STRATCOM visits TRF Bangor

SILVERDALE, Wash. (Sept. 1, 2020) – Adm. Charles Richard, Commander, U.S. Strategic Command (center) speaks with Trident Refit Facility Bangor (TRFB) Sheet Metal (Shop 17A) Supervisor, Thomas Brady (left) and TRFB Commanding Officer, Capt. Robert Figgs (right) during a visit with strategic-deterrent units onboard Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor, Sept. 1. U.S. Strategic Command is a global warfighting combatant command whose mission is to deter strategic attack and employ forces, as directed, to guarantee the security of the U.S. and its allies. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Andrea Perez/Released).
Fall has arrived, but the rain hasn’t slowed down Team Trident Refit Facility Bangor (TRFB). We have accomplished so much as a team and as individuals over the past month.

I’m proud to announce our Sailor of the Quarter (3rd Quarter) Hull Technician Maintenance 1st Class Audon Ariasmartinez, Repair Department (Code/26A) and our Junior Sailor of the Quarter (3rd Quarter) Yeoman (Submarines) 2nd Class Ethan M. Noe, Military Personnel (C/101), congratulations and job well done. (See page 5)

We also have big news out of our Voluntary Protection Program (VPP) office… our very own Jonathan Hagen, VPP Coordinator was recently named the VPP Special Government Employee (SGE) 2020 Region 10 Award Winner. Jonathan was selected out of more than 1,500 SGEs to represent and support worker safety and health. Thank you to Jonathan and each and every one of you for looking out for each other on the worksite and striving every day to keep our TRFB family healthy and safe. (See page 4)

To date, we have integrated 81 of the more than 100 SurgeMain Sailors into TRFB. SurgeMain is here to support the USS Nevada (SSBN 733) Extended Refit Period (ERP) during the COVID-19 pandemic. Working side-by-side, civilian and military, we are one team. This group of reservists bring yet another layer of talent from their civilian careers; we are excited to learn from them and to teach them about our mission. More skills and more maintenance expertise means more mission support to our submarine forces. (See page 7)

On that note, Bravo Zulu and thank you to everyone who contributed to the completion of the USS Henry M. Jackson’s (SSBN 730) Voyage Repair Period (VRP); a total of 205 jobs/1,694 Man Days were expended to accomplish this repair.

There are only three weeks remaining to participate the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS). I encourage each of you to take this opportunity to help improve TRFB by assessing what we’re doing well and where there’s room to improve. Please help me reach our command goal of 80% participation. To prevent survey fatigue, I have decided to postpone the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute’s (DEOMI)/DEOMI Organizational Climate Survey (DEOCS) until early Spring of 2021.

As we enter into the election season, I am reminded what a privilege it is to live in a country where all citizens have a right to vote. I encourage everyone to exercise this right. As military members and federal government employees, it is important for each of us to become knowledgeable about what we can and cannot do during elections. We must avoid inadvertently violating regulations by taking any action that could imply endorsement of a political party, political candidate, or campaign by DoD, the Department of the Navy, or TRFB. Voting is your voice! I will be voting this year and I hope you do too.

As the holidays approach, many of us feel compelled to give to others in need. If you are looking for ways to contribute, please consider participating in the Combined Federal Campaign.

COVID-19 is still at threat to Team TRFB, it is not the time to give an inch on something we have fought so hard to keep out of our worksite. Please continue to self-screen, social distance, wear your masks, practice good hand hygiene and stay home if you feel sick.

Thank you for all you do to meet the TRFB mission.

Warm regards,
Capt. Robert D. Figgs
Commanding Officer
TRF Bangor

Oct. 13, 2020 will mark the Navy’s 245th birthday. The central theme of this year’s birthday and heritage week will be “Victory at Sea,” which encompasses the Navy’s efforts in battle during World War II in the Pacific Theater. Trident Refit Facility Bangor’s recognition of the Navy’s birthday will be highlighted in next month’s Refit Review.

The audit assessed the internal processes, procedures and controls of all SUBSAFE functional areas including management, quality assurance, reentry control, technical, in-process audit and material, which resulted in TRFB earning satisfactory in all categories.

“It is a great accomplishment for a facility to be satisfactory in all SUBSAFE functional areas,” said Chris McNeil, director of the TRFB SUBSAFE program. “To be satisfactory in all areas demonstrates that the SUBSAFE program pillars are healthy and being adhered to at TRFB.”

On April 10, 1963, the USS Thresher (SSN 593) sank due to a piping failure during deep-dive tests killing all 129 officers, crewmen and civilian technicians on board, resulting in the establishment of the SUBSAFE program. Since its inception, no SUBSAFE certified U.S. Navy submarine has been lost.

“Our success allows TRFB to continue SUBSAFE work in direct support of the national strategic deterrent mission,” said McNeil. “The men and women of Team TRFB, from the deckplate mechanics to the commanding officer, who execute and exhibit ownership of the SUBSAFE program are a credit to the USS Thresher’s legacy.”

The next SSFA of TRFB will be conducted in 2022.
SILVERDALE, Wash. (Aug. 27, 2020) – Jonathan Hagen, Voluntary Protection Program (VPP) Coordinator at Trident Refit Facility Bangor (TRFB) was recently named the VPP Special Government Employee (SGE) 2020 Region 10 Award Winner.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) created the SGE Program to give qualified volunteers from VPP sites the opportunity to work with OSHA in various activities.

To be eligible for the award, Hagen participated in multiple OSHA cooperative programs and projects, assisted with VPP on-site evaluations, and served as an instructor and mentor to help other organizations work toward becoming VPP star sites. He also attends and supports local group meetings with other Navy installations to share safety and health concerns and discuss new changes in OSHA.

The VPP SGE awards recognize exemplary individuals around the country who demonstrate outstanding commitment to the program and go above and beyond to benefit their organizations.

Hagen was selected out of more than 1,500 SGEs to represent and support worker safety and health.

“My efforts alone are minimal,” said Hagen. “Our efforts together can change and form a workplace culture to be more safety and health-minded, resulting in fewer injuries and creating a healthier workforce.”

The VPP Star Program recognizes the excellent health and safety management systems of worksites with injury and illness rates below the national average for their industry. TRFB has held a VPP Star Worksite status since November 2008.

“The fact that TRFB has maintained Star Worksite status for so long is a true testament to Jonathan’s effort and dedication to the VPP program,” said Capt. Kenneth Holland, TRFB executive officer. “He competed at a national level, demonstrating his commitment to ensuring TRFB represents a culture of health and safety.”

According to OSHA, VPP sites are committed to effective employee protection beyond the typical requirements. The intent is for employees, managers and leaders to work together to develop and implement systems to effectively identify, evaluate, prevent, and control occupational hazards to prevent illness or injury.

“TRFB is committed to promoting a work environment that goes beyond compliance. VPP is a platform of principles we applied and committed ourselves to in order to create the safety and health culture that exists here at TRFB,” said Hagen. “Safety is selfless, not selfish.”

Together we can all make TRFB a safer, more productive work environment.”

Trident Refit Facility Bangor (TRFB) was established in the Pacific Northwest on July 1, 1981, as the primary maintenance facility for the West Coast Ballistic Missile Submarine (SSBN) fleet. TRFB’s principal mission is to support the nation’s strategic deterrence mission by repairing, incrementally overhauling, and modernizing the Ohio-class and the future Columbia-class until the end of service life. The TRFB team is comprised of approximately 500 military and 1,500 civilians.

The family of Trident Refit Facility Bangor’s beloved Robert “Bob” White was presented with a plaque in memorial of his 37 years of faithful service. Bob passed away peacefully on July 1, 2020.

Bob started working for TRFB in 1983 as a welder in shop 216 and later transitioned to shop 31M as an oiler. He then worked as an oiler work lead since December 1991.

During his time off, he enjoyed coaching peewee football, which he did for 30 years. Bob greatly contributed to the success of TRFB and the Navy’s strategic deterrent mission. He will be missed.
Bravo Zulu!

Yeoman (Submarine) 2nd Class Ethan M. Noe, Military Personnel (C/101), was selected as Trident Refit Facility Bangor’s Third Quarter 2020 Junior Sailor of the Quarter. Based on his ability and trustworthiness, he was hand-selected to be the direct administrative support representative for the Repair Department, the largest department in the command. While on this independent duty assignment, he was solely responsible for all awards, evaluations and fitness reports for more than 300 Sailors and 700 civilians. Bravo Zulu, Shipmate!

- 49 people recognized for Length of Service, totaling 1,010 years
- 62 Time-off awards, totaling 495 hours
- 407 Special Act Awards in the amount of $222,467
- 1,500 Thank You Bucks worth $12,000

Hull Technician Maintenance 1st Class Audon Ariasmartinez, Repair Department (Code/26A), was selected as Trident Refit Facility Bangor’s Third Quarter 2020 Sailor of the Quarter. As swing shift lead petty officer and work leader, he led two Sailors and five civilians through the on-time completion of two Voyage Repair Periods and five SSBN refits. His dedication and leadership is unmatched and his performance, initiative and perseverance reflected credit upon himself and were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service. Bravo Zulu, Shipmate!

TRFB 3rd Quarter Awards

TRFB disciplinary report

In an effort to inform the TRFB team of the local discipline actions, we are publishing a roll-up of these actions. To protect the identity of those involved, no specific details are provided. This report is produced by the Northwest Human Resources Office.

Over the last 30 days the command had three non-disciplinary actions resulting in a letter of caution. The following is a general description of the misconduct resulting in non-disciplinary actions:

- One letter of caution (supervisor) for failure to follow instructions. Employee failed to follow procedures resulting in a work stoppage.
- One letter of caution (non-supervisor) for failure to follow instructions. Employee failed to follow procedures resulting in a work stoppage.
- One letter of caution (non-supervisor) for failure to follow instructions. Employee failed to follow procedures resulting in damage to government property.

Over the last 30 days the command had six disciplinary actions resulting in one letter of reprimand, two suspensions, one removal, and two terminations. The following is a general description of the misconduct resulting in disciplinary action:

- One letter of reprimand (non-supervisor) for tardiness. Employee continued to be tardy after being counseled on tardiness.
- One suspension (non-supervisor) for unauthorized absence. Employee left the worksite without permission.
- One suspension (non-supervisor) for sleeping on duty. Employee fell asleep at workstation while machinery was operational.
- One removal (non-supervisor) for drug use.
- One termination during probationary period for drug use.
- One termination during probationary period for unacceptable misconduct.
Social Security Payroll Tax Deferral

In order to provide relief during the COVID-19 pandemic, a Presidential Memorandum was issued on Aug. 8, 2020 and guidance followed by Internal Revenue Service on Aug. 28, 2020, to temporarily defer Social Security (Old Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance (OASDI)) tax withholdings. Federal employees cannot opt out, and the change is effective through the end of the 2020 calendar year.

Military Members - Effective for September’s mid-month pay, DFAS will temporarily defer the withholding of your 6.2% Social Security tax if your monthly rate of basic pay is less than $8,666.66. If your monthly rate of basic pay is at or above this threshold, your social security tax withholding will not be affected by the temporary deferral. Military members can use their August or prior LES as a good reference for their typical Social Security tax amount. The Social Security tax is labeled as “FICA-SOC SECURITY” on the LES and is calculated as 6.2% of basic pay.

Civilian Employees - Effective pay period ending Sept. 12, 2020, DFAS will temporarily defer your 6.2% OASDI tax withholding if your wages, subject to OASDI are $4,000 or less in any given pay period. Employees can use the “Taxable Wages” on the LES as a good reference for whether they will have OASDI tax deferred. The OASDI deduction is found on your LES under the deductions tab/section.

Voluntary Leave Transfer Program

The VLTP permits employees to donate annual leave to other employees experiencing medical emergencies. If you wish to transfer annual leave or have questions for the Human Resources Office please contact: TRFB HR 360-315-2008. Bldg. 7000, 2nd floor, room W202.

TRFB employees who are seeking leave donations are: Heather Squier, Kristina Carpentier, Kymberly Castillo, Ashley Clark, Dustin Tweten, and James G. Wright.

Election Season Hatch Act Reminder

Military service members and federal employees acting in their official capacity may not engage in activities that associate the DOD with any partisan political campaign or elections, candidate, cause or issue. The limitations of participation can be found in DOD Directive 1344.10, Political Activities by Members of the Armed Forces, and the Hatch Act.

Active duty members are permitted to express their personal opinions on political candidates, make a monetary contribution to a campaign, sign a petition to place a candidate’s name on the ballot, and attend a political event as a spectator. Members on active duty may not participate in partisan activities such as soliciting or engaging in partisan fundraiser activities, serving as the sponsor of a partisan club, or speaking before a partisan gathering. In addition, all military members, including National Guard and Reserve forces, are prohibited from wearing military uniforms at political campaign events.

The Hatch Act allows most federal employees to actively participate in political activities on their own time and outside of the federal workplace. There are, however, significant restrictions on fundraising, running for office in partisan election and using one’s official authority in the political arena.

Disability self-identification

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), signed on July 26, 1990, to prohibit discrimination and to promote inclusivity and equal opportunities for individuals with disabilities across our communities. To honor the ADA’s 30th anniversary, the Department of the Navy (DON) is launching a campaign to encourage civilian employees to voluntarily self-identify as having a disability. In support of this campaign, please take a moment to verify and update your disability status using the DCPDS MyBiz+ self-service portal or by filling out a hard-copy of the Standard Form (SF) 256.

All information relating to disability status is strictly confidential and is used only in aggregate form for statistical analyses. If you have questions please contact Anya Fishbaugh at anya.fishbaugh@navy.mil.

Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey

The Office of Personnel Management launched its annual Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) and has distributed the survey. We only have a few weeks left to complete it. TRFB has a command goal of 80% return rate and we need your help to accomplish this. The survey results help shape workforce policy. Dedicated time during working hours will be provided to complete the survey to help increase participant rates. Thank you in advance for your participation.
Joye, Officer in Charge, SurgeMain. “First, they are here to help get us caught back up on anything that COVID took away; but they are also here to ensure their effectiveness is completely optimized. We want to make more journeymen.”

In addition to performing their job duties, SurgeMain Sailors will have the opportunity to work on their Navy Afloat Maintenance Training Strategy (NAMTS) qualification while assigned to TRFB. Machinist’s Mate Chief Petty Officer Chris Rogers, SurgeMain’s senior enlisted leader, urges Sailors to take advantage of this opportunity by getting qualified, trained and medically screened, so they can become long-term support to TRFB and the Navy’s mission.

“Once the Sailors are qualified,” said Rogers, “They will need to complete continuing education to stay up-to-date, but they will be more prepared for their next mobilization.”

Hull Technician Petty Officer 2nd Class Leroy Jacob Fulton II, a native of Layton, Utah, and a cruise missile mechanic for the Air Force at Hill Air Force Base, said he is looking forward to learning as much as he can about his rate during his time here.

“I have most of my experience in aviation,” said Fulton. “However, I believe the level of mechanical precision needed for my civilian job will directly translate into my work here.”

TRFB employees can help make their mobilization successful by utilizing the talents of these Sailors.

“If you have a problem to solve, one of these Sailors can probably help you out,” said Ingles. “There is a lot of experience and talent amongst these Sailors.”

Training these Sailors directly contributes to the Navy’s readiness and mission.

“Our purpose is to build a better Sailor,” said Joye. “The next big problem won’t be a pandemic. We need to have Sailors trained to enter the fight on a moment’s notice.”

As of June 2018, approximately 59,000 active and Reserve Sailors of Hispanic heritage serve in the U.S. Navy contributing to the strength of the nation’s force. Hispanic Americans’ military service dates back to the Civil War.

The tradition of observing Hispanic heritage began in 1968, when President Lyndon B. Johnson designated a week in mid-September as National Hispanic Heritage Week. Twenty years later in 1988, President Ronald Reagan extended that week to a month-long observance.

The Navy is strengthened by the diversity of its force as it underlines that patriots of Hispanic American Heritage continue to build legacies of freedom and diversity as they fight for the security of the country and the peace of the world.
Flu Shots for Feds

Did you know that all FEHB health plans cover flu shots at no cost to their members? Many plans offer flu shots for children and adults at convenient locations, like retail pharmacies. Scan the QR codes using your mobile device camera or use the websites to find out more:

Use your zip code to find your local flu shot at: vaccinefinder.org. Always ask about full coverage before receiving care.


For the best protection against seasonal flu, get an annual flu vaccine each and every year. It’s also a great time to make sure you are up to date on other recommended vaccines.