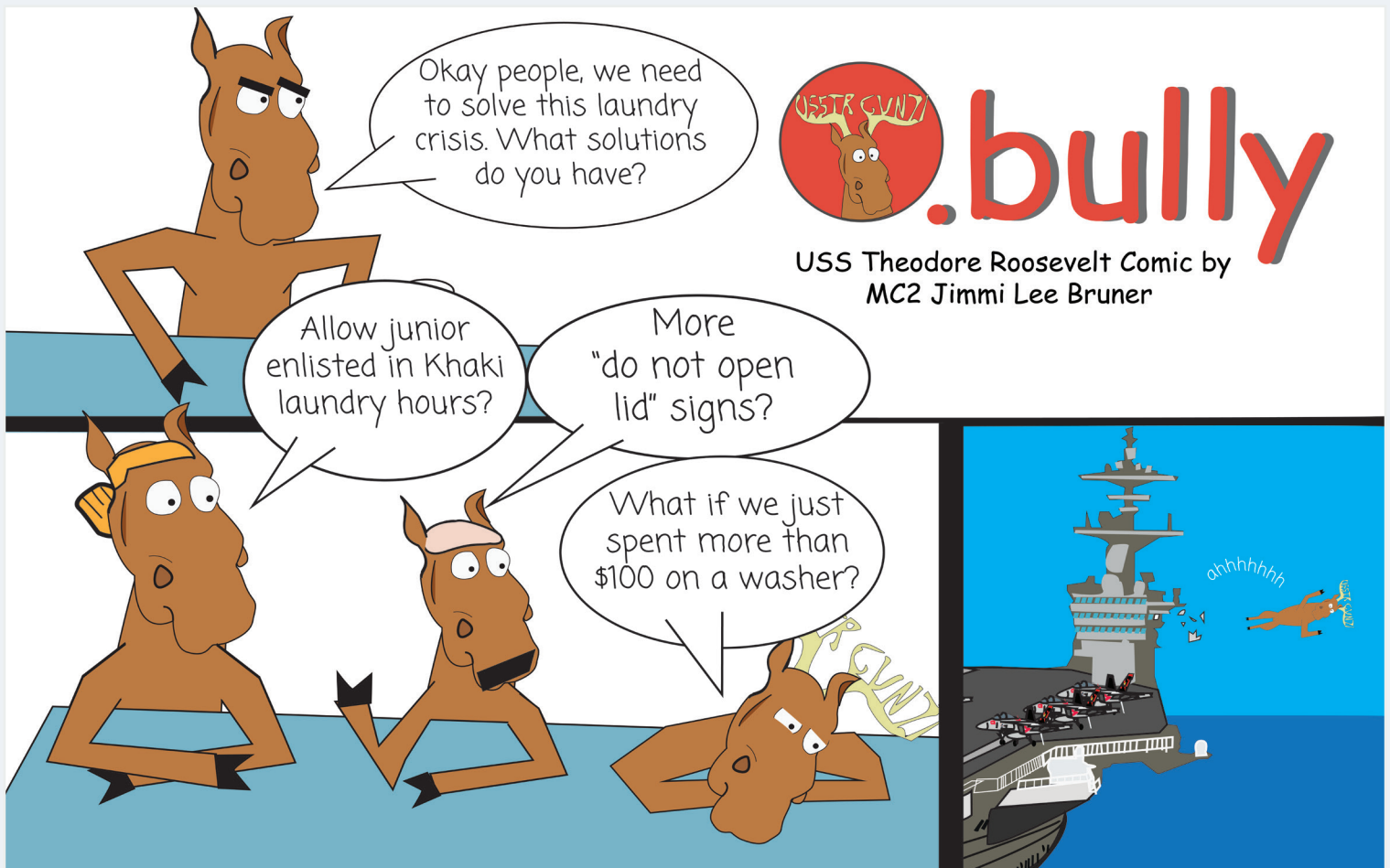
SENIOR EDITOR
MCC Chris Blachly

EDITORS
MC1 Chris Cavagnaro
MC2 Pyoung K. Yi
MC3 Terence DeLeon Guerrero

ROUGH RIDER CONTRIBUTORS
MC2 Jimmi Lee Bruner
MC2 Alex Corona
MCSN Kaylianna Genier
MCSN Olympia O. McCoy
AN D.J. Schwartz

COMMAND OMBUDSMAN
cvn71ombudsman@gmail.com

The Rough Rider is an authorized publication for the crew of USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71). Contents herein are not necessarily the views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government, Department of Defense, Department of the Navy or the Commanding Officer of TR. All items for publication in The Rough Rider must be submitted to the editor no later than three days prior to publication. Do you have a story you'd like to see in the Rough Rider? Contact the Media Department at J-Dial 5940 or stop by 3-180-0-Q. CHECK US OUT ONLINE • about.me/ussTheodoreRoosevelt • @TheRealCVN71



Rough Riders,



As you reflect on the events of 2019, you should be proud of all we've accomplished. Through your hard work and dedication, each of you contributed significantly to the success of the TR team. We are ready for any fight, and ready to operate anywhere the nation sends us in the coming year.

We have asked much of you, and I recognize our high operational tempo can take a toll on both you and your families. We spent several months at sea this year, and many birthdays, anniversaries, and holidays were missed. Please let your families know how much I appreciate their sacrifice, and that our Navy and our nation are stronger thanks to their efforts.

During the next weeks, please take some well-deserved time to rest, recharge, and spend time with your family and friends. As you celebrate Christmas and the Holidays, remember all the hard work it took to get us here, and how important it is that we stay ready for whatever comes next. Enjoy your time off, use the time wisely.

While this season is a source of joy for many, for some the holidays can be a source of stress and sadness. As good shipmates, it is important to take care of one another both on and off duty. If you are in need or know someone who is in need of help, just ask. Your one small act could save someone's life.

I wish you and your families a safe and festive holiday season. It is because of you that we have the greatest Navy in the world, and I look forward to seeing the TR team excel in 2020.

Happy Holidays, Merry Christmas.

*Captain Brett Crozier,
Commanding Officer, USS Theodore Roosevelt*



THIS WEEK IN REVIEW



1. The Military Sealift Command fleet replenishment oiler USNS Yukon (T-AO 202) sends fuel to TR.
Photo by MCSN Kaylianna Genier.

2. AZ2 Yourmajesty Norris files aircraft maintenance paperwork.
Photo by AN D.J. Schwartz.

3. An F/A-18F Super Hornet, assigned to the "Tomcatters" of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 154, takes off from the flight deck.
MCSN Alexander Williams.

4. ABH1 Antwan Robinson supervises Sailors during a freshwater wash down on the flight deck.
MCSN Olympia O. McCoy.



5. HT2 Valeria Duenez adjusts the flame on a torch in the pipe shop.
Photo by MC2 Alex Corona.

6. AO2 Maurice Rogersashe plays a percussion drum in the hangar bay.
Photo by MC2 Pyoung K. Yi.

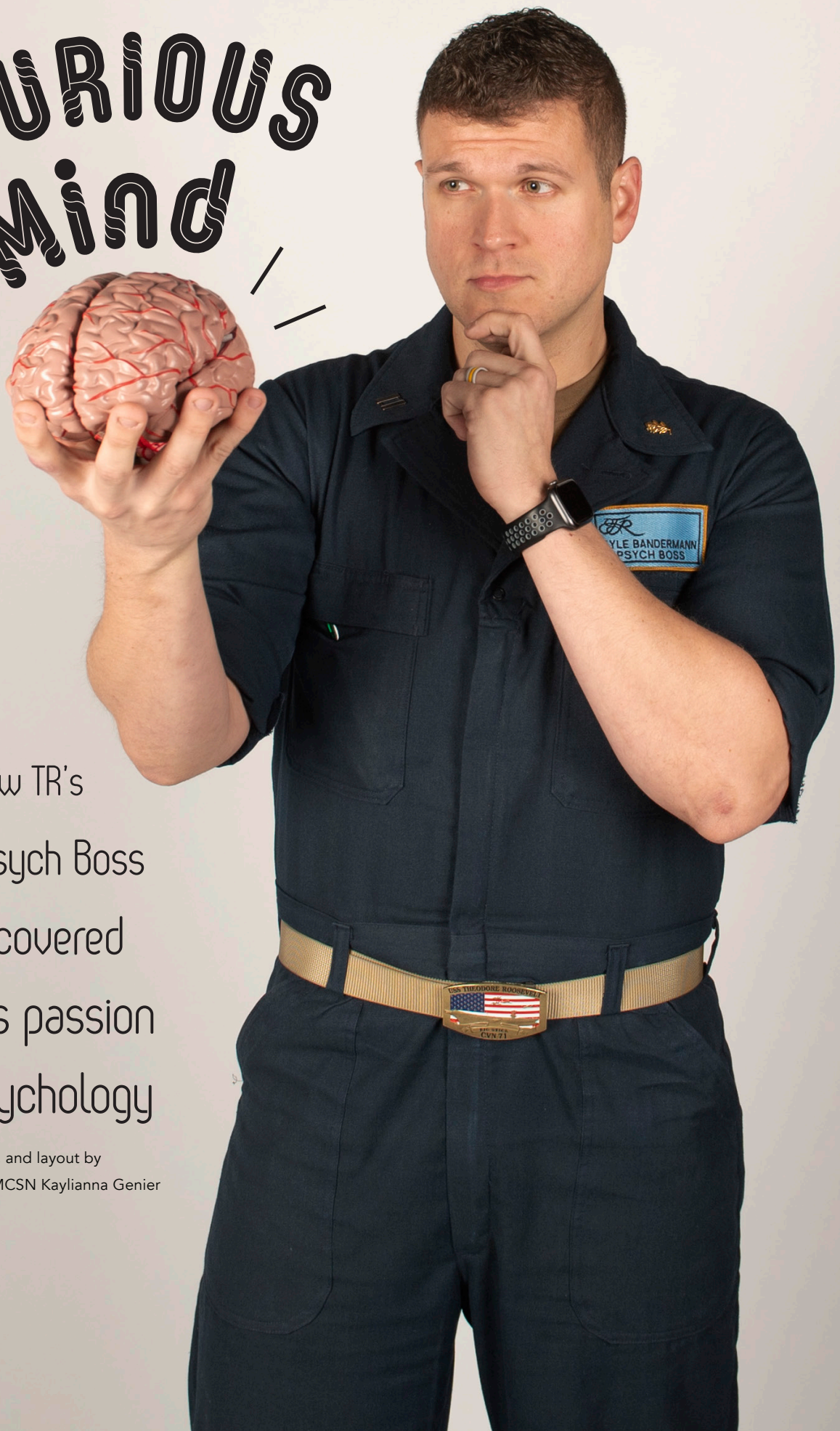
7. AN D.J. Schwartz observes flight operations on the flight deck.
Photo by MCSN Olympia O. McCoy.



A Curious Mind

How TR's
Psych Boss
discovered
his passion
for psychology

Story, photo, and layout by
MCSN Kaylianna Genier



Psychology. It's the study of mind, emotions, and behavior; it's about what makes every person unique and how their attitudes and responses differ. It's finding out what makes someone tick. Why does one person love the thrill of being on the flight deck while others prefer the comfort of their office?

Since he was a child, Lt. Kyle Bandermann, the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt's (CVN71) psychologist, was always curious about why and how his behaviors and attitudes differed from his friends.

"Having a good, tight-knit family, and seeing a lot of friends who didn't have that, I noticed a lot of differences," said Bandermann.

Those differences, according to Bandermann, weren't necessarily for better or worse; they were just differences.

"As a little kid, some of those differences look really nice," said Bandermann. "'Oh your mom and dad each have their own house? That's so cool!'"

As an adult, Bandermann looks back on these experiences in a different light.

"You learn that there's a lot more to it than that," said Bandermann. "Situations like, divorce for example, alter people's lives, and there's a lot of advantages and disadvantages to that."

"It's always fascinated me," said Bandermann. "Everyone grows up differently. They're influenced by different cultural values and it shapes their entire way of thinking."

Bandermann's fascination with people led him to study medicine. He began attending the University of Missouri as a pre-med student, majoring in psychology, although psychology wasn't his original plan.

"I knew that I wanted to be in the medical field," said Bandermann. "But I thought it would be as a more traditional type of medical professional: a pediatrician or a surgeon."

Throughout his time as an undergraduate, Bandermann's childhood fascination with the human mind developed and began to overshadow his physiology lessons.

"I was more interested in a person's behavioral aspect than their physical diagnosis," said Bandermann. "I want to know what makes them tick—but I never considered making it my career."

Bandermann's psychologist recommended he take his interests and make a future of it.

"She asked me if I had ever considered doing her job," said Bandermann. "I told her no, but she convinced me to go for it."

During his last year as an undergraduate, Bandermann changed his mind about becoming a traditional medical professional

"Everyone grows up differently. They're influenced by different cultural values and it shapes their entire way of thinking"

The way children view and think about things is very different than the reality of a situation.

On Bandermann's first trip outside of his home state of Missouri, he found his assumptions and the truth were two different things.

"I was six, and we were on a family trip to Disneyworld," said Bandermann. "On our way to Florida, we stopped in Kentucky, the blue-grass state, and when I got out of the car and stepped into the grass, I was really expecting the grass to be blue!"

Bandermann says assumptions are formed about a location because that individual is from somewhere else. The way a person is raised and the culture in which they're brought up influence how you think and act.

and decided to continue with psychology.

"I never thought I would end up in the Navy," said Bandermann. "I'm gay, and when I started my doctoral program, 'don't ask don't tell' was still in place."

When one of Bandermann's friends decided to join the military as a psychologist, around the same time "don't ask don't tell" was repealed, she enthused about her job and told Bandermann he was perfectly suited for it.

"The Navy was a natural fit," said Bandermann. "I did my residency at Walter Reed Medical Facility, and I commissioned after I completed my Ph.D."

Bandermann hasn't looked back since. He spends his time on TR enjoying the opportunity the Navy's given him to continue his passion for psychology.

CHILLIN WITH A. CORONA

MOMENTS LIKE THIS WITH
CHIEF ROBIN DAY

Story by MC2 Alex Corona

Photo and layout by MC3 Terence Deleon Guerrero

It's an overcast and cloudy day, Aug. 5, 2015, and Aerographer's Mate 1st Class Robin Day and her husband are driving in their car, quietly. He holds her hand, tightly. Day has battled thyroid cancer for the last several months. They are on their way for Day to receive a thyroidectomy, to have the cancer removed from her neck.

Suddenly, the phone rings, breaking the silence. Day receives a message from her command: she is going to put on anchors. The tension and anxiety is released from the car, if only for a moment. As they pull up to the hospital, the sobering reminder of what is waiting for her inside the building comes back to the surface.

Day was born in Connecticut, but never really had a place she called home. Her mother battled addiction

and her father, a truck driver, was gone for long periods of time, driving across the country regularly.

"Since dad was always gone and mom was doing her thing, it left my older sister and me to take care of our two younger siblings," said Day. "When my dad finally had enough they got a divorce when I was 13. By then, my sister was gone and it left just me to take care of my younger brother and sister."

A short time later, Day's father decided to take in her brother and sister, but it left her with nowhere to go.

"I had about enough of my mom at that point so I dropped out of high school and moved in with my boyfriend," said Day. "He was a few years older and had bought a house for me. We were both working and

partying hard for that age. At 17, I miscarried and it truly devastated me, and he didn't care. He was controlling and I felt suffocated. I knew I had to get out of there."

At 18, Day said her father rescued her from the situation, which enabled her to pick herself up and finally graduate from high school.

"After high school I decided to join the Navy," said Day. "I joined as an Information Systems Technician, but failed out of 'A' school. I had great leadership there and was able to re-class as an Aerographer's Mate."

Day said she enjoyed the outside-the-box thinking the rate allowed and the experience she gained at her first command.

"I was lucky and went to a really unique billet at Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Willow Grove, in Pennsylvania," said Day. "It was the first time I really learned who I was. I had my own money and freedom. My leadership immediately started to test me and it was extremely rewarding."

After her first command, Day went to "C" school where she learned weather forecasting and then chose to go to sea duty, declining orders to Germany. She relocated to San Diego where she joined the Strike Group Oceanography Team (SGOT) and, because of her top secret clearance, went on an independent augmentation to Seychelles, an island near Madagascar.

"When I wasn't supporting counter piracy missions I was playing Caribbean poker at the local casino, diving, or going on a run across the eight mile island," said Day. "When I got back to the states it was back to reality and onto [the aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72)] for their deployment around the world. On our way home I started to notice a decline in my energy and started gaining weight."

When Day completed her tour at SGOT, she transferred to Naval Special Warfare Command where she married the love of her life and was selected as the 2014 Sailor of the Year, but her health started to rapidly decline.

"I was there for two and half years dealing with various symptoms ranging from crippling fatigue to my hair falling out," said Day. "During all of this my future husband, Dale, was such an advocate for me. Without him, I don't know where I'd be today."

After speaking to various doctors over six months, Day finally saw an internal medicine specialist. When Day's medical team completed all the necessary tests, they found a lump of cancerous cells near her throat.

"They called for me to do a biopsy and I did it, but my husband and I still decided to go on our honeymoon," said Day. "We had already waited a year and needed to get our minds off of everything. On the way to the airport we got the call. It was confirmed. I had cancer."

Day said the hardest part of the trip wasn't trying to enjoy

their honeymoon; it was telling his family about her diagnosis.

"He had recently lost his brother to cancer," said Day. "His grandmother also passed away from cancer. It was just a scary time, but they were so supportive. He has an amazing family."

When Day and her husband returned from their honeymoon, it was time for her surgery.

Inside the hospital, Dale is told that Day's vocal chords could get nicked during the surgery and she could possibly never speak again. As hours pass, he hears obscenities being yelled from the hallway where his wife was supposed to be having her surgery.

Startled, he stood up. It was her that he heard screaming. She didn't lose her voice. The doctors didn't give her enough anesthesia, but she would be fine. They inform him later that the surgery was a success.

"After I got out of surgery and saw my husband I couldn't have been happier," said Day. "My chain of command brought me a plant and my personal qualification standard for chief season; I couldn't wait to get back."

During chief season, Day was undergoing radioactive iodine inflation treatment, which completely depleted her thyroid hormones. She lost her motor functions and began to see things that weren't there.

"All of this craziness was happening during chief season and it really brought out the best in me," said Day. "I was so averse to asking for help that it forced me to grow and push me out of my comfort zone."

After putting on her anchors, and almost a year after the surgery, Day received great news from the doctor.

"I got a clean scan in June 2016," said Day. "I was still dealing with some of the residual effects from the surgery. I was battling my weight and hormones and was told during sea duty screening that I could medically retire after only 13 years."

Day said after a long talk with her husband, it was clear she wasn't ready to retire. They agreed it would become the biggest regret of her life and she should push herself to get healthy again.

"I started to train every day and had a strict diet," said Day. "I was able to lose 30 pounds and with the right medication, finally felt healthy. I was able to come back to SGOT as leading chief petty officer of the metrology and oceanography division. It has been amazing to be a chief at sea."

Day feels through all of her experiences that every moment is truly something to treasure.

"When I think about all the things I had to go through to get here, I'm proud to have experienced all of it," said Day. "The pleasant and the horrific. It's about all of those moments. In the end, it's those defining moments that make us the most resilient."

HOME FOR HOLIDAYS

Story by AN D.J. Schwartz • Layout by MC3 Terence Deleon Guerrero

Sailors in the U.S. Navy are asked to make many sacrifices. Often times they run on little sleep and work long, hard days. From launching and recovering jets on the flight deck, to standing watch in the reactor far below the mess decks, the jobs Sailors are asked to do are frequently high stress, involve danger, and have a direct impact on an aircraft carrier's combat abilities. Added to the pressure of Sailors' everyday jobs is the strain that comes with spending time away from their families.

Sailors miss births of their children and birthdays of loved ones. They miss little league games and high school graduations. They also often miss holidays. In the last year alone, Sailors aboard TR have celebrated Independence Day and Thanksgiving at sea.

TR's supply department, fun boss, Morale, Welfare, and Recreation, and many other crew member organizations have done a tremendous job bringing the feeling of "home" to the ship during these holidays. Celebrating with our "sea family" takes some of the sting out of being away from home.

This holiday season is different. TR is coming home this week, and holiday spirit is starting to fill the air. Many Sailors are taking advantage of the designated leave periods to go home and visit family and friends the last few weeks of the year.

One of those sailors is Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Jennifer Melendez, from West Palm Beach, Florida. Melendez has been aboard TR for more than a year and has a 3-year-old daughter, Isabella, that lives with family in Quantico, Virginia.

"The thing I'm looking forward to most about going home is seeing my daughter," said Melendez. "She knows I'm coming and every time I'm on the phone with her she says, 'Mommy is coming home!'"

Melendez looks back fondly on holiday memories she shared with her mother when she was a child

and can't wait to continue those traditions with her daughter, Isabella.

"Every year, we would make sugar cookies and decorate them for Santa Claus," said Melendez. "I've already planned what decorations I'm going to use with Isabella."

Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Steve Sumlin, is from Riverside, California, and during his five years in the Navy, he has spent each holiday season either on duty, in training, or underway. Although he gets to go home to Los Angeles frequently, his visit this week holds special significance. It will be his first time home for the holidays since joining the Navy in 2014.

"I have two little brothers, one is twelve and the other is seven. They are the joy of my world and I can't wait to go home to see them," said Sumlin. "My family goes to the movies every year on Christmas Eve and my brothers usually fall asleep on the way home. My step dad stays up all night wrapping presents for the morning, so for the first time in years I am going to help."

As the operational tempo of TR's strike group has been high in recent months, this holiday season seems to have caught most by surprise.

"I have been so busy working that I didn't really think much about the holidays," said Sumlin, "I made my plans and then blocked it out so that I could stay focused. Now that this underway is coming to an end it hit me that I'm going home soon and it's so exciting."

For others, the thought of the holidays has provided a mental escape during the long days at sea.

"When I had a bad day, or got overwhelmed, I would look at the calendar and try to remember that no matter what, today was one day closer to going home," said Melendez. "Going home to see my daughter has been a light at the end of the tunnel."

Whether you are going home or staying in San Diego, Melendez has a message for you; "Happy holidays, shipmates!"





OS3 AUTUMN ALVAREZ

OPERATIONS SPECIALIST

IF I WEREN'T A SAILOR, I'D BE...

A FASHION DESIGNER FOR ATHLETIC WEAR

BEST CAREER ADVICE I'VE GOTTEN IS...

DO WHAT YOU LOVE AND LOVE IT ENOUGH YOU COULD DO IT FOR FREE

KIND OF WORK I'D DO FOR FREE...

GIVING PEOPLE PROPER ADVICE WHEN IT COMES TO WORKING OUT

WHO DO YOU ADMIRE AND WHY...

RANDALL PICH. A MULTIMILLIONAIRE ENTREPRENEUR FOR LVFT AND TOP THREADS

ON MY BUCKET LIST...

CLIFF DIVE, ROCK CLIMB, FLY A PLANE, AND LIVE OVERSEAS

IF I COULD LIVE ANYWHERE, IT WOULD BE...

ICELAND

BEFORE I DIE, I WANT TO...

BE SOMEONE OTHER PEOPLE ADMIRE

MA3 DANIELLE SANCHEZ

PATROLMAN

IF I WEREN'T A SAILOR, I'D BE...

A VETERINARIAN

BEST CAREER ADVICE I'VE GOTTEN...

THERE IS NOTHING NOBLE ABOUT BEING SUPERIOR TO OTHERS. TRUE NOBILITY IS BEING SUPERIOR TO YOUR FORMER SELF

KIND OF WORK I'D DO FOR FREE...

I'D RESCUE ALL THE INJURED OR SICK ANIMALS I COULD AND NURSE THEM BACK TO THEIR HIGHEST POTENTIAL OF HEALTH AND GIVE THEM TO A HAPPY, LOVING, FOREVER HOME

ON MY BUCKET LIST...

TO RUN A 5K OR A MARATHON ON EVERY CONTINENT. SO FAR, I'VE TACKLED NORTH AMERICA, ASIA, AND EUROPE!

IF I COULD LIVE ANYWHERE, IT WOULD BE...

LONDON, U.K. IT'S MY FAVORITE PLACE IN THE WORLD!

BEFORE I DIE, I WANT TO...

BACKPACK THROUGH EVERY CONTINENT



