

Sailors receive increased SGLI coverage

By Michael McLellan,
NAVPERSCOM Public Affairs

MILLINGTON, Tenn. (NWS) — The maximum coverage of Service Members' Group Life Insurance (SGLI) will increase to \$250,000 on April 1, as provided by the FY01 National Defense Authorization Act.

Servicemembers currently pay \$16 per month for \$200,000 coverage; that will increase to \$20 per month for \$250,000 coverage. No action is required by the service member for the increased coverage to become effective.

Maximum coverage will be afforded to all service members starting in April. Service mem-

bers who decline coverage or elect reduced coverage during this transition month will not be required to pay the April premium for full coverage. If the full premium is deducted from April's paycheck, the excess premium will be refunded.

Members who choose to decline or decrease coverage must complete and submit SGLV Form 8286 to their personnel office. If a member completes and submits SGLV Form 8286 on or after May 1 to reduce or decline coverage, the reduction will begin on the first day of the following month after the form is submitted.

The revised SGLV Form 8286

is available on the Department of Veterans Affairs web site www.insurance.va.gov April 1.

The increased coverage is only part of the good news. Financial counseling is now available through a financial planning agency, Ernst and Young, to help beneficiaries make wise financial decisions and develop a personal financial plan. The service is provided at no cost by the Department of Veteran's Affairs.

"One of the key benefits offered with SGLI is the free financial planning package that is now available to beneficiaries," said Mr. Michael Wardlaw, deputy director of the Casualty Assistance and Retired Activities Division

at Navy Personnel Command (NAVPERSCOM) in Millington, Tenn.

"Program beneficiaries will receive a brochure on this program in the event of a member's death, and will also be provided with an information kit prior to the initial meeting with Ernst and Young."

Wardlaw continued, "Another aspect of the program is that the cost of coverage will stay the same, in that cost per \$10,000 coverage will remain at its current level of \$.80."

Beneficiary election rules have not changed. While service members are not restricted in their election of beneficiaries, careful

consideration is recommended before designating a minor child as a beneficiary.

According to Wardlaw, "Each state has similar laws with some variations regarding children who are designated as beneficiaries. Before a Sailor makes a decision to leave money to a minor child, I would recommend that they contact their Navy Legal Service Office for advice."

Further details will be available in a forthcoming NAVADMIN. For more information on the SGLI program, please contact Sandy DuBois of NAVPERSCOM's Casualty Assistance Branch at (901) 874-4299/DSN 882.

Cooperative engagement successfully demonstrated at sea

By OASD Public Affairs

WASHINGTON (NWS) — The Navy announced March 6 that the results of a recently completed technical evaluation (TECHEVAL) indicate the Cooperative Engagement Capability (CEC) is on track to a successful Operational Evaluation (OPEVAL) in April and May of 2001.

The CEC system is intended to provide the capability for a warship to cooperatively engage targets by using data from other CEC-equipped ships, aircraft, and land-based sensors, even in a jamming environment.

Working in conjunction with individual ship, aircraft and shore systems, it also provides a common, consistent, and highly accurate air picture, allowing battle group defenses to act as one system. The networking of individual ship's weapons systems increases the range at which enemy and friendly contacts can be identified and engaged.

The TECHEVAL was conducted Feb. 9 to March 2 in two phases, the first off the

coast of Puerto Rico and the second off Wallops Island, Va. The tests included live missile firings and tracking exercises from some of the Navy's most technically advanced ships.

and systems engineering for the Program Executive Office, Theater Surface Combatants.

"The challenges we threw against CEC and the combat systems were tremendous,

“The robustness of CEC when augmenting the capabilities of the individual combat systems was again proven in TECHEVAL.”

Capt. Dan Busch
CEC Program Manager

"During TECHEVAL, we confirmed that CEC enables our ships to put ordnance on target under conditions that would otherwise be impossible," said Rear Adm. Kate Paige, director, theater air missile defense

and again, they proved themselves to be an awesome combination. I'm proud of the entire government/industry team. We're looking forward to OPEVAL."

"The robustness of CEC when augment-

ing the capabilities of the individual combat systems was again proven in TECHEVAL," added Capt. Dan Busch, CEC program manager. "One specific example occurred when the two most powerful jamming aircraft available in the United States attempted to simultaneously thwart the ships' radar and the CEC network. They failed. CEC is ready."

The testing featured units under the operational command of Rear Adm. Lewis W. Crenshaw Jr., Commander, Carrier Group 6. CEC-equipped ships participating were the guided missile cruisers USS Hue City (CG 66), USS Vicksburg (CG 69), USS Anzio (CG 68) and USS Cape St. George (CG 71); the amphibious assault ship USS Wasp (LHA 1) and the aircraft carrier USS John F. Kennedy (CV 67). Other units participating in the test were the guided missile destroyers USS Carney (DDG 64) and USS The Sullivans (DDG 68), and more than 24 aircraft.

More information about U.S. Navy ships and aircraft is available at <http://www.navy.mil> under "fact file."

Navy Diving and Salvage Center honored for supporting community

By CNET Public Affairs

PANAMA CITY, Fla. (NWS) — While the Naval Diving and Salvage Training Center's (NDSTC) primary mission is to train Sailors as highly qualified diving and salvage experts, the staff and students also step outside the gates to help their civilian neighbors.

The training command was honored recently for its selfless support of the community, and has been selected as one of two organizations to receive the Florida State Education Commissioner's Business Recognition Award for Bay County.

Annually, the Florida

Education Foundation and Florida Department of Education honors businesses throughout the state that have shown an outstanding commitment to improving education by partnering with schools in their communities.

Since 1997, the Sailors at the Panama City, Fla. training center have partnered with the Margaret K. Lewis School for Exceptional Children, volunteered at events including playground renovations and landscaping projects, and assisted at the school's annual fall festival. The training command also instituted a student of the month program, recognizing the outstanding students selected by the

school's staff.

"Each class has a student of the month and an overall student is selected for the school," explained Electrician's Mate Chief (SS) Todd Leeth, the training command's community service and outreach coordinator, also an instructor at the dive facility.

"The Dive and Salvage Training Center presents each student with a certificate and the overall winner for the school receives a special plaque from the training center."

More than 50 Sailors from the Navy dive school have volunteered over 2,500 man-hours, supporting many ongoing programs with the school including

Special Olympics, school festivals, and a special needs bowling program.

NDSTC has also been honored by the Navy for their community activism. Earlier this year they were selected as the winner of the 2000 Health, Safety and Fitness Community Service and Outreach Flagship Award in the Small Shore Installation category.

"We have a commitment to build Navy divers, but it is equally as important to develop and build citizens of the community, thus promoting tradition and Core Values within our Sailors," said Cmdr. Mark Helmkamp, commanding officer at the train-

ing facility.

According to Leeth, the Navy's culture of fitness makes supporting health and fitness programs for America's youth a natural progression.

"Health, safety and fitness is an integral part of our diving program, so it is inherent for us to instill this quality to our youth," explained Leeth. "Not only do we strive to improve our children, we make it a goal through our outreach programs in the community to develop our future leaders with the same qualities."

More information about the Naval Diving and Salvage Training Center can be found at <http://www.cnet.navy.mil/ndstc>.

USS Lake Erie carries Theater-wide Ballistic Missile Defense mission to Central Pacific

By Lt. J.g. Ryan Ona
USS Lake Erie Public Affairs

In February, USS Lake Erie (CG 70) transited to the middle Pacific to conduct exercises in support of the Navy Theater Wide (NTW) program.

In support of the Theater Ballistic Missile Defense program, Lake Erie participated in the Theater Missile Defense Critical Measurements Defense Program 3B (TCMP-3B) test event at the Kwajalein Missile Range in the Marshall Islands this past month.

During the event, Lake Erie was near the Kwajalein Atoll, in a TBMD intercept launch position. Using the LINEBACKER program, Lake Erie successfully acquired, tracked, and performed a simulated engagement of the TCMP-3B flight test vehicle launched from Wake Island. This first test of the joint interoperability of Navy AEGIS and Army PATRIOT systems was a major step forward in achieving a viable defense against theater ballistic missiles.

One year ago, USS Lake Erie (CG 70) was designated as the Navy's test ship for Theater Ballistic Missile Defense. The AEGIS Lightweight Exoatmospheric Projectile (LEAP) Intercept (ALI) system, a baseline upgrade to the LINEBACKER Area Missile Defense system, was installed to support the testing of Theater-wide Ballistic Missile Defense (TBMD). ALI combines the capabilities of tracking exoatmospheric ballistic missiles and engaging them with intercept missiles fired from the ship.

Earlier this year, Lake Erie participated in the Flight Test Round 1A (FTR-1A) and conducted a successful test of the ALI system and the newly developed, exoatmospheric Standard Missile-3 (SM-3) at the Pacific Missile Range Facility (PMRF), Kauai, Hawaii.

While in the region Lake Erie had the opportunity to visit Majuro Atoll, the capital of the Marshall Islands. During

World War II, the Marshalls served as the eastern defensive perimeter for the Japanese military forces in the Central Pacific. After heavy fighting in the Marshalls, the islands were taken over by the U.S. and made a United Nations Strategic Trust in 1947. In 1986, the Marshall Islands were transformed into a self-governing democracy in free association with the United States.

The visit allowed Lake Erie Sailors to participate in a number of activities. Lake Erie Sailors participated in a major community relation's effort, assisting with a local high school construction project.

Many crewmembers relaxed on the beaches of Majuro, while others went fishing around the plentiful coral atoll.

Scuba diving and snorkeling enthusiasts were able to dive around the healthy coral reefs and the abundant supply of ship and plane wrecks in the atoll lagoon.

Lake Erie's basketball team played a game against the Republic of the Marshall Islands' national team, in a game broadcast on the radio (in Marshallese) and widely followed by the local populace. The Lake Erie Blaze won by two points before a full house.

Lake Erie hosted a reception for American and Marshallese government and community leaders on Feb. 24. The RMI Foreign Minister, Alvin Jacklick, and the American Ambassador to the Marshalls, the Honorable Michael J. Senko, were the senior officials present.

Lake Erie was the first U.S. Navy ship to visit Majuro Atoll in 10 years.

At the conclusion of this historic port visit, Ambassador Senko expressed his appreciation for a successful port visit that advanced U.S.-RMI relations:

"[I want to thank] the crew of the USS Lake Erie for another job well done in the middle Pacific," said Senko. "Your impressive ship and crew has made us proud...The Sailors of Lake Erie could not have done more to show the U.S. flag in a favorable light."

NEMPMU-6 names Bergeron Sailor of the Quarter

By Lt. Deidra M. Ramos
NEPMU-6 Public Affairs

The Sailor of the Quarter (SOQ), fourth quarter 2000, for Navy Environmental and Preventive Medicine Unit 6 (NEPMU6), Pearl Harbor is Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Donald R. Bergeron. A Baton Rouge, La., native, Bergeron joined the Navy in July 1998 and is currently assigned to the administrative department.

"I'm proud and honored to be selected as NEPMU6's SOQ," said Bergeron.

He believes "military bearing and maintaining professionalism in your daily routine are a must."

Although he was nominated a few times before and not selected, he stated, "It was discouraging, but I used that energy to work harder and accomplish more to have a more competitive package."

Bergeron works as an Administrative Assistant with a myriad of administrati-



Hospital Corpsman
3rd Class Donald R.
Bergeron

ties. As the command pass liaison representative he serves as an invaluable link between NEPMU6 and PSD, ensuring all unit personnel needs are met.

He processes over 700 Gateguard and Defense Messaging System (DMS) Naval messages, Plan of the Week, and incoming/outgoing official correspondence.

In addition, he provides critical training to command watchstanders on the operation of DMS for PQS and instituting cross-training among staff personnel.

He developed Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for downloading, sending and reading Naval messages and was a key player in the development of an SOP for processing Emergency Leave Requests.

His collateral duties include assistant command sponsor coordinator, assistant recycling petty officer, awards board member, pass liaison representative, and mobile medical augmentation readiness team (MMART) Member.

He has one personal award, the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal which he received recently for professional achievement from February to June 2000.

"Although I'm honored to be SOQ, I feel some pressure because I think my peers will be watching me with scrutiny," said Bergeron. But I intend to do the best job that I can and be a role model at all times."

Hopper Sailors chaperone Waipahu students

By Charlie Aldinger
Public Relations Director

Academy docent and retired Capt. Cecil Sharp was giving a tour this week to a group of seventh graders from Waipahu Intermediate School.

Instead of the usual parent chaperones, the group had six Navy enlisted Sailors from USS Hopper (DDG 70) as their escorts.

When Sharp asked the leader how many kids were in the group, the Sailor turned around and commanded, "Sound Off!"

And one-by-one the youngsters, all-smiles, called out names and numbers until all had been accounted for.

"It was the best behaved group of teenagers I've ever had the pleasure of touring through the Academy," said

Sharp.

Academy DOE liaison Dorothy Oshiro said the Navy participation is part of their "Weed and Seed" program which partners local schools with military ships and stations.

In some cases, parents are not able to take off work to escort children on school field trips. The Navy's help ensures the children don't miss out.