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# WAKE ONE

HALLOWEEN EDITION



# MEET THE EDITORS

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# WHAT'S BUZZIN'?

What's your favorite Halloween tradition?



**CMC JAMES TIMMERMAN**

"I enjoy building haunted cookie houses with my kids."

"I like going pumpkin picking and getting to carve them with my family."

**ADAN ANDY MORALES**



"My favorite tradition is handing out candy to trick-or-treaters."

**RS3 SHYANN CAINE**

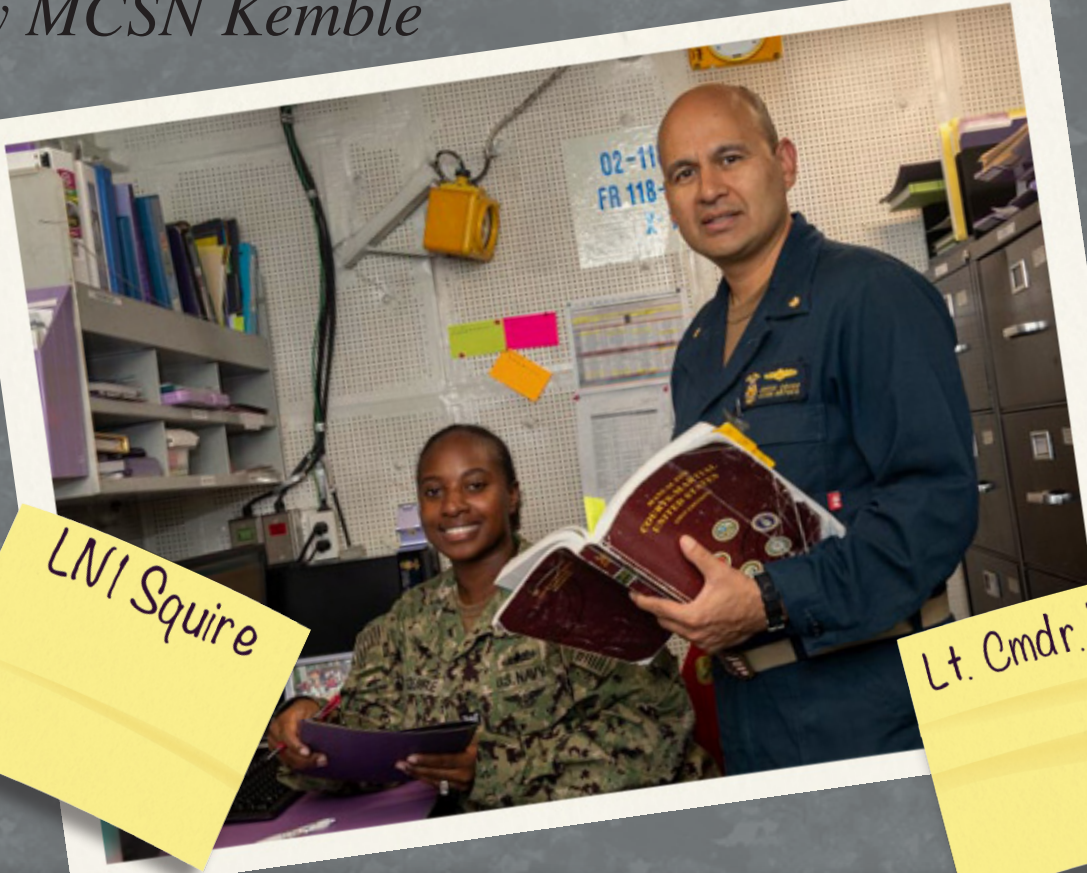


## LEGALMAN

The legalman rating was established in 1972 by Secretary of the Navy John Chafee in response to the Navy's growing need for paralegal services. Through an expansive knowledge of the inner workings of military law, legalmen can assist Sailors in a plethora of ways. Legalmen can prepare records of hearings, investigations and court-martials. They process appeals and prepare mast proceedings reports. If Sailors need help in filing claims or preparing personal legal forms, letter, and requests, they can ask their ship legalman.

# No Rest for Legal

By MCSN Kemble



LNI Squire

Lt. Cmdr. Yanez

Every Sailor requires assistance to prepare for their mission in different ways. Sailors often seek out legal to keep their home life stable while out to sea. No matter how hectic a ship can get, legal helps Sailors daily.

Lt. Cmdr. Josue Yanez and Legalman 1st Class Charis Squire compose the legal team aboard the amphibious assault ship USS Wasp (LHD 1). They assist with a variety of legal matters.

As a legalman, Squire's job is to help her shipmates and help uphold military law.

"[I love] being able to guide Sailors on their legal issues so they can get back to focusing on their jobs," Squire said.

Yanez, the meteorology and oceanography officer onboard Wasp, became Wasp's collateral duty legal officer after attending a legal training course that prepared him for this role.

"The real job for the legal team aboard the ship is to ensure the command can be well taken care of. We are always looking out for the best interest of the command," Yanez said.

Legalmen assist with documentation such as administrative remarks or page 13's, records for non-judicial punishments (NJP), and appeals. Yanez said the procedure for power of attorney is what often takes the most time. The process is intricate and requires ample time to assist the crew.

He recommends Sailors address any legal matters they require assistance with six months prior to deployment, to allow enough time for completion.

Yanez said a common misconception for legal is that they are lawyers, however they cannot perform all the same duties as one, just as how a nurse cannot perform all of the same tasks as a doctor. Sailors will seek legal's assistance for wills or advice, but with no attorney on board, the team must refer the Sailors to a judge advocate general (JAG) on base. Sailors must also be referred to a JAG when handling an issue that is a conflict of interest with the command, as legal works directly for the commanding officer.

"There's always going to be an uptake of Sailors we see before deployment, it's challenging while we go through these phases of deployment," Squire said.

When a Sailor enters the legal office after addressing their needs to the team, the Sailors role in the POA process is equally as important as Yanez and Squire's. Yanez said Sailors should know and trust who they want to take care of their bills or their children while they are out to sea.

"We are not giving away the power—it's the Sailor giving it to someone else. All we do is verify the information is accurate," said Yanez.

Not everyone enters Squire's office under the most favorable circumstance. Sailors may find themselves face-to-face with legal when they are charged with a potential violation of the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ). The people involved in a Sailor's NJP shift depending on the severity of the accusation, but the legal team always has a hand. Their role is determining if what a Sailor is being accused of violates the UCMJ for the command to move on with the Sailor's NJP.

Yanez and Squire said they appreciate seeing the fruits of their labor and how it helped each Sailor after all the time and effort dedicated to them.

Yanez said the end goal of an NJP is not to punish Sailors but to have them maintain safe and professional activities in a military environment that must be taken seriously.

"[I enjoy] seeing the change that can happen to Sailors and how they've improved over time," Yanez said.

Squire and Yanez keep the crew aboard Wasp safe and prepared to perform their missions, helping alleviate exterior concerns. They are a building block in ensuring Sailors' personal well-beings are situated so they are able to focus on their professional development and responsibilities.

On The



Deckplates  
Halloween Edition



# THE STORY BEHIND THE SECRET SQUIRRELS

By MC2 Amber Speer

Shades of blue envelop their surroundings as watchful eyes take in the horizon, ready for anything. Radars track contacts and send signals to the team below; their gaze is trained on blinking screens, covered with numbers and symbols. Suddenly an unidentified mark appears: five nautical miles out, inbound, port side, 20 knots.

The tactical action officer (TAO) gives the command to change course. From desk to desk, each Sailor shouts, relaying what they have heard. Bearings are tracked, gunmounts are manned and no threat remains unseen.

Information is a weapon if the wielder knows how to use it, and the crew of the amphibious assault ship USS Wasp (LHD 1) keeps their blades well sharpened.

On Oct. 7, 2023, Sailors watched the warfighting tactic instructors of the Surface and Mine Warfighting Development Center (SMWDC) embark Wasp, and they knew what was coming next: the surface warfare advanced technical training exercise, otherwise known as SWATT. For the next ten days, the Sailors of the operations, weapons and C5I departments would run drill after drill perfecting their responses and techniques.

“SWATT is one of the most advanced surface warfare tactical exercises and training you’ll get underway,” said Lt. Pat McDonough, an amphibious warfare tactics instructor. “It is the first time the [amphibious readiness group] ships are integrating, and it’s getting them ready for the different threats that are out there.”

SWATT is one of the many exercises Wasp must complete

before it is considered deployment-ready. After completing Basic Phase and board of inspection and survey assessments, Wasp entered the integrated phase of work-ups. Now, Wasp must coordinate every move they make with the San Antonio-class amphibious transport dock ship USS New York (LPD 21) and the Harpers Ferry-class dock landing ship USS Oak Hill (LSD 51) as part of their ARG.

However, some of the most critical parts of this mission happen behind locked doors in spaces lit only by blue bulbs and flashing screens. The room is split in half; surface to the right and air to the left, with the tactical action officer seated directly in the middle. No matter which side a Sailor is on, their job is not an easy one.

One such Sailor is Operations Specialist 2nd Class Tristan Sharkey, one of the air defense weapons coordinators. Part of Sharkey’s job is to coordinate directly with the TAO and the air missile defense coordinator (AMDC) regarding defense of the ship.

“Some of my duties involve launching the proper responses to intercept incoming missiles. I enjoy the excitement of having to adapt to each





scenario. The hardest part is adapting to new threats and multitasking. It's all about keeping your composure." Sharkey explained. "SWATT is a team effort, and everyone is involved in an essential way."

Unlike past inspections and training evolutions, the commands Sharkey gives are not simulated during SWATT. Real boats show up as contacts on radars, and those same remote-controlled boats are used as target practice.

The opportunity to practice firing on a real target excites the gunner's mates sitting behind complex machinery and live camera feed. They are the remote operate controllers, and this means everything to them. For the first time onboard Wasp, they get to see all their training put into practice and fire away.

"I'm keeping a look out for anything in the water and reporting it to the gun liaison officer who reports it to the tactical action officer," said Gunner's Mate 2nd Class Zack Lehman, remote operate controller of the mark 38 25mm machine gun. "I've only ever shot at the water; SWATT has given me the chance to shoot at something. I need to be proficient; I need to be accurate. My role is important to the defense of the ship, and I've gotten a lot of experience and knowledge from this."

The guns are not the only things being shot during these evolutions. While there is defense of the ship through force, information is also a key component to winning every battle.

The ship's nautical or otherwise photographic interpretation and examination (SNOOPIE) team and the visual information personnel (VIPER) team are called away several times a day during SWATT. Intelligence specialists and mass communication specialists hurry through the passageways, dragging cameras with them.

They position themselves at the top of the ship where their view of any adversary is unobscured, and their lenses can see for as many nautical miles as the weather permits. On the bridge, they listen intently to the calls from watch standers, frantically scribbling as much information as they can obtain and recording the scenario from start to finish no matter how long it takes or how hard the rain pours.

"They told us from the start: this is a no-fail mission," said Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Eric Moser. "We have time limits and very strict requirements for our products. We're either perfect or we're letting down the rest of the SWATT team. So, we strive for perfection."

All elements of SWATT are watched with a teacher's eye by the SMWDC team. Now is the time that feedback is most critical. As each Sailor develops proficiency in their job, their mistakes become lessons that hone their senses. And, while the instructors are there to grade, they're there to teach as well.

"SWATT is not a pass or fail exercise," McDonough said. "This is free training for the ships to get better: to look at their watch teams, their equipment—to look at their tactics and battle orders and see how they can improve."

As the intense days of SWATT passed by, the teams' responses to certain triggers became muscle memory for the crew. The long evolutions were familiar by their final days of training, and confidence coursed through each watch stander as it all came to an end.

Wasp continues to inch closer to deployment with each successful underway. The crew knows they must remain on the alert at all times. Their minds are the swords they sharpen and wield; they are the warfighters of what they consider to be the number one ship in the fleet.



# STAY SAFE

## DURING THE SEASON OF THE WITCH

### Beware of werewolves, goblins and ghouls...

Whether you have kids or you're going out on your own, don't forget Stranger Danger. Halloween is a night of masks and secrecy, so keep an eye out for suspicious behavior and stay safe.

### Who you gonna call?

If you plan on drinking, make sure you have a back up plan. Whether that means calling the Ghostbusters, your buddy or your chain of command, there's never a reason to get behind the wheel while under the influence.

### Love Potion No. 9

If you're going to be at a party, a bar or a club, keep your drink close at all times, and if you have to leave it alone either have someone you trust watch it or pour it out.

