



# THE Currents™

Vol. 27 No. 1

Serving the New Orleans Regional Military/DoD Communities

January 2016

## CNRSE Announces 2015 Region Sailor of the Year

By Mass Communication Specialist  
1st Class Stacy D. Laseter  
Navy Region Southeast  
Public Affairs

Air Traffic Controlman 1st Class (AW/SW) Leonor E. Ortegacruz of Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base (NAS JRB) New Orleans was named Navy Region Southeast (NRSE) Sailor of the Year for 2015 during a ceremony on board NAS Jacksonville Dec. 3.

The ceremony was the conclusion of NRSE Sailor of the Year Week, during which the top five finalists selected from the region's 18 installations were invited to Jacksonville, Fla., to compete for the honor of Sailor of the Year.

The finalists were able to participate in a series of

recreational activities, including a visit to Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans' Nursing Home located in St. Augustine, Fla; a tour at EverBank Field, home of the Jacksonville Jaguars; and a visit to Jacksonville's Lone Sailor Memorial. The final day included an oral board, with command master chiefs from various Southeast installations serving as board members, followed by a luncheon during which the winner was announced.

"Our five Sailor of the Year finalists were selected from an extremely talented group of Sailors from our 18 installations across the region," said NRSE Command Master Chief

Sailor of the Year Page 14



Air Traffic Controlman 1st Class (AW/SW) Leonor E. Ortegacruz

## Military Leaders Report to City Council

By Mass Communication Specialist  
1st Class John Hulle  
The Currents' staff

Military members and senior leaders from around the New Orleans area filled the New Orleans city hall Council chambers Dec. 10, for the 24th Military Appreciation Day with the city council.

New Orleans Military Appreciation Day was started in 1992 by the Mayor's Military Advisory Committee (MMAC) and local leaders to acknowledge local military service members and to promote a closer relationship for state and federal agencies in Louisiana.

Senior military leaders from all service branches in the New Orleans area were on hand to detail specific community service, economic and mission-centric contributions

to the region.

Retired Marine Corps Maj. Gen. and MMAC Chairman David Mize, conducted the session, which began with Lt. Cmdr. Shawn Turpin, Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base (NAS JRB) New Orleans base chaplain, delivering a prayer. Followed the prayer was a reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance, a joint-service color guard and the playing of the National Anthem by the Marine Corps Band New Orleans.

Capt. Mark Sucato, NAS JRB commanding officer, provided the council and guests updates on the work of Sailors assigned to the base.

"I am honored to be here today to represent the men and women of NAS JRB New Orleans. Our installation continues to provide a superior operational and training environment for active duty and



Senior military officers from each branch of the service voice the impact of the military to the City of New Orleans Council members with the Mayor's Military Advisory Committee (MMAC) at New Orleans City Hall Dec. 10. MMAC advises the Mayor and the City Council regarding the importance of the military to the economy and needs of the military individually and collectively in the areas.

Photo by MC1 John Hulle

reserve components from all branches of the armed services while sustaining a full range of combat, peacetime, and humanitarian operations," said Sucato. "During this past

year we have hosted squadrons, battalions, paratroopers, and detachments from all military branches,

MMAC Page 14

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NAS JRB New Orleans  
2015 highlights  
Pages 8 & 9



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<p>This month in Navy &amp; Marine History</p>	<p>January 29, 1914 Hatii U.S. Marines land in Haiti to protect U.S. consulate</p>	<p>January 1, 1962 Navy Seals Navy SEAL teams established</p>
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**From the Flightline**

By Capt. Mark Sucato  
NAS JRB Commanding Officer

Happy New Year to all! Whether you are one to make resolutions this time of year or not, the New Year marks another year gone by for everyone. It brings each of us to a point where we may reflect and start anew with a fresh slate. It is a collective ignition point that reminds us we must make the very most of our lives.

Most resolutions involve something about the self: a drive to lose weight, work harder, stop smoking, exercise more or perhaps take on new challenges. Individuals will have varying levels of success and failure with these goals in the coming days and weeks. These are, maybe, the resolutions that seem to be taken out of the closet each year as we are packing away all of the Christmas stuff to end another holiday season.

Yet, resolutions can become reality. I encourage you to be sensible in setting goals, and be specific. Break large goals into small steps. Search out alternatives to behaviors and habits you wish to change or break. If you can replace negatives with meaningful activities that give you enjoyment - whether it's visiting friends, a new hobby, taking a class or doing volunteer work - you'll have less time on your hands to engage in the behavior that you want to eliminate. And, don't give up. Do not confuse a slip-up with



failure. Resolve to start again, whether it's the first day of a new year or the 100<sup>th</sup> day.

Carnival season begins only six days into our new year on January 6th. This will be my first Mardi Gras and I look forward to experiencing this one-of-a-kind celebration. If this also happens to be your first Mardi Gras, talk with your shipmates about what to expect and go online to the many web sites that detail the numerous parades and associated celebrations throughout the area. I encourage each of you to safely experience this unique time of the year in New Orleans!

Part of my job involves engaging numerous civic organizations and entities beyond our fence line. While representing you only a short time, I have received numerous accolades on your behalf. I sincerely appreciate the work you do on base and in the community. Thanks to each of you for all you do to make military service in New Orleans a rewarding experience!

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Naval Air Station JRB New Orleans  
**Capt. Mark Sucato**  
Commanding Officer



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# Trees for Troops Helps Brighten the Holiday

The Currents' Staff

In early December 200 military families in New Orleans received freshly cut Christmas trees thanks to the National Trees for Troops program.

Trees for Troops, a program of the Christmas Spirit Foundation, provides farm-grown Christmas Trees to armed forces members and their families in the U.S. and stationed overseas.

Trees delivered to Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base (NAS JRB) New Orleans were from Geissler Tree Farms in Leesport, Pa.

This year, Trees for Troops delivered more than 18,000 trees with a majority of those going to military families stationed at military installations

across the U.S. The deliveries were to more than 60 bases covering every branch of the armed services.

The National Trees for Troops program was started in the early 1990's. Trees for Troops counts on donations from the public to make the program succeed. To date, the program has exceeded expectations and grows with every year thanks to support and generous donations from communities. Since 2005, Trees for Troops has provided more than 157,000 Christmas Trees to military families and troops in the United States and overseas.

Anyone interested in making a tax-deductible donation for the 2016 holiday season can visit <http://www.treesfortroops.org/> and make a donation.



NAS JRB New Orleans Command Master Chief, CMC Chad Helms, left, along with other chief petty officers on the base, show off the fresh Christmas trees for military members, Dec. 11, as part of the Trees for Troops program. From left are: Helms; LSC Wendy Proffit, NRPDC; AMC Richard McDonald, VFA-204; HMC Casey Osbey, NOSC New Orleans; ISC Joseph Ward, VFA-204; BMC Daniel Mendoza, NRPDC and the transport driver for FedEx.



HMC Casey Osbey, NOSC New Orleans, helps unload the 200 Christmas trees delivered to NAS JRB New Orleans as part of the Trees for Troops program. Trees for Troops is a national program that donates more than 18,000 trees to servicemembers stationed across the U.S.

Photos by MC1 John Hulle

# ID Tags Receive First Update in 40 Years

By Daniela Vestal  
U.S. Army Human Resources  
Command Public Affairs

After more than four decades, the ID tags issued to all Soldiers, most commonly known to people as dog tags, are getting an update.

In accordance with Department of Defense guidance governing the reduction of the use of Social Security numbers, the Army published a new Department of the Army Pamphlet 600-8-14 Nov. 30, with procedures to replace Soldiers' Social Security numbers with their Department of Defense identification numbers.

The change to using the 10-digit, randomly-generated number will be implemented on an as-needed basis, said Michael Klemowski, soldiers programs branch chief, U.S. Army Human Resources Command.

"This change is not something where Soldiers need to run out and get new tags made," said Klemowski. "We are focusing first on the personnel who are going to deploy. If a Soldier is going to deploy, they are the first ones that need to have the new ID tags."

The removal of the Social Security number from ID tags is one of the ways the Army is safeguarding the personally identifiable information of its Soldiers whenever possible, Klemowski said.

"I think removing the social will help," Klemowski said. "If you find a

pair of lost ID tags you can pretty much do anything with that person's identity because you now have their blood type, their religion, you have their social, and you have their name. The only thing missing is their birth date and you can usually get that by Googling a person."

Staff Sgt. Kristen Duus, a Soldier with the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, said she thinks the update is a good one.

"Identity theft is a very real threat for us right now, and so many people are not aware that our information is easily accessed," Duus said. "By removing socials from ID tags, one more step is being taken to protect ourselves and our identities."

The required change was first outlined in the DoD Social Security Number Reduction Plan and the President's Task Force on Identity Theft Strategic Plan in 2007.

Since then, the Army has been searching for a way to replace the Social Security number on the ID tag Soldiers wear. However, what might seem like a simple task turned out not to be, said Klemowski.

The Army used several systems tied to a Soldier's Social Security number, all for different purposes. Each of these systems had to be retooled to work with one another and the DoD ID number, Klemowski said.

"The DoD ID number is currently used on ID cards and TRICARE will be using it in the future," Klemowski said. "More and more systems are

going to the DoD ID number as we are able to phase out the Social Security number. technology catches up with us and we



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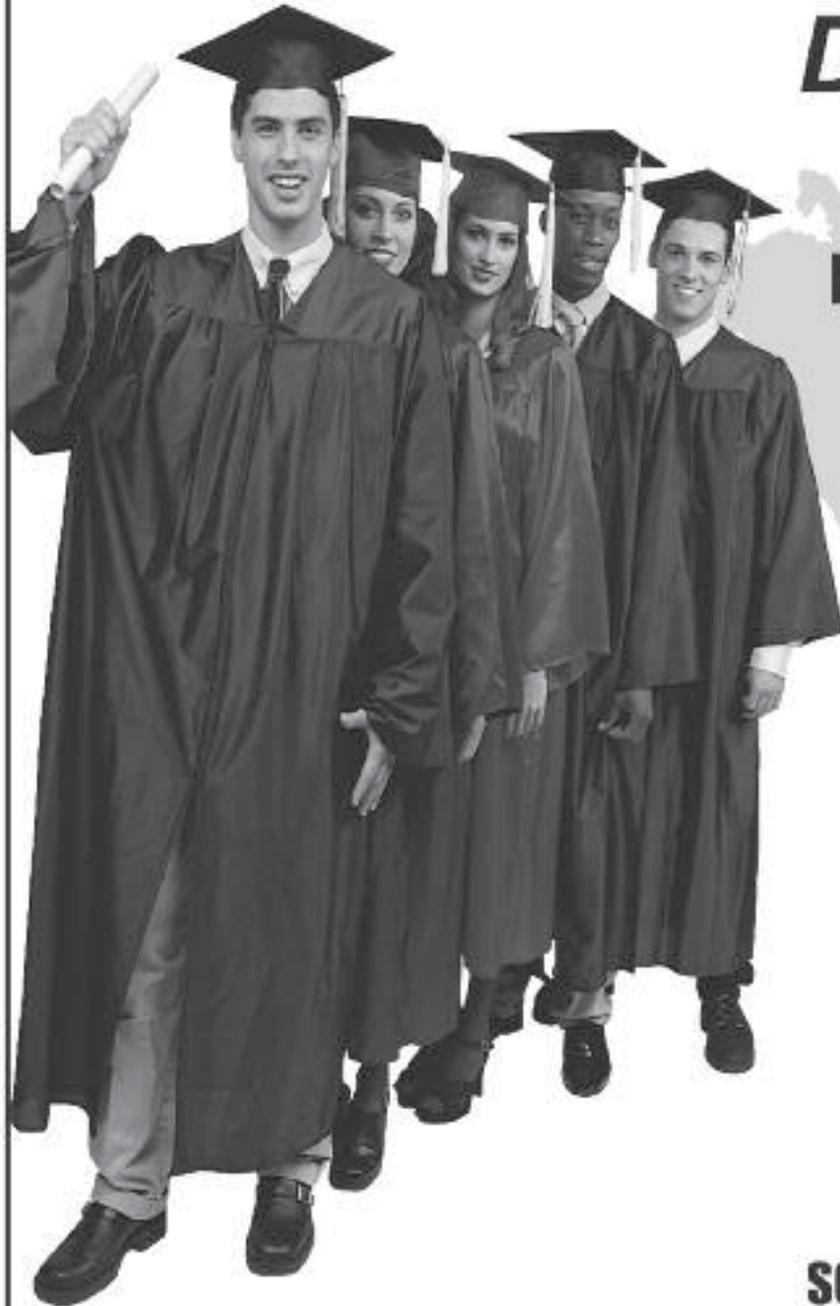
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# Making Life Changes - It's a Marathon, Not a Sprint

By Lt. Cmdr. Shawn Tupin  
NAS JRB Chaplain



2015—it's gone! 2016—where did it come from? We all have seen a lot of victories such as increased education, a new family, a great job, a promotion, etc. But we have also seen our set of challenges or even heartache, such as an illness in the family, a failed inspection, a new job that we don't like, or a loss of income for one reason or the other.

But some of our biggest vic-

tories or challenges come from small changes to our own character and discipline. You lost a few pounds! That takes hard and dedicated work. Or unfortunately, perhaps you went the other way—you found yourself unable to maintain self-control or dedication to something you wanted to change for the better. You may have even gone back-

wards.

Look back to January 2015, one year ago. New Year's Resolutions took center stage. Take a moment to list them out: perhaps go to the gym every day; perhaps supper with your family every day; or perhaps writing a thank-you note every day. How many of them did you keep? And when you failed to keep them, did you continue trying?

Let me encourage you to only set one New Year's Resolution. Place your life into categories that work for you, such Family,

Work, Social, Spiritual, etc. Determine what is an easy change in your life and stick to one thing. After one month of success, add another resolution in a different category. Keep in mind—maintain consistency, not perfection.

Ever drive a manual stick shift? You can't begin in gear four. You have to begin the journey in the right gear. Ever run a marathon after one week from couch potato? I don't think so. So it is with changes you want to make in your life. You must chart the course, determine the

big goals, break the elephant down to bite-size pieces, and don't be discouraged when you miss a day. Proverbs 24:16 states, "The righteous person falls seven times, but gets back up again." The key is to not worry about perfection, but to be more concerned about consistency. It takes time to change.

Be encouraged! You have people in your life who want you to succeed. Hang around those types of people. Seek help. Seek accountability. Most of all, remember, it's a marathon, not a sprint.

Lt. Cmdr. Chad George, NAS JRB New Orleans quality of life officer, stands with Tony Hernandez from the St. Bernard Parish, La., Historical Society, during the organization's wreath-laying ceremony for the 201st anniversary of the Battle of Lake Borgne, Dec. 14. George was invited to join the society's members and guests on board a yacht in Lake Borgne for the ceremony and to lay the wreath commemorating the anniversary of the event. The Battle of Lake Borgne was a battle between the Royal Navy and Royal Marines on one side and the U.S. Navy and U.S. Marines on the other in the American South theatre of the War of 1812. It occurred on Dec. 14, 1814 on Lake Borgne, and allowed the British to assault New Orleans 10 days later.

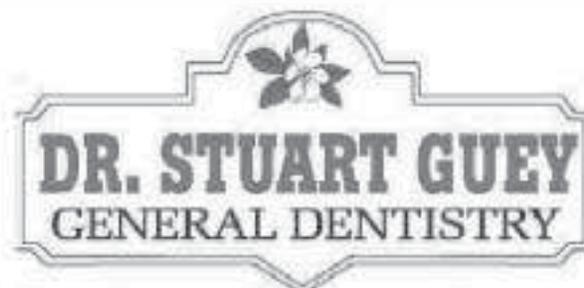
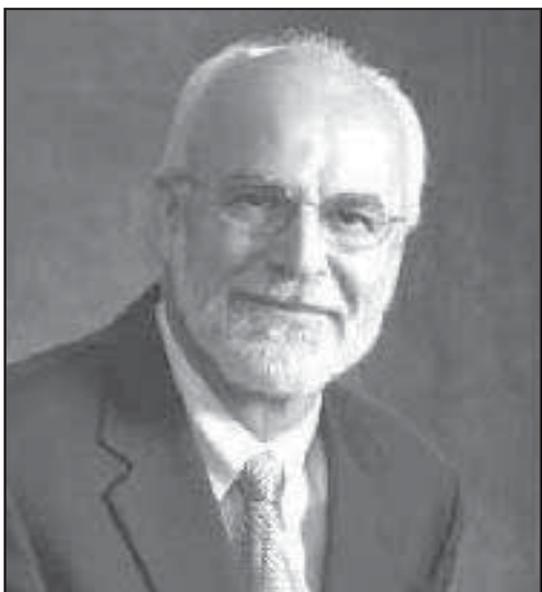


The Battle of Lake Borgne was the opening military engagement in the campaign for control of New Orleans.

*Courtesy photo*



PS1 (AW) Terrell Culler is the 2015 Sailor of the Year (SOY) for Fleet Logistics Squadron (VR) 54 at NAS JRB New Orleans. Culler was also selected as the Commander, Fleet Logistics Support Wing Sea Sailor of the Year making him a finalist for 2015 Commander Naval Air Force Reserve Sea Sailor of the Year. Culler proudly represents the VR-54 Rev-eler nation.



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# NAS JRB New Orleans 2015 Highlights



On March 3, 2015, the Navy Reserve marked its centennial anniversary. Congress approved legislation leading to the creation of a naval reserve in 1915. The official legislation read: "There is hereby established a United States Naval Reserve, which shall consist of citizens of the United States who have been or may be entitled to be honorably discharged from the Navy after not less than one four-year term of enlistment or after a term of enlistment during minority. The naval reserve shall be organized under the Bureau of Navigation and shall be governed by the Articles for the Government of the Navy and by the Naval Regulations and instructions."



Airmen from the 159th Fighter Wing, LAANG and 59th Medical Wing, Joint Base San Antonio Texas, transport simulated patients from a municipal ambulance for aeromedical evacuation processing during an Ultimate Caduceus 2015 at NAS JRB New Orleans.  
Photo by Master Sgt. Dan Farrell, 159th Fighter Wing Public Affairs



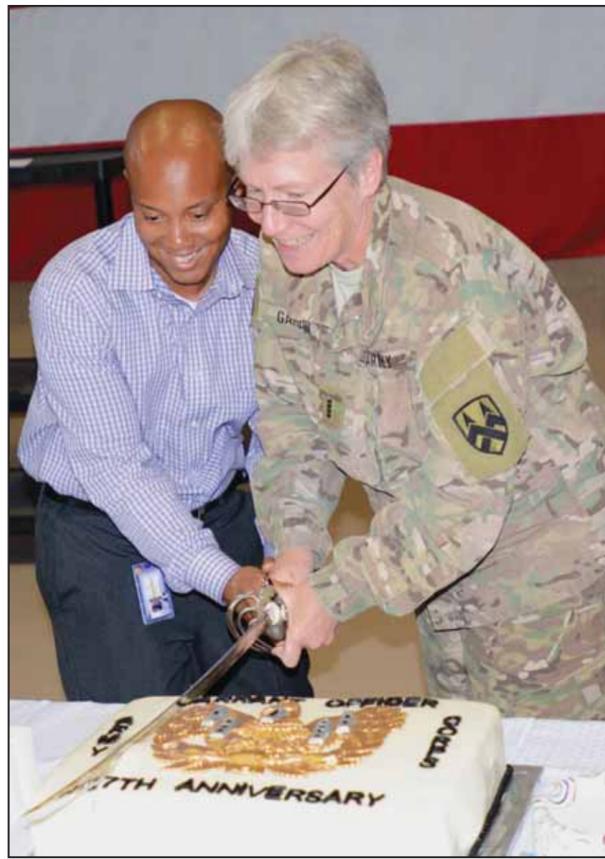
A color guard from the New Orleans Military and Maritime Academy leads the Krewe of Plaquedilla parade. Behind the color guard was the Budweiser wagon with a full complement of Clydesdales. This was the first year the Clydesdales participated with the Plaquedilla parade. A few military members from base commands were selected to ride the wagon and toss beads.  
Photo by Tammy Prine



The British Royal Navy frigate HMS Lancaster (F229) arrives in New Orleans as part of NOLA Navy Week 2015. New Orleans Navy Week 2015 was held New Orleans April 23-29 with six ships docked pier side on the banks of the Mississippi River. The sea services of the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom were on display in downtown New Orleans.  
Navy photo by MC1 Stacy Laseter



Sailors assigned to NAS JRB New Orleans sort, weigh and box donated food at Second Harvest Food Bank in New Orleans June 15. Fourteen Sailors spent the afternoon volunteering at the food bank, which provides households in need in Louisiana with sustenance. From left clockwise: MA1 Roger Price, MA1 Eric Milton, AC1 John Wood, MA1 Roger Price, MA1 Eric Milton, ET1 Robert Raizor, ET2 Aaron Beckwith, AC1 Leonor Ortegaruz, YN1 Kim Ahearn and ET1 Samuel Turner.  
Photo by MC1 John Hulle



Willis Glass and Chief Warrant Officer 4 Tracy Garder from the 377th Theater Sustainment Command (TSC) at NAS JRB New Orleans cut a cake to celebrate 97 years of the warrant officer corps. Glass, a civilian logistics management specialist for the 377th is also a Chief Warrant Officer 2 as a culinary technician. The event included a history presentation and a cake cutting by the command's most junior and senior warrant officer. Established July 9, 1918, the Army Warrant Officer Corps is comprised of Soldiers who specialize in specific technical areas of expertise.  
Army photo by SFC Angele Ringo, 377th TSC



The air control tower at NAS JRB New Orleans looks like a scene from an air show. The NCIS New Orleans crew transformed the empty ramp area into an air show for an upcoming episode in the show's fall lineup.  
Courtesy photo



After the pinning ceremony, chiefs, officers and shipmates congratulate the 23 newly pinned chief petty officers. Twenty-three Sailors from commands across the greater New Orleans area earned the title of chief petty officer during a pinning ceremony aboard Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base (NAS JRB) New Orleans Sept. 16.  
Photo by MC1 John Hulle



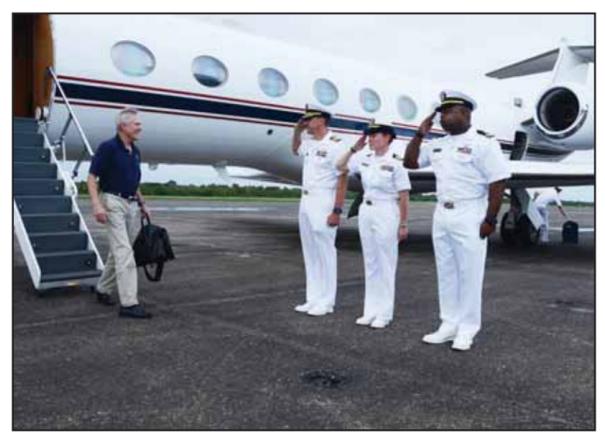
Maj. Gen. Les Carroll, commanding general of 377th TSC looks on while Bonnie Murphy speaks during Gold Star Mothers luncheon at NAS JRB New Orleans Sep. 29. Her son, Army Sgt. Warren Murphy, lost his life in Taji, Iraq, Jan. 6, 2005.  
Photo by MC1 John Hulle



Capt. Mark Sucato, right, NAS JRB New Orleans commanding officer salutes outgoing commanding officer Capt. Scott Gootee during the base's change of command ceremony Nov. 6. This exchange of salutes signifies a change of command at NAS JRB New Orleans. Following the ceremony Gootee, who had commanded the base since November 2013, was piped into retirement after more than 24 years in the Navy.  
Photo by MC1 John Hulle



U.S. Marine Corps Lt. Gen. Richard P. Mills, outgoing commander and Lt. Gen. Rex C. McMillian, incoming commander, salute during the posting of the colors at the change of command ceremony held at Marine Corps Support Facility, New Orleans, La., Sept. 12. Mills passed his duties as commander of Marine Forces Reserve and Marine Forces North to McMillian after commanding the organizations for more than two years.  
Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Kimberly Aguirre



Secretary of the Navy (SECNAV) Ray Mabus is greeted by NAS JRB New Orleans Commanding Officer Capt. Scott Gootee, Executive Officer Cmdr. Carina Maloney and Lt. Roggie Norman, air traffic control facility officer, during a visit to NAS JRB New Orleans Sept. 10. Mabus was in the New Orleans area on official business.  
Photo by MC1 John Hulle

## LANG'S First Female Artillery Soldier

By Spc. Megan V. Zander  
21st Mobile Public Affairs  
Detachment

NEW ORLEANS –For the first time in U.S. military history, gender is no longer be a deciding factor or disqualification for military jobs. The Army had already begun the process of integrating some jobs, including many field artillery positions that were opened to women in October. On Nov. 30, Pvt. Journae Q. King made history for the Louisiana Army National Guard as the first female to enlist as a field artillery automated tactical data systems specialist. After completing training, King will operate communica-



Pvt. Journae Q. King takes the oath of enlistment as the first female automated tactical data systems specialist in the Louisiana National Guard at the Military Entrance Processing Station at NAS JRB New Orleans in Belle Chasse, La., Nov. 30.

Army National Guard photo by Spc. Megan V. Zander

tion systems, assist in the preparation of computer centers, prepare field artillery tactical data systems, and determine target locations using computers or manual calculations. King, 21, of Laplace, graduated from East Saint John High School and attends Southern University.

King, who played high school basketball, knew that her athletic background would help her excel during basic combat training. She also feels mentally prepared, knowing that her strong mind, positive attitude and never-quit mentality will push her through the difficult phases of basic training and advance individual training. "I like competition and challenges, it is something that someone with a weak mind couldn't do. It's a life changing experience, serving your country," said King.

King is joining the LANG's historic 1st Battalion, 141st Field Artillery Regiment, also known as the Washington Artillery.

King expects to encounter some challenges along the way but is prepared to face them head on. "I have always been a competitive person and have a never-quit attitude," King said. King's mom gave her daughter advice on the challenges ahead. "I'm so proud of my daughter. From the beginning, I was very supportive and knew she could do it," said Rhonda King, Journae's mother. "I'm so glad she made the decision to join, and I told her, 'whatever you decide, I'm going to support you.' 'Never say you can't. Try before you give up, and if you fail, try, try again. Keep on until it can't be done, and eventually you will get it.'"

A promotional poster for the Krewe of Plaquedilla Parade. The top half features the text "OUT OF THIS WORLD" in a bold, serif font, with "Science, Space and Sci-Fi" written in a cursive script below it. The central image shows a space station orbiting the Earth, with a space shuttle in the foreground. A large, golden ticket is overlaid on the bottom left, reading "FEB 2ND", "KREWE OF PLAQUEDILLA PARADE", and "1:30 P.M.". At the bottom, it says "NAS JRB NEW ORLEANS" and "FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL 504-678-3260".

A large advertisement for BioGuard pool care products. The top half features a black and white photo of a young child in a pool, with the text "Still as SIMPLE as 1-2-3" overlaid in a large, bold font. Below this, a paragraph explains the three-step process: Step 1: adding a sanitizer (SilkGuard Technology), Step 2: using shock to destroy contaminants, and Step 3: adding an algicide. To the right, images of BioGuard product containers are shown, including "inhibit" and "maintain" products. At the bottom, contact information for Billiot Pools is provided: "555 Lapalco • Gretna, LA", "504-433-5455", and "www.billiotpools.com". The BioGuard logo and tagline "guarding more than your pool" are also present.

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# Wreaths Across America Commemoration Held in Slidell

The Currents' Staff

More than 250 people gathered Dec. 12 at the Southeast Louisiana Veterans Cemetery



**Capt. Mark Sucato, NAS JRB commanding officer, places a wreath at a grave site in the Southeast Louisiana Veterans Cemetery in Slidell, La., following the Wreaths Across America ceremony Dec. 12.**

Photos by Andrew Thomas

in Slidell, La., to participate in a Wreaths Across America commemoration to adorn the more than 500 burial sites there with holiday wreaths. Seven ceremonial wreaths representing each branch of the armed forces, the U.S. Coast Guard, the U.S. Merchant Marines and the 93,129 POW and MIA service members from all branches were also formerly presented and displayed.

"The wreaths before you represent our commitment as a united America to remember the fallen. We also want these holiday wreaths to symbolize our honor to those who have served and are serving in the armed forces of our great nation and to their families who endure sacrifices everyday on our behalf," said Capt. Mark Sucato, Naval Air Station Joint Reserve (NAS JRB) New Orleans commanding of-

ficer, who was guest speaker for the event.

Megan Waite, ombudsman for Fleet Logistics Support Squadron (VR) 54 Ombudsman, spearheaded the Southeast Louisiana Veterans Cemetery commemoration for the second year. "I think it's extremely important to the families of veterans, our veterans and current service members that we take the time to have ceremonies as this. We want to show our appreciation," she said.

Morrill Worcester, owner of Worcester Wreath Company of Harrington, Maine, started Wreaths Across America in 1992 when his company found themselves with a surplus of wreaths. He arranged for these wreaths to be placed at Arlington in an older section of the cemetery. A local trucking company volunteered to transport the wreaths and

American Legion Posts and Veterans of Foreign Wars groups volunteered as well. In 2005, the effort received national attention because of an online photograph of a snow-covered wreath at Arlington Cemetery. Thousands of requests came in from people wanting to help with Arlington, and to emulate the Arlington project at their national and state cemeteries.

This year Wreaths Across America and volunteers placed more than 220,000 memorial wreaths at 545 locations in the United States, Puerto Rico and overseas.

"I am thankful to live in a country where the citizens honor their veterans on days such as this. Each wreath symbolizes acknowledgement of the sacrifice that a service member and their family gave on behalf of our country," Sucato said.



**AZAN Camerin Williams, VR-54, receives ceremonial wreaths from a Patriot Guard rider at the Wreaths Across America ceremony Dec. 12, in Slidell, La. Seven ceremonial wreaths representing each branch of the armed forces, the U.S. Coast Guard, the U.S. Merchant Marines and the 93,129 service members from all branches whose last known status was either prisoners of war or missing in action, were formerly presented and displayed during the commemoration.**

## New Website Helps Identify Victims of OPM Breach

WASHINGTON (NNS) — The United States Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has steadily sent out notifications to individuals affected by the data breach that took place earlier this year.

In an effort to reach everyone affected, OPM has launched a website designed to help people check if their personal information has been compromised.

OPM's Cybersecurity Resource Center (<http://www.opm.gov/cybersecurity>) requires individuals to submit their information, but won't instantly be able to tell the user if his or her information has been compromised. Instead, the government will review submissions and respond in two to four weeks with a letter.

For those notified, OPM has offered up to three years of intensive credit monitoring with a company that specializes in identity theft protection, fraud resolution and a million dollars in identity theft insurance. So far only 1.2 million people have signed up for that protection, according to a blog post by acting OPM Chief Beth Cobert.

"Part of its job, other than verifying for individuals if they were or were not affected, is providing another method to confirm their current contact information," said OPM press secretary Sam Schumach.

In addition to the site, individuals

can also call 866-408-4555, to get the investigation process started.

If you would like to read more about the information the letter contains and what you can do to protect your information read the All Hands magazine story from August 2015: You've Been Exposed, More than 21 million people affected by data breach. It can be found here: [http://www.navy.mil/ah\\_online/deptStory.asp?issue=3&dep=5&id=90573](http://www.navy.mil/ah_online/deptStory.asp?issue=3&dep=5&id=90573).

OPM works in several broad categories to recruit, retain and honor a world-class workforce for the American people. OPM manages Federal job announcement postings at [US-AJOBS.gov](http://US-AJOBS.gov), and sets policy on government-wide hiring procedures. They conduct background investigations for prospective employees and security clearances across government, with hundreds of thousands of cases each year and uphold and defend the merit systems in Federal civil service, making sure that the Federal workforce uses fair practices in all aspects of personnel management. The OPM staff manages pension benefits for retired Federal employees and their families, administer health and other insurance programs for Federal employees and retirees and provide training and development programs and other management tools for Federal employees and agencies.

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# DoD Releases 2016 Basic Allowance for Housing Rates

The Department of Defense has released the 2016 Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) rates. The BAH rates increased an average of 3.4 percent Jan. 1. An estimated \$21 billion will be paid to approximately one million service members. On average, BAH rates will increase approximately \$54 per month.

Continuing to slow the growth in compensation costs, the 2016 BAH program ex-

pands the member cost-sharing element (out-of-pocket expense). Based on the authority provided in the FY 2016 National Defense Authorization Act, the cost-sharing element was increased to two percent. The cost-sharing amounts incorporated in the 2016 BAH rates vary by grade and dependency status and range from \$24 to \$57 monthly. This means for 2016, a typical member will need to absorb two per-

cent of the national average housing cost by pay grade. This rate computation change slows the growth of certain military pay and benefits in a fair, responsible, and sustainable way. Even with these nominal changes, the overall military pay and benefits package remains robust and healthy.

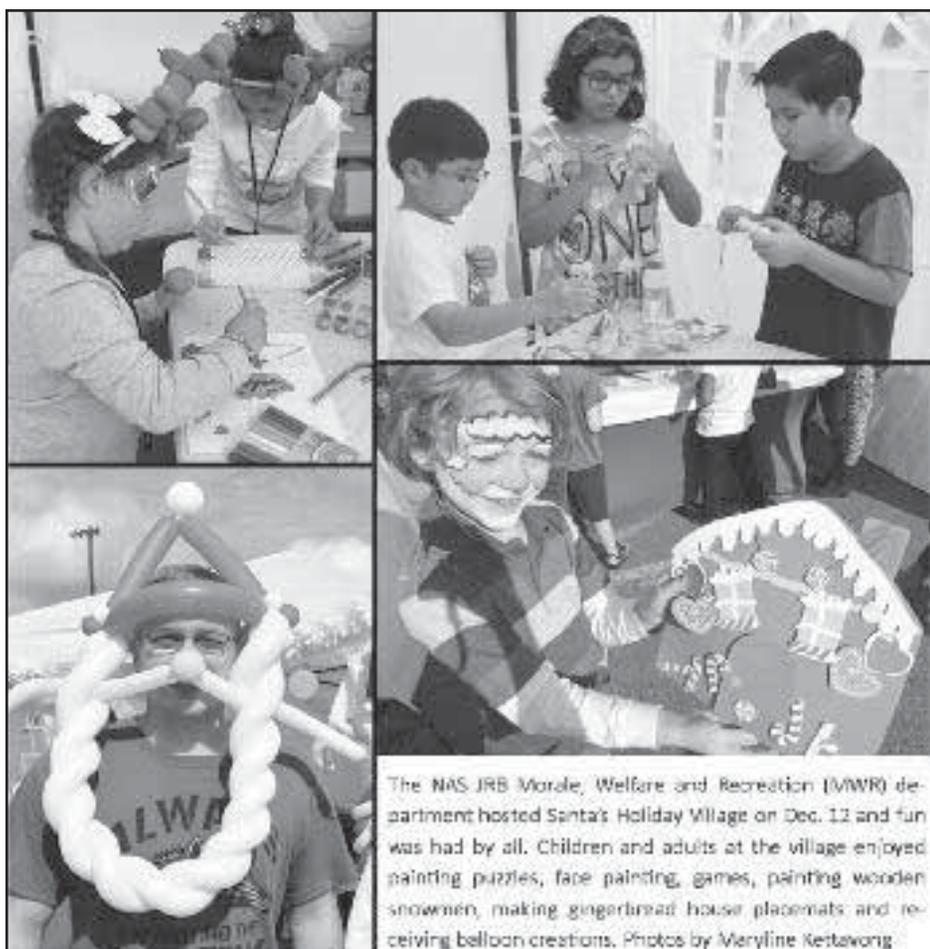
Housing cost data are collected annually for more than 300 military housing areas in the United States, including

Alaska and Hawaii. Input from local commands is used to determine in what neighborhoods data is collected and to direct the data collection effort towards adequate apartment complexes and individual housing units. Total housing costs are developed for six housing profiles (based on dwelling type and number of bedrooms) in each military housing area. The BAH rates are then calculated for each pay

grade, both with and without dependents.

The DOD is committed to the preservation of a compensation and benefit structure that provides members with a suitable and secure standard of living to sustain a trained, experienced, and ready force now and in the future.

For more information on BAH rates and breakdown, visit <https://www.defense-travel.dod.mil/site/bah.cfm>



The NAS JRB Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) department hosted Santa's Holiday Village on Dec. 12 and fun was had by all. Children and adults at the village enjoyed painting puzzles, face painting, games, painting wooden snowmen, making gingerbread house placemats and receiving balloon creations. Photos by Varyline Kettawong



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## Sailor of the Year: *continued from Page 1*

(AW/SS) Michael Jackson.

According to NAS JRB New Orleans Command Master Chief Chad Helms, Ortegacruz, the NAS JRB New Orleans Sailor of the Year, is very worthy of the award, but the other competitors were equally deserving.

"I'm super excited because the competition was so great,"

said Helms. "The bases really brought their best forward. It was evident not only in their packages, but also at their oral boards. These Sailors came to compete."

Ortegacruz said she appreciated the time spent at NRSE and the ability to bond with fellow first classes.

"Meeting the other Sailors

and forging friendships with them was probably the most rewarding part of the experience," Ortegacruz said. "We are all in different ratings, but we all have something in common. We all have the same wants and the same goals — to better ourselves."

Along with Ortegacruz, the top five also included Gun-

ner's Mate 1<sup>st</sup> Class (SW/EXW) Joseph Blacka of Joint Base Charleston, S.C., Air Traffic Controller 1<sup>st</sup> Class (AW/SW) Ayanna Gregg of NAS Jacksonville, Aviation Machinist's Mate 1<sup>st</sup> Class (AW) Theophilus McLawrence Jr. of NAS JRB Fort Worth, Texas, and Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Handling)

(AW/SW) Marlon Squires of NAS Whiting Field, Fla.

Ortegacruz will go on to compete against Sailors from other regions for the honor of Commander, Naval Installations Command Sailor of the Year. The selectee from that competition will go on to compete for Chief of Naval Operations Sailor of the Year.

## MMAC: *continued from Page 1*

and a host of federal agencies with missions, ties and interests in New Orleans and southern Louisiana.

"On any given day we have about 3,000 people working aboard the base — about half of those are civilians — add to that another 2,000 reservists who perform their drills on weekends or in many cases, also during the week. It's an impressive workforce, with a mixture of sea-

soned professionals who have experience in nearly every facet of military experience and expertise. It is also a workforce that in salaries alone put more than \$200 million dollars into the local economy this past year," he said.

Stacey Head, councilmember-at-Large, said "thank you for everything you do on a daily basis. We are lucky to have so many fabulous men and women

in the military living among us and keeping us safe."

"Let me thank the people here, the Soldiers, the Marines, the Airmen and the Sailors. We are thankful for what you do," said Marine Corps veteran, James Austin Gray II, district "E" councilmember. "I've got to do a lot of things in my life, but the proudest moment of my life is when the Marine Corps gave me a rifle platoon in 1968 in the

Republic of Vietnam. I don't think I will ever do anything as important as that. We realize your value and appreciate you."

In addition to Sucato, other senior members that spoke to the council included: Brig Gen. Norman Green, 377th Theater Sustainment Command; Brig. Gen. Barry Keeling, Louisiana National Guard; Col. Steven Godinho, Marine Forces Reserve; Capt. Wayne Agruin, U.S.

Coast Guard Sector New Orleans; Col. Shawn Coco, 159<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing, Louisiana Air National; and Larry Jones, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve.

They each reported on the status and the activities of their organization and the contributions made to local communities such as food drives, mentorship programs and work-related community service.

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SK1,USN,(RET)

## Belle Chasse Academy Meetings Notices

Board of Directors

**January Meeting -**  
4 November 2016 • 7 p.m. at BCA

**February Meeting -**  
1 February 2016 • 7 p.m. at BCA

Please check the BCA web site for  
Board of Directors Committees Meetings and  
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