



## VR-53 Celebrates Change of Command

By LCDR Alexander Ellermann, VR-53 Public Affairs Officer

On 7 August, Fleet Logistics Support Squadron FIVE THREE (VR-53) celebrated its change of command when CDR Tim Fox, USNR, relieved CDR Chris Ryan, USNR. VR-53 flies the C-130 Hercules transport aircraft out of Naval Air Facility Washington, a part of Andrews Air Force Base.

CDR Ryan, who took command in April 2003, served in VR-53 (nicknamed The Capital Express) since 1998. After assuming command, he led the squadron during one of its most successful periods on record. As a testament to his hard work and dedication, he was selected for the prestigious RADM Stanley Griggs Award for leadership excellence. This award doesn't come lightly. During CDR Ryan's tour, VR-53 was awarded both the Chief of Naval Operations and Department of the Navy Safety Excellence awards, managed a retention rate of 92 percent, and promoted 13 Sailors to the rank of chief petty officer.



CDR Tim Fox, USNR

CDR Chris Ryan, USNR

The squadron worked hard to earn these awards by flying long hours all over the world, logging over 4,000 hours of mishap-free flight time during CDR Ryan's command tour alone. From flying the first Navy C-130 mission into Iraq to supplying antiterrorist forces in the Philippines to supporting the President's attendance at the recent NATO summit in Turkey, VR-53 has served as the squadron of choice for those missions that absolutely must get done.

CDR Fox, who is moving up from the position of Executive Officer, is a graduate of both the Air Force Command and Staff College and the Naval War College. In his change-of-command speech, he thanked CDR Ryan and the entire squadron for the hard work they've done and outlined the plan for the future. In the coming year, VR-53 plans to deploy to Sicily, Bahrain, and Japan, in addition to conducting operations in support of Joint Theater Commanders and Naval forces worldwide. ⚓

## U.S. Navy Commissions Military's First Buddhist Chaplain

By Journalist 1st Class (SW) Hendrick L. Dickson, Navy News Service

The Navy commissioned the military's first Buddhist chaplain in a ceremony at the Pentagon, 22 July.

Chief of Navy Reserve, VADM John G. Cotton, commissioned LTJG Jeanette G. Shin in front of several of her family members and friends, making her the Department of Defense's first Buddhist chaplain.

After taking her oath of service, Shin expressed her gratitude to her peers and said she looks forward to making a difference in the fleet.

"I am very grateful to have the opportunities to serve the sea services – regardless of their religious faith," said Shin. "I will do my best to help you [Sailors and Marines] in any way I can."

Shin's commissioning is an important moment for the Navy's Chaplain Corps, as it continues to improve its diversity to serve Sailors and Marines from a variety of religious backgrounds. Shin was praised for her tremendous accomplishment and welcomed to the Corps by her peers.



Chief of Navy Chaplains, RADM Louis V. Iasiello, left, watches with Commander, Naval Reserve Force, VADM John Cotton, as newly commissioned LTJG Jeanette Gracie Shin signs her Oath of Office paperwork in the Pentagon. Shin is the first Buddhist Chaplain in the Department of Defense and first entered the military by enlisting in the Marine Corps in 1988.

"This is another historical moment for the Chaplain Corps of the United States Navy, as we reach out to provide for the religious needs of our people," said Chief of Navy Chaplains, RADM Louis V. Iasiello. "You are most welcome to our ranks as a chaplain, and we look forward to working with you in the future."

"This really is your statement of care and love and concern for us," said RADM (Sel) Harold L. Robinson, Special Assistant, Reserve Manpower, Chief of Naval Chaplain's Office. "It's a call of the Chaplain Corps to serve every human being we encounter, and that's what we are saying. We are very blessed to have you among us."

Shin earned her bachelor of arts degree from George Mason University in Philosophy and Religious Studies in May 2000. She earned her master of arts degree in Buddhist studies from the Graduate Theological Union/Institute of Buddhist Studies in Berkeley, CA, in May.

Shin is currently stationed at the Navy Reserve Center in Alameda, CA. ⚓



## Fleet Hospital Unit Cares for Civil War Reenactors

### Navy Reservists Assist at Gettysburg

*By Journalist First Class Mike Miller; Naval Reserve Center; Avoca, PA; Public Affairs*

A detachment of Navy Reserve corpsmen descended upon Gettysburg, PA, for the annual Fourth of July weekend Civil War reenactments. Members of Navy Reserve Fleet Hospital Fort Dix, Det. 13, from Navy Reserve Center, Avoca, PA, camped near the main battlefield and provided medical services to reenactors and spectators during a training evolution designed to accustom them to working with heat-related injuries in a hot-weather environment.

Working alongside civilian emergency medical technicians (EMTs), the Reservists took advantage of a unique training opportunity to acclimate themselves to working in a hot environment on actual heat-related casualties, while providing a valuable public service as well. Many of their shipmates first receive that training in the Central Command area of operations.

An estimated 45,000 spectators converged on Gettysburg in 95-degree heat and 95-percent humidity (if not more at some times) to immerse themselves in two Civil War battles per day on 2, 3, and 4 July. Heat exhaustion was rampant this year, as it surely was in 1863, when 51,000 American fighting men were casualties of the Civil War by nightfall on the Fourth of July.

CWO2 Skip Gross, XO of Gettysburg exercise, said, "I've served in the Middle East, but it is great to serve Americans here in the homeland. For training purposes, hot-weather training is excellent. The temperature and humidity here are near 100 degrees and 100 percent. It was excellent hands-on training in a high-heat triage situation. Ninety percent of the injuries we treated were heat-related."

HM2 Ken McCawley echoed Gross' sentiments. McCawley said, "From a hot weather training perspective, our mission is to provide medical support in a hostile combat environment under harsh conditions, so any kind of training that causes physical exertion on the body is good training. Here, about ninety percent of the reenactor and spectator injuries were the result of heat exhaustion – that's what happens when you don't train for this environment. Obviously, the Civil-War-period heavy wool uniforms have a lot to do with heat exhaustion injuries. These reenactors live the part – right down to full-length undergarments. Some just are not knowledgeable regarding proper hydration."

CAPT (Sel) Tony Alvarez, Commanding Officer of Det. 13, said, "It's amazing to me that, in this day and age, these guys are wearing double-lined, very heavy knitted wool with a liner, two sets of wool socks, and boots. So, clearly, the clothing contributes



**LCDR Alan J. Gutman (L) and HM3 Shawn H.J. House (R), work with civilian emergency medical technicians to treat a civilian casualty suffering from heat exhaustion at the 141st Gettysburg Civil War Reenactment. Navy Reserve Fleet Hospital Ft. Dix Det. 13 provided medical services to spectators and reenactors throughout the Fourth of July weekend. The training evolution provided valuable experience treating heat-related injuries in a high heat environment. The Reservists were from Navy Reserve Center, Avoca, PA. (Photo by JO1 Mike Miller)**

to the heat casualties. And in terms of training, it doesn't seem like all the reenactors have the sort of water discipline that is instilled into present-day military personnel. They need to figure out a way to hydrate while reenacting, like with a CamelBak [a self-contained hydration system in a back pack] or something like that. For all their good efforts, some of them are physically unprepared for this type of exertion. Many could do with regular PT and dropping a few pounds."

Navy camouflage BDUs worn by detachment members came as a surprise to some reenactors suffering from the heat. "We're from the future," LCDR Alan Gutman joked with a reenactor. "You might want to try drinking some water."

HMC(FMF) (Sel) Dan Serfass said, "Some of our corpsmen have

never worked with civilian EMTs before, and I think the EMTs got a good understanding of the military side this weekend. We augmented their efforts and cut down on their workload. I think it was a good teaching tool. We've always stressed water discipline, taking care of yourself, and watching out for your shipmates. I think this got the point across for anyone who had doubts about water discipline. For some others, this was their first time with real patients. They got to see exactly how heat affects the body – it's very serious."

Working alongside civilian EMTs was a unique experience. Alvarez said, "The EMT group has been together for several years here and bonding and teamwork are such that they can practically read each other's minds. I think they had some initial concerns about how we would integrate with them. Those concerns immediately dissipated during and after the first battle as we quickly responded to casualties on the field and in the field hospital. It became immediately apparent that we could function with them seamlessly."

McCawley said, "I think we integrated well with the civilian EMTs. We operated as one unit. Hopefully, we'll never have to work together with civilian EMTs in a homeland security situation; but, if we do, this detachment is prepared for that."

Fleet Hospital Fort Dix will be defunded 30 Sept., leaving members currently pondering their future in the zero-based review. Alvarez said, "We've been invited back by the EMTs, and I hope we can do that either as a group or individually. But more importantly, no matter where we wind up, the members of this unit are ready to deploy in support of the fleet – one force, one fight." 🇺🇸