



# THE BRIGHT PENNY

October 2007

A NEWSLETTER FOR MEMBERS OF THE USS BERKELEY (DDG-15) ASSOCIATION



As one year since becoming the director of the USS Berkeley Association is about to come to a close, I want to thank the staff for the support and the hard work they are doing for the Association. I would especially like to thank Jim Barrett and Jim Sundahl for the outstanding job they do in putting the newsletter together and getting it to press. Again Jim Barrett for the excellent job he's doing as the Berkeley Webmaster. Jim has added the ship's store page to the website and now is continuing to make the website even better. Dale Johnson, Assistant Director, and I are always in touch with each other. If I have something on my mind regarding the Association, I always call Dale to get his opinion about it. I would also like to thank the members because if it weren't for them, this wouldn't be the Association it is today.

One thing I would like to bring to the member's attention is, that I'm always getting e-mails asking 'where can I get things like ball caps and other items for the Berkeley?' Well, there is a lonesome Ship's Store Manager, Gerry Hansen, who is waiting for you to e-mail or call him to place an order. The Web site has pictures of some of the items currently available to order. I have ordered 12 new navy blue golf shirts for the guys. I ordered medium, large, X-large and, for you guys that wear XX-large they're available too. I have also ordered 36 coffee mugs with the USS Berkeley silhouette on it. The mugs have a handle and snap-on top. And ladies, I have not forgotten about you. Gerry, Francine, Pat and I are working on a lady's shirt. New magnets with pictures of the Berkeley are also now available. Also, you Radarmen out there, hats with your rating on them are collecting dust. Pictures of these items are posted on the Ship's Store page of the Web site. For the members that do not have a computer Gerry and I will work on a way to get pictures of the items to you.

Our association has grown over this past year. We have signed up 47 new members bringing our dues-paying membership to 255. I know the membership committee has been doing their job but I would like to change it just a little. If we could get members that have free minutes on their phone to volunteer to call those listed on the 'non-members' roster and see if they can encourage them to become a member (s) I think we could increase our membership quite a bit. I understand that those who do not have free minutes or unlimited calling on their phones are limited in where they can call and I don't want anyone to incur charges that the Association cannot reimburse. I have personally found that making a personal

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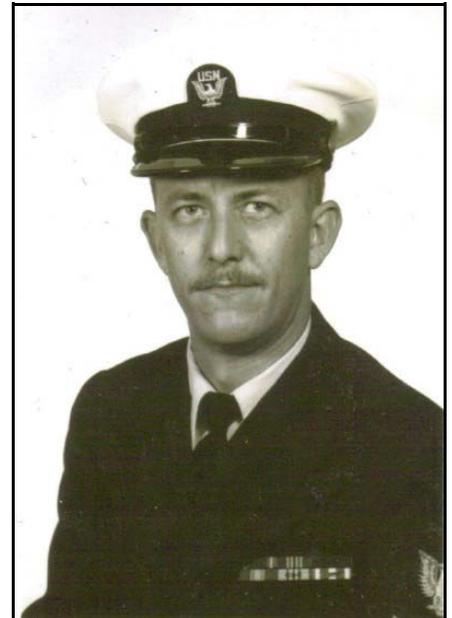
## IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Yeoman First Class Benjamin Lewis Bess dropped out of high school in 1958 to support his mother and tried to join the U.S. Army, but due to physical reasons he was not accepted. Four months later he decided to try for the Navy and enlisted in St. Louis, Missouri. Ben did his training at Great Lakes, graduating on his 18<sup>th</sup> Birthday. For his first assignment he was ordered to USS GALVESTON (CLG-3) reporting on board in July 1959. While on board he made one Caribbean cruise, completed his high school GED and was promoted to Seaman in January 1960.

In May 1960 Ben was transferred to COMSERVLANT / COMCRUDESANT in Norfolk, VA to work in the staff print shop. Finding this not to his liking he requested a transfer to sea and received orders to the USS SPRINGFIELD (CLG 7), reporting to the ship in Nice, France in June 1961.

While on board USS Springfield Ben was assigned to the officer's motorboat where he became 2<sup>nd</sup> coxswain and also leading seaman. In June 1962 the personnel office told him he was being sent back to the states for discharge as his enlistment was up. He requested permission to reenlist for orders to a destroyer and an office position, which is how he received orders to USS BERKELEY Pre-Commissioning Detail in Newport, Rhode Island and reported for duty in August 1962.

Ben met his wife, Karen, in June 1963 while BERKELEY was participating in the Rose Festival in Portland, Oregon. He was promoted to Personnelman Third Class in April 1964. In October Ben was transferred to Bremerton Group Pacific Reserve Fleet. Due to the increased activity in South Viet Nam he was transferred in December 1965 to the USS VIRGO (AE 30) Pre-Commissioning Detail in Seattle. Ben made two WestPac Cruises on VIRGO and was promoted to Yeoman Second



**YN1 Benjamin Lewis Bess**

Class. Following this sea tour he received shore duty orders to FAETUPAC at Naval Air Station Whidbey Island, Oak Harbor, Washington. Preferring to stay at Whidbey, he request orders to a squadron stationed there, but instead received orders in January 1971 to Attack Squadron TWENTY-FIVE at Naval Air Station Lemoore, California and deployed with the USS RANGER (CVA-61).

After three cruises with VA-25 he received Shore duty order to COMSUBPAC at Naval Submarine Base Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, reporting for duty in July 1974. The Navy wanted to keep him in Hawaii, but after three years there Ben decided that it was time to retire and requested transfer to the Fleet Reserve effective 31 October 1977. Ben returned to his land on Whidbey Island, attended Skagit Valley College to get his AA degree, and worked for the Navy Exchange for eighteen years. In 1997 he retired from the NEX and went to school to be a long haul truck driver. He drove for Swift Transportation until he retired for good at the end of 2002.

## Ahoy Berkeley Beauties!



WOW! Can you believe that fall is upon us already? It is such a wonderful time of the year. So many of you have the advantage of having changes in your seasons and I'm sure that fall must rank as number one in both weather and seasonal color. I'm sure that many of you have great recipes for this time of year. With the cooler weather, you can again think of using the oven again and cooking up some delicious dishes that are so good this time of year especially with Thanksgiving and Christmas just around

the corner. Of course I hope you are planning on sharing some of these recipes for inclusion in our 'Berkeley Family Cookbook'. I'm hoping to receive some recipes soon! You can send your recipes, or questions, to me at pat\_lilipad\_clark@charter.net. . I'm sure one of the guys has a 'turkey carving' experience to share.

In the last issue, you learned that some of us found love in 'all the right places'. One of which is 'Parents Without Partners' (PWP). Chief McGuire (Robert) e-mailed me to tell me how much he enjoyed the story that Mary and Jerry

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Biennial Dues: \$20.00

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Reunion Committee Chairman: Lou Clark

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Ship's Store Manager: Gerald Hansen

Webmaster: Jim Barrett

Newsletter Publisher: Jim Barrett



GMM1 Lou Clark (Ret)

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**From the Director**

call achieves more than an e-mail or a letter. Of course, an e-mail or letter hopefully can reach those non-members who prefer to not list a phone number. Now that the website has an updated Quarterdeck Log, we've picked up seven new members who have used the new application to sign up. Since the July edition of the Bright Penny, the following have become members:

Richard Nybeck, PA  
Harry (Joe) Quinn, IO  
Jimmie Starling, FA  
Richard Stephenson, OH  
Bill Trandum, WA  
Mark Vieth, CA  
Michael Wallace, NC  
Richard Williams, FL  
Mark Wheeler, MI  
Fred Whitman, VA  
Robert Worley, AZ

**Reunion update:**

Al Meier is checking leads for a photographer and DJ for our banquet at the 2008 Boston reunion. Reunion attendance cards will be included in the January issue of the Bright Penny and will need to be returned to me by May 15, 2008. As you know, you can make your hotel reservation at any time. They're ready for us!

As some of you know, I have been diagnosed with stomach cancer. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of my Berkeley shipmates and their families for the prayers and support they are giving me. The letters, cards, e-mails and phone calls have helped me to battle this damn thing. I am now undergoing chemotherapy, so the battle has started between the cancer and me. I am a strong warrior and I will defeat my enemy.

Lou

**Shake Rattle and Roll — To Smoke or Not to Smoke.**

By Sunny Sundahl, SK1, 70-71



During the early 70's as the Navy was pulling out of Vietnam, many of us in-country were transferred earlier than our original rotation dates. This was true for two Second Class Storekeepers, **Willie Williams, SK2** and myself. We both were transferred to the **USS Berkeley DDG-15**. I was excited because my first sea duty was the **USS Kearsarge (CVS-33)** and I wanted no part of big ships; I wanted a tin can.

To make a long story short Willie and I hung out together with a few other SK's. I was married but my wife was in Washington. Willie was single and he and the other SK's rented an apartment in Long Beach, which became the hang out for all of us. When we were about to leave for WestPac we put everything in storage including my motorcycle. I caught a ride to the ship the morning we were to deploy with one of the other SK's since his family was going to pick up his sports car at the dock. As we were going over the Long Beach bridge the car started to vibrate. Thinking it was a flat tire we started to stop on the bridge to check it out, but we kept shaking and shaking. What hit us it was an earthquake. He threw the car in gear and we flew off the bridge. When we

**From the Quarterdeck by**

CDR Jim Barrett (Ret)

**Merger of OS (RD) and QM rates halted**

The Navy has pulled the plug on the proposed merger with final approval by the CNO. This should be good news to the 10,400 sailors who serve in the two ratings, especially for the QM's, whose learning curve would have been the steepest.

While both the QM and OS ratings do navigational work and work closely at sea, the OS rating also has air traffic control skills and other combat system requirements.

Although the ratings will remain separate, their "A" schools will now be combined. Commanding Officers will continue to cross-train both ratings when it makes sense to meet mission requirements.

**Veterans not in uniform may soon salute the flag**

The current law (US Code Title 4, Chapter 1) states that veterans and servicemen not in uniform should place their hand over their heart without clarifying whether they can or should salute the flag.

U.S. Senator Jim Inhofe (R-Okla.) praised the passage by unanimous consent of his bill (S.1877) clarifying U.S. law to allow veterans and servicemen not in uniform to salute the flag. This bill has not yet gone to the full Senate for a vote, which is not expected to happen until the Senate returns from summer recess in September.

"The salute is a form of honor and respect, representing pride in one's military service," Senator Inhofe said. "Veterans and service members continue representing the military services even when not in uniform."

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got to ship everything was a mess. A lot of the crew was not there yet and the ones with families were trying to call them. TV news showed an overpass had fallen on a pickup pan caking it and stopping the driver's wristwatch. A home for the elderly lost its outside wall. Poor people, lots of damage all over. When we found out all our crew and families were safe, to my surprise, we left for WestPac that afternoon.

My mind went back to the bridge and the way we rocked and rolled. I thanked the Lord for us being safe. That lead me to think I should give up smoking; life is too short. So Willie decided to quit too, cold turkey and we would support each other. Oh boy, we both worked in the Supply Office with **LT William Trandum**. First day went well. Second day we both got a little edgy and by day three we had a few harsh words back and forth, then there was the fight and the scissors. LT Trandum stood and ordered both of us to start smoking again, right then...I did till 1985 and by then it was almost five packs a day.

No \$\$\$^,

Honest Injun

Sunny

**Berkeley History  
October****40 Years Ago, 1967**

During the last week of September Berkeley provided gunfire support primarily to the Third Marine Division. The ship's guns pounded Viet Cong infiltration routes, concentrations and storage areas and airborne spotters reported 26 Viet Cong emplacements destroyed and 49 damaged.

**01 Oct**, Berkeley was detached from TU 70.8.9 and proceeded to Nagoya, Japan for R&R. **09-11**, In port Yokosuka, Japan preparing for the trip back to Long Beach. **12-24**, Homeward bound in company with the destroyers USS Agerholm (DD-820), USS Richard B. Anderson (DD-780), USS Ernest G. Small (DDR-838), USS Porterfield (DD-682) and USS Bausell (DD-856). **17**, refueled at Midway Island. **25**, Arrived in Long Beach, commenced leave and upkeep

**30 Years Ago, 1977**

In September Berkeley was recognized by Commander, Naval Surface Force Pacific for outstanding performance during the January 76—July 77 competitive cycle by the awarding of the Operations "E", Communications "C", Missiles "E", ASW "A" and Gunnery "E".

**01-30**, In Puget Sound Naval Shipyard for regular overhaul.

**20 Years Ago, 1987**

**01**, In port San Diego. **02**, Underway for sea trials, but was forced to return to the pier when an engineering casualty caused a loss of electrical power throughout the ship. **03-05**, In port San Diego. **05**, Underway for sea trials. Due to heavy fog the ship was unable to complete a full-power run and returned to port that evening. **05-06**, In port San Diego. **07-08**, Underway to the Fleet Training Group anchorage, San Diego. **08-13**, In port San Diego. **13-14**, Underway to the Naval Weapons Station, Seal Beach for a two-day weapons on-load. **15-19**, Moved to the Broadway Pier for guest ship duty. The ship hosted over 2,000 civilian and military visitors. **19**, Underway commenced Snap II computer implementation. **20-22**, In port San Diego. **22-30**, Underway TRE.

**Ten Years Ago, 1997**

Ex-Berkeley in service with the Hellenic Navy of Greece

**5-inch gun with paint burned off the barrel — Vietnam, 10 May 1972**

Here's a picture of mount 52 on 10 May 1972. It was taken right after the *daylight* raid on Haiphong Harbor to cover the mining operations (Operation Pocket Money). If memory serves me, mount 52 fired 289 rounds within 20 minutes. Mount 51 only fired a few rounds, before she busted - as usual. In those days we called Mount 52 "Baby" because of her relative reliability. Mount 51 was called "Bitch", and for good reason.

The previous night there had been a raid on Haiphong that included multiple cruisers. We predicted at the time, rightly so, that this was the raid that would make the history books (last multi-cruiser gun



raid on a shore target, etc). Our daylight raid, along with Edwards, was *much* more dangerous. Oh well, didn't do it for the glory anyway.

Rex McCoy, LCDR (Ret)  
Gunnery Assistant 1971-72

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**Ahoy Berkeley Beauties**

Hudson, as well as Lou and I, had all met at a PWP meeting. Robert (Mac) said I could share the following about his 40 years of marriage to wife Dorothy: *'I did not meet my bride of 40 years at a PWP, but at the Long Beach CPO Club after she and some of her lady friends came to the club after a PWP meeting. It was her first visit to the club as one of the ladies told her all the guys there were married and none had a car; boy did I mess up her statement. A year later we were married, thanks to the chance meeting brought about by the PWP.'*

R. McGuire.

Thanks for sharing your story with us Mac. Anyone else wanting to share their story of how they met, contact me at pat\_lilipad\_clark@charter.net.

Prayers have helped and Karen (Zilverberg) Carson is doing better. Let's all pray that her health continues to improve. Thanks, also, to all of you praying for Lou in his battle against cancer. Those of you wanting to share your Christmas joy with a Sailor in harms way, checkout: <http://anysailor.com/index.cfm>. Click on 'where to send' to select a name. I'm planning to pick a gal and Lou is going to select a guy. Also, a group in Renton, WA is busy making stockings for our troops. I've been busy making some that I'll be sending on behalf of the Association and have friends working on some as well. If you'd like to help or know someone who would like to participate, check out Santa's Soldiers at: <http://www.operationssupportourtroops.org/Holidays%20From%20Home/Santa's%20Soldiers%202007.htm>.

I know some of you are aware that each year I enter items in the country's largest county fair, the Los Angeles County Fair. Well this year was no exception. I entered eight items (handmade) and took six, 1<sup>st</sup> place, one 2<sup>nd</sup> place and one 3<sup>rd</sup> place. Now, to decide what I should enter next year!

Now I'd like to introduce Suzanne Schmer, wife of CDR Conrad J. 'Dutch' Schmer, plank owner 1962/64:

Greetings from Nebraska! I'm Suzanne

Schmer, wife of retired CDR Conrad 'Dutch' Schmer. Dutch was with the Berkeley as part of the Commissioning Crew from 1962-1964.

Dutch enlisted in 1952 in the Reserves and went active in 1953. We did not meet until November of 1962 when we were in my sister's wedding party.

After a short stay in Long Beach to find an apartment, as I would be teaching there in the fall of 1963, we headed to Hunter's Point in San Francisco. We lived in a double Quonset that overlooked Candlestick Park. What fun exploring that beautiful city!

Over the years we lived in many exciting cities: San Diego, Newport, Monterey, and Washington D.C. But, the most memorable part of my Navy life was the friends and shipmates we knew and the support that Navy folks gave each other. The long West Pac cruises were difficult but also a source of patriotic pride. The mailman and the grapevine kept us connected.

I'm still active in the real estate business with Coldwell Banker here in Norfolk, NE. It's been 28 years now and I keep threatening to quit, but it's too much fun!

We have three children and eight beautiful granddaughters aged 2 to 19 years. All are special to us as are their parents.

It was nice to meet some of you at the reunion in Branson. We hope to make the next one!

Till next time,

Pat

**Sick Call**



Just a thought – Why not drop a fellow shipmate a note of cheer either with an electronic greeting or snail mail. They are sure to appreciate it and glad to know they are being thought about.

**Lou Clark** – In July, Lou was diagnosed with stomach cancer. He's presently undergoing chemotherapy in hopes of reducing the tumor so it can be surgically removed.

**A special bomb**

Aboard the USS Midway (CVA-41) in October 1965, a special bomb was dropped on North Vietnam from a VA-25 A-1H Skyraider in commemoration of the sixth millionth pound of ordnance expended.



Right after the launch a call came from the bridge, "What the hell was that on 572's right wing?"



Underway Golf Course

Submitted by: ETR2 Brian Hamon 1972-74

**TAPS**



**Layton Lloyd**, plank owner 62/64, passed away on July 31, 2007. He had been suffering from a heart condition for many years and his body finally gave out. He would have celebrated his 65<sup>th</sup> birthday on August 1<sup>st</sup> and his 42nd anniversary on August 7, 2007. He is survived by his wife Betty, four children, five grand-children and two great grandchildren. Submitted by Shannon Nordmann, granddaughter.

**West, J. C., MMC**, M Div. Served (67/68). Passed away Feb 20, 2003.

**Reagan, Bill F.** MMC M Div. passed away Aug 24, 2007. He is survived by his wife, Amanda, and four children Rory, Kyle, Scott and Shannon.

On April 16, in Norfolk, VA, **Thomas David Parham**, the Navy's first black sailor to be promoted to the rank of Captain, passed away. Captain Parham was 87 years old.



The US Navy lost its oldest Navy veteran earlier this year. He was 105 years old. **Lloyd Brown** fought in World War I.

## WW-II revisited

By Jim Barrett

During the early days of my naval career I served on a destroyer escort built during the war. By the time I reported aboard she was already twelve years old. Nevertheless, she had been well taken care of and was now a naval reserve training ship.

About 20 years later I became a member of the Destroyer Escort Sailors Association, which is made up mainly of WW-II veterans. DESA publishes a quarterly newspaper of about 28 pages with extraordinary stories about these special ships. The DE's have a rich history for their performance during the war. Sixteen were lost in action, but only eight were sunk by submarines.

Most of the 565 DE's built (only 479 in U.S. service) were rapidly decommissioned after the war but several remained in service as ASW and Naval Reserve training ships. The majority found their way to the scrap yards or became targets. By the end of the 1950's nearly all of the ships still designated DE's had been decommissioned and replaced with larger DD's. Thirty-six were converted and became radar picket ships, DER's; and 92 became high-speed transports, APD's.

In 1951 one DE, the USS SLATER (DE-766), was taken out of mothballs, transferred to Greece and renamed H.S. Aetos (DE-01). The ship served the Hellenic Navy for nearly 40 years as a training ship and was decommissioned in 1991.

DESA was formed in 1975 and began shopping for a DE soon after to become a museum ship, but to no avail. Several years later they learned that the H.S. Aetos was being decommissioned and began steps to acquire her. The Greeks agreed to let DESA have the ship but they would have to fund the towing back to the U.S. An aggressive campaign was initiated for donations from the members to pay for the tow. By a stroke of luck a tug was going to tow the ex-USS Richard E. Byrd (DDG-23) to Greece to be used as spare parts for the recently acquired DDG's from the U.S. Navy. Therefore, the cost of the tug to bring the ship home would only be for one direction.

DE sailors from around the nation raised \$275,000 for the tow and the ship arrived in New York in 1993 and was docked next to the USS Intrepid. Shortly after volunteers began restoring the former USS SLATER to her WW-II configuration.



In 1997 the City of Albany signed a letter to have the ship permanently located there and she arrived in October of that year. For those that donated to get the ship back home they all became new plankowners of the USS SLATER. For

the past ten years volunteers have worked thousands of hours to get the ship ready for visitors. Obtaining original equipment has been an ongoing challenge, but recently an original SL radar was acquired and is being installed.

Last month I attended the DESA Convention in Albany and for the first time in over 50 years I walked the decks of a ship identical to the one I served on for two years. The nostalgia was overwhelming as I walked through all the spaces and everything began to fall in place. CIC, where I spent most of my time, is smaller than an average bedroom. To be exact, 8.5 feet wide and 14 feet deep. In that confined area we had surface and air search radars, a dead reckoning tracer (DRT), a fathometer, vertical plot and assorted communications including a voice tube to the flying bridge. Normal watch standing was two radarmen, but at GQ it was quite crowded, and no air conditioning. The combination of those conditions in a rolling sea on a DE made life quite interesting.



### COMBAT INFORMATION CENTER

The USS SLATER is now open to the public so if you were in the vicinity of Albany you would find a visit worthwhile. If you miss chipping paint or like to paint they are always looking for volunteers.

There is only three WW-II DE's left in the world and the Slater is the only one in the U.S. Visit the ship's Web site at [www.ussslater.org](http://www.ussslater.org).

DESA now invites all destroyer sailors to join the organization, which remains strong. The DE sailors of WW-II are passing away at a rapid pace and the follow-on generation is warmly received. The DESA News has over 35,000 readers and that publication alone is worth the \$20.00 annual membership fee. For more information visit <http://www.desausa.org>.

### From the Editor:

Coming from a family with newsprint running in our veins, my Dad was a printer, reporter, proof reader and at times Editor, of our home town newspaper, as well as others around the area. I was Ad Editor of my school newspaper and had my own newsletter later for a church I was in. I always thought the Editor should provoke you in to thinking into action on different ideas.

Some my thought provoking, action-thinking Editorial is to get you the Shake Rattle and Roll your brains to roll over and send me SEA STORIES. I am sure you'll tire of mine after a few issues. My email address is [W0WEE@arrl.net](mailto:W0WEE@arrl.net). Yes, I ham it up... Get 'R Done,

Sunny Jim

## USS TRAYER commissioned at RTC Great lakes

If you went through NTC San Diego you were introduced to the USS Recruit (TDE-1), affectionately known as the USS Neversail, a two-thirds mockup a destroyer escort. You may recall stepping up the gangway and saying for the first time, "Request permission to come aboard, Sir."

The USS Recruit was commissioned in 1949 complete with a commissioning pennant, Union Jack and the national ensign. But, in 1967 something unusual happened. Navy civilian employees making a routine manual punch card index inventory of vessels in the San Diego Area were baffled when the USS Recruit was continually rejected.

The computer determined the ship was neither afloat nor tied to a pier. It wasn't in drydock or undergoing repair. And, it wasn't in mothballs. When the Navy discovered that the computer could not classify USS Recruit as a commissioned vessel, it was promptly decommissioned on March 7, 1967.

In 1982 the Recruit, old and weathered, was transformed from a DE platform to a guided missile frigate to catch up with new technology. But that was short lived; NTC San Diego ceased to operate on April 30, 1997 and on May 30, 2000 the property was transferred to the City of San Diego. The good news is that in 2005 the vessel was designated a California Historical Landmark.

The Navy's newest and largest simulator, USS TRAYER (BST-21), was commissioned at the Recruit Training Command, Great Lakes, Illinois on 18 June. Battle Station 21 is a 210-foot Arleigh Burke Class destroyer simulator.



Before recruits graduate from boot camp they spend an entire night on board Trayer loading stores, getting underway, handling mooring lines, manning general quarters stations, stopping floods and combating shipboard fires. It is as close to being underway as a recruit can get before they receive orders to their first ship. The ship actually rests in a pool of 90,000 gallons of water.

Battle Stations 21 began in 1997 as part of a 10-year, \$763 million recapitalization of recruit training facilities. For more detailed information visit [www.news.navy.mil/](http://www.news.navy.mil/).

### Humor

#### Why do you want to join the Navy?

Having passed the enlistment physical, Jon was asked by the doctor, "Why do you want to join the Navy, son?" My father said it'd be a good idea, sir. Oh? And what does your father do? He's in the Army, sir.