

FLEET FOCUS

Lake Erie hoists Gold Surface Warrior Officer Excellence Pennant

Ens. Daniel McFadden
USS Lake Erie (CG 70)

SAN DIEGO – Rear Adm. Terrance T. Etnyre, Commander of Cruiser Destroyer Group One, presented Lake Erie's officers with the gold surface warfare excellence pennant on Sept. 27. The pennant is awarded to ships in which all officers assigned to the ship for 18 months or more wear the gold pin of a surface warfare officer (SWO).

Lake Erie's Blue/Gold watchstanding system provides unparalleled opportunities for the professional education of junior officers.

"Blue/gold allows individuals to get more experience. It gives you more time for study

and is the catalyst for the ship to qualify more people," said Lt. Rob Kuffel, the combat information center officer.

Additionally, the ship's involvement in the Navy's theater ballistic missile defense (TBMD) research and development program provides further distinctive experience and training to the ship's junior officers.

"There's no doubt about it, Lake Erie Sailors and officers know a great deal about the technology and operations of TBMD," asserted Kuffel. Since earning the status of the SWO qualification an officer to learn in detail all aspects of naval operations, Lake Erie's watchstanding system and TBMD participation help junior officers to ac-

quire expansive knowledge and experience that is critical to earning their SWO pin.

According to Lt. Cmdr. Linda Craugh, chief engineer and senior watch officer, the SWO pennant is a great recognition of the professionalism of the officers assigned to the ship. Plans are underway to further enhance the professional education of the ship's officers.

For newly-arriving ensigns, the command is implementing a "four-month plan," a program to support junior officers in achieving their first major watch qualification within four months of arrival. Although challenging, this is part of Lake Erie's overall goal to "challenge the abilities of very capable people."



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Lake Erie's surface warriors stand with Rear Adm. Terrance Etnyre, Commander Cruiser Destroyer Group One, after raising their Surface Warrior Officer Pennant Sept. 27.

"The bare minimum is not enough for Lake Erie SWOs," said Craugh of those wearing a SWO pin. After being desig-

nated SWOs, junior officers are offered the chance to qualify as engineering officer of the watch and navigator.

'Operation Dear Abby' targets servicemembers stationed overseas

HQ NAVSUP Public Affairs - Mailing addresses for the 2001 holiday season "Operation Dear Abby" have been announced by the Military Postal Service Agency.

This year, mail is being targeted to fleet mail centers and U.S. military aerial mail terminals overseas, instead of to specific units or countries, to ensure that the mail is evenly dis-

tributed to all services across the board.

Operation Dear Abby is a goodwill effort begun 17 years ago by nationally-syndicated columnist Abigail Van Buren to bring holiday cheer to the men and women of the U.S. Armed Forces. Through her column, she solicits patriotic Americans to send cards and letters to U.S. service mem-

bers stationed overseas.

To ensure the mail is received within the required time and within Department of Defense security guidelines, the mail will be limited to first class letters, 13 ounces or less.

This year there are two fleet mail center addresses for Operation Dear Abby mail. These addresses will accept Operation Dear Abby mail from

Nov. 15 to Jan. 15, 2002.

The two fleet mail center addresses are: Any Service Member, Operation Dear Abby, FPO AE 09646 (Mediterranean Basin); and Any Service Member, Operation Dear Abby, FPO AP 96385 (Pacific Basin).

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