

FLEET FOCUS

Bluestein relieves Wittman as Commander, Patrol Squadron 47



Fleet Imaging Center Pacific photo

Cmdr. Keith A. Bluestein salutes Cmdr. Gregory J. Wittman upon properly relieving him as Commander, Patrol Squadron 47 in a ceremony held June 21 at Hangar 4, Marine Corps Base Hawaii, Kaneohe.

By Lt. David G. Belew
VP-47 Public Affairs Officer

Commander Keith A. Bluestein relieved Cmdr. Gregory J. Wittman as Commander, Patrol Squadron 47 in a ceremony held June 21 at Hangar 4, Marine Corps Base Hawaii - Kaneohe.

Cmdr. Wittman joined VP-47 as executive officer in June 1999 and assumed command June 30, 2000. He graduated from the United States Naval Academy in May 1982 with a bachelor of science degree in resource management.

Cmdr. Wittman served his initial deployed tour with Patrol Squadron 49 before being transferred in 1989 to be the assistant for officer accession programs on the staff of the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (OP-01).

Cmdr. Wittman served as the communications officer aboard USS America (CV-66) from August 1991 to April 1994. During his department head tour with Patrol

Squadron One, he served as administrative officer and operations officer, deploying to Japan and relocating the squadron to Whidbey Island, Wash.

In March 1996 he reported to Sicily where he assumed duties as officer-in-charge, Tactical Support Center, Sigonella, Sicily, and Commander, Maritime Air Control Authority, Sigonella.

Cmdr. Wittman reported to the Naval War College in March 1998, graduating a year later with a master of arts degree in national security and strategic studies.

Adm. Brooks was the guest speaker at the ceremony and said, "VP-47 completed 98.5 percent of missions during their recent deployment. This is unheard of, not only in the VP community, but also in any community that I have served with. Cmdr. Wittman's exceptional leadership as commanding officer of VP-47 contributed directly to the squadron's outstanding achievements." Cmdr.

Wittman will depart Marine Corps Base Hawaii for duty at the Pentagon in Washington, D.C.

Cmdr. Bluestein graduated from Arizona State University in 1983 and was commissioned from Aviation Officer Candidate School (AOCS) in 1984. He has served with numerous patrol squadrons and as assistant navigator aboard the USS Ranger. Cmdr. Bluestein transferred to the Bureau of Naval Personnel in 1993 where he served as the special assistant for line selection boards until 1995.

Prior to reporting as executive officer of Patrol Squadron 47, he served on the staff of the Chief of Naval Operations' Office of Special Programs (N-894) as a program requirements officer and the branch head for access control. He holds a master's degree in business administration from San Jose State University. Cmdr. Bluestein assumed his assignment as executive officer in June 2000.

Skinny Dragons continue winning streak with 'Isbell Trophy'

By Lt. Mark Brummett
VP-4 Public Affairs Officer

After winning the Battle 'E' award for maritime patrol and reconnaissance squadrons in the Pacific Fleet, Patrol Squadron Four (VP4) has continued its winning streak with the presentation of the Capt. Arnold Jay Isbell Trophy for calendar year 2000.

Sponsored by the manufacturer of the P-3 Orion, Lockheed Martin, the Isbell Trophy was presented during a special ceremony in the Skinny Dragon hangar at Marine Corps Base Hawaii, Kaneohe. Ret. Navy Capt. Tom Sprague, the head of the P-3 business development program, presented the award for Lockheed Martin.

Given for outstanding anti-submarine warfare (ASW) accomplishments, the award is given to each patrol squadron, sea control squadron and helicopter anti-submarine squadron. Each Atlantic and Pacific fleet commander submits a list of nominees to the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) who renders the final decision. Squadrons are judged by their degree of professionalism and effectiveness during the previous year.

The Skinny Dragons demonstrated their merit "on-station" while supporting Seventh Fleet operations during a recent six-month deployment. Maintaining de-

ployment sites in Misawa and Okinawa, Japan, VP-4 flew over 4,800 hours and conducted 27 multi-national exercises. The area of responsibility assigned to VP-4 was a vast amount of ocean, including parts of Alaska, China, Thailand and as far south as Australia.

One of the most significant factors that contributed in the selection of the Skinny Dragons as the Isbell Trophy recipient was the real-world ASW actions taken throughout the deployment.

Six submarine prosecutions were conducted in the six-months that VP-4 was stationed in the Western Pacific, including diesel and nuclear powered vessels. These prosecutions further highlighted the role of the P-3 Orion as the Navy's leading ASW platform.

"The amount of training that is involved in work-ups before deployment and the commitment every member of the squadron has during deployment is so immense. To have the opportunity to use what you have learned against a real world submarine in an unfriendly environment gives you a great sense of pride in your profession," stated Chief Aviation Technician Bret Thrailkill.

The trophy is named for Capt. Arnold Jay Isbell who served in the Navy during the first half of the century and World War II. After earning his "wings of gold" at the



File photo

AW1 Timothy Gonsalves and AW2 Tanya Castro accept the Isbell Trophy on behalf of VP-4 from Ret. Navy Capt. Tom Sprague of the Lockheed Martin Corporation. As members of CAC-9, Gonsalves and Castro are acoustic sensor operators who played a valuable role in the ASW success the squadron had in the past year. Joining Skinny Dragon Commanding Officer Cmdr. Doug Yancey are Tom Weatherall (far left) and Tim Hodges (far right), the P-3 technical representative manager at Kaneohe Bay.

Pensacola Naval Flight School, Capt. Isbell later became the commanding officer of Patrol Squadron 54. During World War II, as commander of the escort carrier USS Card, the task group was responsible for the sinking of 10 German U-boats.

Capt. Isbell was killed in April 1945 in a Japanese air attack while waiting to assume the command of the USS Yorktown. In his honor, the destroyer (DD 869) was named the USS Isbell later that same year and saw action during the Korean War.

USS Russell (DDG 59) changes hands



Lt. j.g. Jason Troupe photo

Commodore Mark Buzby, Commander, Destroyer Squadron 31, presents Cmdr. Robert Winsor with the Meritorious Service Medal for his achievements during his tour aboard USS Russell (DDG 59).

By Lt. j.g. Jason Troupe
USS Russell Public Affairs

After successfully fighting off terrorists, hostile warships, inbound cruise missiles and floating mines (all simulated as part of Russell's Final Evaluation Problem), Cmdr. Robert W. Winsor, Jr., turned over the reins of USS Russell (DDG 59) to Cmdr. Hank Miranda in true warrior fashion at sea on June 21. Commodore Mark Buzby, Commander, Destroyer Squadron 31 ably made the transition from Senior Inspector to principal speaker.

Commodore Buzby, after congratulating Russell's crew for their incredible FEP performance, spoke of the "scant five percent of men who go to sea who truly have the sea in their veins", men such as Cmdr. Winsor.

The commodore then proceeded to recognize that as much as we celebrate

Cmdr. Winsor's successful tenure as commanding officer (who will become the head of Junior Officer Detailing at BUPERS), the day is really for Cmdr. Miranda, who will lead Russell on his tenth Arabian Gulf Deployment.

Cmdr. Miranda comes to Russell from the Surface Warfare Directorate of the Chief of Naval Operation's Staff. He has served on the USS Francis Hammond (FF 1067), USS McCluskey (FFG 41), COMDESRON 15 and USS Laboon (DDG 58). Ashore he has served as a Junior Officer Detailer, aide to Commander, Naval Surface Group, Western Pacific, and as a student at both the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey and the Inter-American Defense College. His wife Shauneen, a Commander in the Naval Nurse Corps, will be assigned to Medical Clinic, Pearl Harbor.

PHNSY & IMF 2001 wins Collaborative Project Excellence Award

By PHNSY & IMF Public Affairs

Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard and Intermediate Maintenance Facility (PHNSY & IMF) shared honors with some world-renowned companies last month when the command was selected as a recipient of the 2001 Collaborative Project Excellence Award from the National Center for Manufacturing Sciences (NCMS). The center gave the awards to organizations participating in a program to share and explore new technology as a way to quickly and economically make small quantities of otherwise expensive or hard-to-obtain specialty parts.

Other honorees included Portsmouth and Norfolk naval shipyards, NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center, Pratt and Whitney, Eastman Kodak and Honeywell.

The RPTA Program

One of the most pressing problems

for both private industries and DoD maintenance activities is finding fast and cost-efficient ways of producing limited numbers of specialized parts that still have "conventionally manufactured" functional properties. These parts can be made directly from a computer-aided design (CAD) file, but are more frequently reverse-engineered from an existing part.

Rapid Prototyping and Manufacturing (RP&M) technologies offer a solution. According to the center, the technologies "are capable of creating physical objects directly from digital data without manually generated numerical control programs or tooling."

Although RP&M technology has had a sweeping impact in private industry, implementation within DoD maintenance facilities has been limited by high initial investment costs and associated risks.

The center's Rapid Prototyping Technology Advancement (RPTA) program enabled DoD facilities and other organizations to share in the costs and risks through collaboration among a broad community of industry partners.

PHNSY & IMF participation began with a visit by Ken Johnson, program executive director, on Feb. 6 and 7.

After briefings and meetings with mechanics, program analysts, and production shop group supervisors, Yardeners identified seven pilot projects for rapid prototyping.

Through the program, the Shipyard received weld rod holder caps and an injection mold tool for electronics cable connectors. Shops 26 and 67 are evaluating these items for usability and cost benefits. When these studies are done, the Shipyard will seek new projects to expand participation in the RPTA program.

Bravo Zulu

Defense Information Systems Agency, Pacific

Defense Meritorious Service Medal
Maj. Philip G. Rynn, USMC

Joint Service Achievement Medal
YN1(AW) Cyrus Z. Best
OS2(SW) Steve M. Gonzalez

Fleet Logistics Support Squadron 51

Sailor of the Quarter (TAR)
AK1 Brent D. Geist

Sailor of the Quarter (SELRES)
YN1 Kimberly K. Rutigliano

Navy Commendation Medals
Lt. Cmdr. Frank J. Koska
AM1(NAC) Joy Gisi

Navy Achievement Medals
AE2(NAC/AW) Mark J. Hoekstra

Letter of Appreciation
AC3 Kay K. Vieths

Enlisted Aviation Warfare Specialist (AW)
PR2 Kimberly D. Rowe

Good Conduct
AEC(NAC/AW) Donald C. Hernden
AE1(NAC/AW) Michael S. O'Malley
AE1(NAC/AW) Eric J. Dixon
AZ1(AW) Dale R. Twest

Promotions
Cmdr. (Sel) David N. Valente
Lt. Cmdr. Jack M. Omohundro