

# NAVY news

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ISSUE 05 2007

## Sharp End of the Thin Blue Line!

### Keeping The Coast Clear

*"Sea defence is of utmost importance.  
I believe in the need for vigilance and readiness..."*

### NSFs Who Soldier On

*"It's not so much about the tangible recognition,  
but the sense of achievement and experience... that matters most!"*





## Republic of Singapore Navy



**RADM Chew Men Leong**  
Chief of Navy

# A Word from CNV

The roles of the navies have been changing and expanding over the years, increasingly, keeping sea lanes safe and secure has taken on greater importance and has come into sharper focus. Maritime security is one critical issue that ranks high in Singapore's national security priorities, as with many countries around the world.

Contemporary challenges to maritime security cut across national boundaries. They are multi-faceted in that they tend to cross sectoral boundaries between enforcement agencies, port authorities and shipping associations. No single organisation or country has the complete wherewithal to tackle the multifarious maritime threats by itself. Instead, a new paradigm of national security is necessary, one that is founded on strong inter-agency co-operation and greater international collaboration.

The RSN has been evolving to meet this new challenge. Some of the changes have included strengthening COSCOM's capacity and capability to safeguard our waters through the introduction of multi-crews and the experimentation in unmanned maritime vehicles. The FLEET & COSCOM too have had to share the load in force protection, and build competencies in tracking shipping and boarding. Today, maritime security activities are a standard feature in their range of exercises.

At the same time, the RSN has been working closely with multiple agencies both on the homefront and international level to develop comprehensive maritime security solutions. A demonstration of the close ties that we have developed was evident at the recent annual Ex APEX, which involved multiple homefront agencies such as the Police Coast Guard, the Maritime and Port Authority and the Immigration and Checkpoints Authority. The successful conduct of Ex APEX also demonstrated our capabilities to keep our waters safe.

The security and well-being of our countries are linked together more intimately than we could have imagined only a decade ago. The confluence of greater dependency on sea lanes for trade flow and the rise in the tide of non-conventional and terrorist threats pose new contemporary challenges to navies worldwide. The need for response by navies to these challenges has altered their priorities and capability sets. The RSN will continue to work closely with our partners to ensure the security of the regional waters, to ensure the sovereignty of Singapore and to contribute to the economic growth of our nation.

## Courtesy Calls



**RADM Carol Pottenger**,  
Commander, Expeditionary Strike Group 7,  
Task Force 76, United States Navy



**RADM Katsutoshi Kawano**,  
Director Operations and Plans Department,  
Maritime Staff Office, Japan Maritime  
Self-Defense Force



**RADM Nora W. Tyson**,  
Commander, Logistics Group,  
Western Pacific United States Navy

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Photo by CPL Robin Ong

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Photo by CPL Robin Ong  
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# RSS Formidable's Fine Form & Sleek Lines during EX MALABAR 07



In the distant shores of idyllic Port Blair, situated in the Andaman Islands, all eyes on the wharf were peeled towards a sleek grey silhouette that was gradually pulling into port. RSS Formidable (FMD) was making her first overseas port call since her commissioning on 5 May. This port call also marked the start of 185 (FFS) SQN's first foreign exercise: Ex MALABAR 07 on 4-9 Sep.



Successful participation in Ex MALABAR marked a major milestone for FMD and for the squadron, as the frigate's operational envelope was stretched along various fronts: launch/recovery and tactical deployment of ASW aircraft (including dipping sonar-equipped helos), gaining a better understanding of the RSN's future Naval Helicopter (through control of the USN and JMSDF's SH60s), and performing Ground Control Intercept control of USN aircraft.

During FMD's stay in port, she hosted a VIP Indian Navy (IN) delegation onboard for dinner and several ship visits for IN sailors. Comd 1 FLOT/CO 185 SQN COL Wellman Wan and CO FMD LTC Frederick Chew also made courtesy calls to top Andaman and Nicobar Islands Command officials.



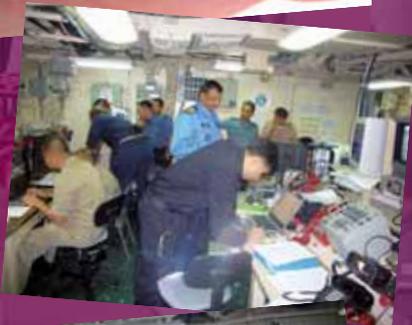
At the end of the exercise, FMD was voted the "sleekest ship with the finest lines". FMD's performance also drew compliments from other participant ships. Reflecting on the exercise, LTC Frederick Chew, CO FMD, had this to say: "Participation in EX MALABAR provided an excellent opportunity to showcase the frigate's capabilities and to enhance the RSN's interoperability with other navies. I am glad that FMD could do her part for the RSN, and that everything went smoothly. The crew worked really hard and should be proud of themselves."

*Article contributed by 2WO Hoo Hui Seng & CPT Nicholas Lee*

## EX SEACAT 2007



Involving several Navies and Coast Guards from Singapore, Malaysia, Brunei, Indonesia, Philippines and the United States of America, EX SEACAT (Southeast Asia Cooperation Against Terrorism) is aimed towards ensuring that the Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCs) traversing the region are kept safe and free from threats to shipping like piracy and terrorism.



This year, RSS Brave represented Singapore's Coastal Command (COSCOM) in the annual multinational exercise. In the exercise, the United States Naval Support ship, PVT Franklin J Phillips acted as a highly sensitive vessel transiting through the regional waterways. RSS Brave was subsequently deployed to provide close escort to the ship in the Singapore Straits, as well as to conduct Vessel Boarding, Search and Seizure (VBSS).



RSS Brave's Boarding Team had been well prepared for the exercise. Said SSG Zen Lim, Witnessing Officer of the RSS BRAVE Boarding team: "Although RSS BRAVE's routine was hectic, the boarding team was able to cope with the training to accomplish our mission effectively during the exercise. Our team was able to learn from past year's experiences and are now more proficient in such operations. Such exercises are also beneficial to our Navy as our team gains valuable experience working in close partnership with the other national and multinational agencies."

*Article contributed by CPT Wee Hong Tat*



## Minister for Defence Visits VGD Submarine Crew

Minister for Defence Mr Teo Chee Hean, accompanied by senior government officials which included Singapore's Ambassador to Sweden Mr Quek Poh Huat, paid a visit to the first crew of the Vastergötland (VGD)-class submarine a visit at the naval town of Karlskrona on 31 Aug.

Minister Teo was treated to a short trip on board HMS Östergötland, the Swedish submarine which had been providing training for the Singaporean crew. During the trip, Minister Teo witnessed first-hand the type of training the crew underwent and also took the opportunity to dine with the crew.

During the dialogue session with the detachment, Minister Teo emphasised to the crew, of the importance maintaining a high standard of operations on board the submarines. Concluding the visit, Minister Teo hosted a dinner for the detachment and their families. ~KS



## Minister's Visit to RSS Intrepid

On 10 Sep, Minister for Defence Mr Teo Chee Hean witnessed first-hand the capabilities of the navy's latest asset – the Formidable-class frigates. After arriving onboard Intrepid on a Super Puma with Chief of Navy RADM Chew Men Leong, he was warmly received by Fleet Commander RADM Tan Kai Hoe and Commander 1st FLOT/CO 185 SQN COL Wellman Wan.

Intrepid served as the command node at sea, co-ordinating high-tempo multi-dimensional warfare scenarios. The demonstration at sea was successfully executed by leveraging on upon the advanced force-multiplying capabilities of the frigate's Combat Management System, and the confident performance of warfare duties by WOSR, who have since undertaken the role of Cluster Supervisors in the frigates' CICs. This was a role traditionally performed by Principal Warfare Officers.

Besides proving the capabilities of the frigate to take charge of and execute complex warfare missions, the operational demonstration also clearly showcased the Navy's professional empowerment of its committed and capable personnel, with higher operational responsibilities entrusted upon our WOSR corps to contribute to the Navy's mission success.

*Article contributed by CPT Shawn Tham*





## Gulf Deployment Sending-Off Ceremony

"In this interconnected world, instability within Iraq and the wider Gulf region... can exacerbate the spread of transnational terrorism," said CNV RADM Chew Men Leong during the sending-off ceremony for the Task Group to be deployed to the Gulf. These words served to remind the Task Group of Singapore's commitment towards the international community and the importance of such contributions.

Held on 1 Sep, family and friends of the members of the Task Group assembled at Changi Naval Base to wish their loved ones a safe voyage and a successful mission. Numbering 180 personnel, the Task Group is being led by LTC Li Lit Siew, CO 191 SQN.

"We believe our son will return from the mission a more independent and responsible person," said Mr Tay Ping Yew, whose son is participating in the deployment. "Of course we are worried, but this is a chance which not many people get!"

"Preparing logistics in the Gulf is definitely going to be an eye-opener," said MSG Yogesvari Mary Anne. "I am looking forward to this challenge and it will most definitely benefit me in my capabilities as Chief Logistics on board RSS Persistence."

The ceremony ended with RSS Persistence sailing into the western horizon with relatives and friends waving proud farewells to their loved ones headed for their next mission. ~KS



### Backpaddle

### The RSN's Contributions to East Timor

The RSN took part in one of its most significant peacekeeping support operations back in 1999 under UN International Force for East Timor (INTERFET). As part of the 250 SAF personnel that took part in the multinational effort to restore peace and security to East Timor, RSN sent two of its ex-County Class LSTs, RSS Intrepid and RSS Excellence, to provide logistics support for the mission. In the following year, RSS Perseverance was sent to support the transition from INTERFET to United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET).

In his speech at the medal presentation ceremony for INTERFET on 2 May 2000, then-Minister for Defence Dr Tony Tan commented: "I am happy to note that our contributions have been useful in helping to bring peace and stability to East Timor in a relatively short period of time." ~KS



# Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy visit to CNB

Students from the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (LKYSPP) paid a visit to CNB on 12 Oct to gain a better understanding of the RSN and some of the policies that can be adapted back in their own countries.

Welcoming the LKYSPP was LTC Spencer Ngui. Besides a brief to provide the visitors with an understanding of the structure and missions of the RSN, they were also brought on a tour of RSS Endeavour. COL(NS) Sukhvinder Singh Chopra, who had recently left the service, was also on hand to share some of his interesting experiences from his former service days.

The students managed to leave with some valuable lessons on how the RSN is able to sustain its operations despite the lean manpower, relative to other navies in the world. Mr Aung Naing from Myanmar was also impressed with the technologies developed by the RSN that made normal tasks manpower efficient. "The fact that this ship [RSS Endeavour] can be managed by 65 people is really amazing," he said. ~LL

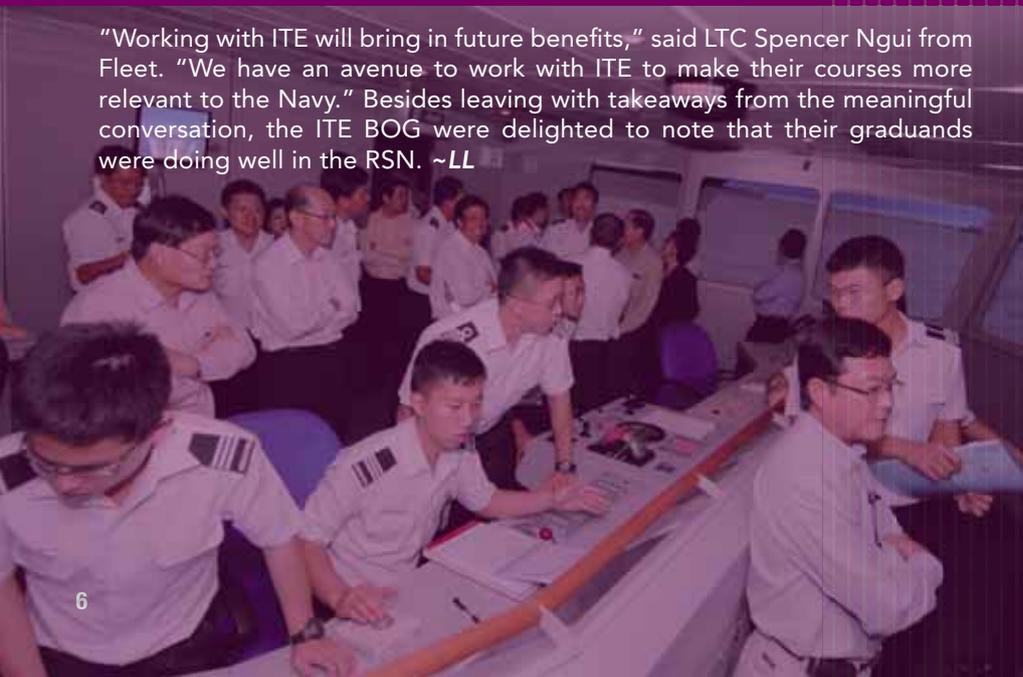


## ITE BOG visits CNB

A group of our naval specialists, who are ITE graduates, helped lead the Institute of Technical Education's Board of Governors (BOG) visit to Changi Naval Base on 3 Sep. The visit, hosted by the Fleet Commander RADM Tan Kai Hoe, comprised of a general brief followed by visits to both the stealth frigate RSS Formidable and the Landing Ship Tank RSS Endeavour.

The BOG was showed around the two platforms by the naval ITE graduands and were shown the workings and different operational aspects of the ships.

"Working with ITE will bring in future benefits," said LTC Spencer Ngui from Fleet. "We have an avenue to work with ITE to make their courses more relevant to the Navy." Besides leaving with takeaways from the meaningful conversation, the ITE BOG were delighted to note that their graduands were doing well in the RSN. ~LL



# 36th FLEET Anniversary

Cheers and laughter were heard from Fleet personnel at Civil Service Club@Bukit Batok on 30 Aug. In a departure from usual practice, Fleet celebrated its 36th Anniversary outside the premises of Changi Naval Base this year.

Following a cake cutting and awards presentation ceremony for personnel and units that had done well in the Fleet, the fun started for Fleet personnel. Besides the bowling and snooker competition, the personnel enjoyed themselves in the water theme park, which included the exciting tsunami

waves in the wave pool, the spiral water slides, and the serenity of the lazy pool.

Fleet Commander Tan Kai Hoe joined in the games by pitting his snooker skills with members of the Fleet after the competition. For the record, HQ 1st Flot and HQ Fleet emerged as the winners for the snooker and bowling games respectively.

*Article contributed by MAJ Kumar*



## TRACOM Anniversary 2007

Approximately 700 men and women from TRACOM made a beeline for Bottletree Park in Yishun to commemorate their 13th Anniversary on 7 Sep. The line-up of activities ensured that there was something for everyone – from fishing, prawn-fishing, arts and crafts, to treasure hunts.

The event served to forge esprit-de-corps among staff and trainees of TRACOM, and to strengthen the bonds within and between families.

A game segment was also carefully crafted for participants to develop their attributes of leadership, fitness, courage, team spirit, discipline, resourcefulness, and adaptability.

TRACOM staff and their family members formed teams and competed in activities such as decorating rubber/sand art with a TRACOM theme, fishing for prawns, basket-bola, five-stones, shooting toy soldiers with rubberbands and solving jigsaw puzzles

LTC Tan Kai Cheong, Comd IMOS, commented: "The games were well crafted, and it suited participants of all ages." 2WO Jeremy Wee's comment rounded up the whole day: "I was having so much fun that I was unaware that time just flew by!"

*Article contributed by 2WO Chee Soy Fong*



# 38th Command and Staff Course

The honours of graduating at the top the class for the Navy cohort went to MAJ Tan Kian Wee for the 38th Command and Staff Course (CSC). Reflecting back on the last nine months, MAJ Tan said: "The most important aspect from the course is the forging of friendships and relationships with my fellow coursemates, We have all graduated as professional SAF officers and the knowledge gained from the experiences is invaluable."

A milestone course aimed at preparing SAF Officers to assume mid-level command and staff appointments, the Command and Staff Course (CSC) introduces officers to new operational domains, which enhances their knowledge of military strategy and the conduct of military operations. This year, 12 naval officers graduated from the course on 12 Sep. The course also included study visits to some ASEAN and regional countries to provide the officers with deeper insights into the developments of these countries. ~KS



MAJ Tan Kian Wee receiving his award from Defence Minister



## 2nd NOC Voyage Viva Volcano!

Kangaroo steaks, whale sightings and even live erupting volcanoes! These were just some of the things the 2nd Navigating Officer Course (NAVOC) trainees experienced while aboard RSS Endurance for two weeks during the passage from Muara, Brunei to Cairns, Australia recently.

Life was hectic as very few of the trainees had experiences on large vessels and had to quickly adjust to the different navigation systems and manoeuvring characteristics of a bigger ship. This is so that they could prepare for ocean passage from Brunei to Australia. This was on top of the busy lesson schedule and the daily watches on the bridge. NAS Directing Staff (Navigation) MAJ Sylvan shared that the key purpose of the course was "to equip selected officers with the skills and knowledge needed to navigate larger vessels in the RSN – the stealth Frigates and the Landing Ship Tanks."

Despite the packed schedule, it was not all work and no play. "We had our fair share of adventure as well," said CPT Seah Seng Long. As he recalled vividly: "I was on [duty on] the Bridge when the lookout reported smoke and fire from an island about 15 miles away. I peered through the Night



Vision Device, and behold, Batu Tara volcano was erupting! We could see lava flowing down the slopes."

Article contributed by CPT Tong Hong Tat, 2<sup>nd</sup> NAVOC

# Navy Captain Bags Second NSmen of the Year Award in a Row!



CPT(NS) Poh receiving the SAF NSmen of the Year Award

When asked about the motivational force behind his zest for his service to the nation, CPT(NS) Poh said: "To lead, to excel and to overcome. It's a great achievement to lead a group of men from all walks of life, to excel as one in their training and to overcome all the differences to be an operationally ready force."

This year, the NSmen of the Year Awards were presented during the NS40 Commemoration Dinner where CPT(NS) Poh received the SAF NSmen of the Year Award. Prior to receiving this award, CPT(NS) Poh also received the Formation NSmen of the Year Award in 2006, making it two NSmen of the Year Awards in a row!

Recognising the contributions of NSmen towards the security of our nation, the Singapore Armed Forces has been awarding outstanding NSmen who have gone the extra mile in their service to the nation. Since 1994, two categories of awards for these individuals have been presented annually – the SAF NSmen of the Year Award and the Formation NSmen of the Year Award. ~KS

National Education (NE) is the building block of society's commitment towards their country. While various organisations have been conducting NE activities, CPT(NS) Poh Sek Khim has also conducted his own NE sessions to remind his men of the importance of commitment. "I have implemented an initiative within my unit to remind my men of the purpose of National Service and their role and duty in this big organisation. With this understanding, good command and control of the group is formed and results in increased operational efficiency!"

## Long Service Award & SAF Tour Awards



The Long Service and SAF Tour Awards, organised by the Naval Personnel Department, was held on 7 Sep at the Victory Hall in RSS Panglima. The Long Service and SAF Tour Award was graced by Chief of Navy RADM Chew Men Leong to recognise and appreciate deserving recipients who have contributed and dedicated their services to the organisation through

the many years. A total of 10 SAF Tour Award and 173 Long Service Awards were presented to military personnel, DXOs and DSTA personnel serving in the RSN. After the presentation, recipients and their spouses were treated to a reception at the RSN Central Mess Wardroom.



One of the recipients, Ms Michelle Lum from HQ TRACOM said: "The SAF Tour Award is indeed a pleasant surprise to me! I really appreciate the welfare and goodwill of the organisation for recognising the value of loyalty. This award certainly serves as motivation for not only myself, but for others as well, to accomplish our mission." ~RO





# MARSEC

## Keeping

Over the years, the Republic of Singapore Navy has been developing its capabilities to meet the demands of the rapidly evolving security landscape. Maritime Security (MARSEC) has never been more important, with the rise in the tide of terrorist threats world wide. Singapore's surrounding waterways serve not only as a Sea Lines Of Communication for global maritime trade, they also are a major factor in the continued prosperity of the island state's economy. The Navy News team dedicates the following two pages to the hardworking men and women who have been contributing tirelessly to ensure the security of our waters.

Since 1988, COSCOM has been formed to ensure the safety and security of the Singapore Strait and the immediate seaward defence of Singapore. True to their motto "The Frontline Force - 247", the personnel in COSCOM have been working 24 hours, 7 days a week throughout the year to fulfil this task.

One of the many initiatives by COSCOM in recent years to improve RSN's maritime security capabilities was the introduction of Accompanying Sea Security Team (ASSET) in 2005. The ASSET team features small teams of armed sea marshals deployed on certain vessels as a form of deterrence against potential threats to shipping that call at, or depart from, Singapore. Should anything be amiss onboard a ship, the ASSET team will also double as an early-warning team, further enhancing the protection of the vessels and the surrounding waters.

"We are now talking about guarding our homeland from terrorist attacks and that is the factor of most concern to us now. Shipping is one of our country's main revenue. As such, sea security is a must and is very important for the survival of our country," said MSG Joe Tay, an ASSET team member. SSG Glen Wee added: "We do our duty 24/7 and see lots of ships coming in and out of our waters. The ASSET team could see four or five boardings or even more each day. 3 or 4 teams may be activated, even standby teams may have to come back to conduct boardings."

Recognising the importance of the mission that the COSCOM personnel have taken on, senior management from MINDEF and SAF have been regularly visiting COSCOM units and holding dialogue sessions with its personnel to gain a better understanding of their job and the issues/concerns they face.

One such visit was on 24 Sep where RADM Chew Men Leong, paid his first visit as CNV to COSCOM and 182/9 SQN. Besides sharing his insights and perceptives on MARSEC and he also lent a listening ear to HQ COSCOM & 182/9 SQN personnel.

The threat of terrorism has been growing rapidly over the years. It is not possible for COSCOM or even RSN to manage these wide-ranging and varied threats alone. To accomplish this mission, the RSN is working hand-in-hand with other agencies to carry out and accomplish its mission.

At the national level, close ties have been developed with the Police Coast Guard (PCG), the Maritime and Port Authority (MPA), and the Immigration and Checkpoint Authority (ICA) to ensure the security



# on Our Radar

## Things Straight & Narrow on the Water Margin



Signing of the Joint SOP Agreement between the RSN and ICA



Permanent Secretary for Defence Mr Chiang Chie Foo visiting Ex APEX



Signing of the HARTS Joint SOP Agreement between the RSN, ICA and PCG

of the Singapore Strait. This is epitomised by the annual multi-agency exercise, codenamed Ex APEX. Conducted from 13 to 24 Aug, this year's exercise featured some 2,000 personnel from the RSN, the RSAF, the Army, and the maritime partners. Aimed at improving co-ordination between the government agencies, this year's EX APEX featured large-scale inter-agency collaboration, sophisticated unmanned technology and the launch of the Harbour Craft Transponder System (HARTS).

The exercise featured challenging scenarios in order to test the capabilities of the participating agencies. The exercise took place on both land and sea as operations were conducted in both COSCOM Headquarters and at sea. Manned by personnel from the SAF, MPA, PCG and ICA, the exercise offered many opportunities for the various maritime agencies to work in close co-ordination with each other.

SSG M. Suresh, a Surveillance Supervisor from 181 SQN had this to say: "MARSEC is at the core of what we all are doing. We work closely with PCG and MPA to keep our waters safe."

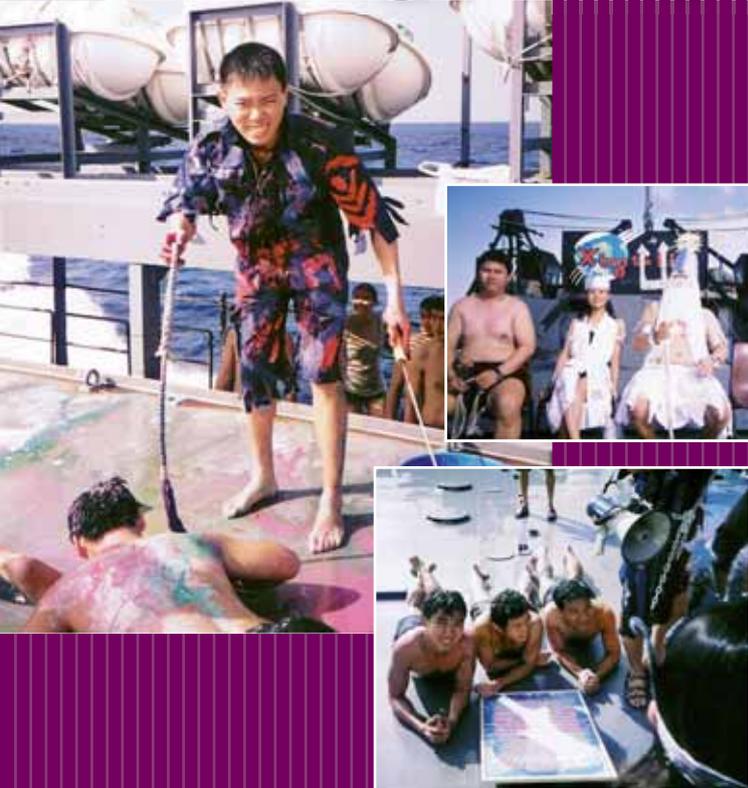
Reinforcing COSCOM's commitment to MARSEC, CPL Lee Hong Ern from 181 SQN added: "As it has always been emphasised, sea defence is of utmost importance. I believe in the need for vigilance and readiness to detect and respond fast to developing threats. For example, illegal immigrants sometimes just charge up to Singapore in their small boats, leaving us with only a few minutes to react. We have to call PCG as quickly as possible so that they could deploy their vessels immediately to the location to investigate."

The RSN has also taken vital steps towards ensuring the close collaboration not only with local agencies, but foreign navies as well. For example, the Indo-Sin Co-ordinated Patrols has provided a platform for the exchange of information between the RSN, Singapore Police Coast Guard, Indonesian Navy and Indonesian Police. Since its inauguration in 1992, sea robberies in the Singapore Strait and the Phillip Channel have been greatly reduced and brought under control.

In addition, maritime security serials have also been added to the bilateral and multi-lateral exercises with other navies in recent years. One such exercise is EX CARAT. Initiated in 1995, it is aimed at enhancing interoperability and professional co-operation between the United States Navy, US Coast Guard and the RSN through mutually beneficial training exercises. While focusing on conventional maritime warfare competencies, anti-terrorist exercises have also been integrated into EX CARAT to help both navies to further improve on their abilities to tackle various terrorist threats. ~KS



# Crossing the Equator Line Ceremony



Crossing the Equator Line is one of the most sacred of naval ceremonies deeply etched with tradition and till this day is still religiously practiced. It can be said as a rite of passage for all new comers to the realm of the sea and something all salty sailors can relate to. This article will uncover some of the lore and legend behind this unique naval tradition so that the next time you go through this ceremony, as a participant or a role player, it would be even more meaningful:

**Some Useful Points** (you should read before your next crossing the line ceremony)

**Shellbacks** – Personnel who have crossed the equator and participated in the ceremony.

**Pollywog** – Or more dearly referred to as “slimy” pollywog, are personnel who have not yet crossed the equator, and must endure the ceremony at the hands of the Shellbacks before being accepted into their numbers.

## Did you know?

The term “wog” has been crossed into the Scientology religion, where it refers to the unconverted. This is probably due to the founder of the Church of Scientology, Ron Hubbard, was once a junior officer in the Navy.

**King Neptune** – The most senior shellback AKA Neptunus Rex, is the Roman sea god who originated from the god of fresh water but later became associated with the Greek sea god Poseidon. Poseidon is one of the three sons of Kronos (Zeus, Hades and Poseidon) who drew the lot of ruling the sea instead of the underworld or heaven.

**Neptune’s trident** – Poseidon has always been associated with carrying a three-pronged spear, the trident.

**Queen Amphitrite** – Consort to Poseidon. Pollywogs are not allowed to look Queen Amphitrite directly in her eye, for they are deemed unworthy of her “beauty”, failing which, the offender shall have to be dealt with severely.

**Triton** – AKA the “Royal Baby”, merman son of Poseidon and Amphitrite. This character is usually played by the fattest chief onboard.

**Davy Jones** – Loyal scribe of King Neptune. There are a few explanations of the origins of this mysterious figure. Some say that he is a fearsome pirate who sank to the bottom of the sea when crossing the equator. He now patrols the equator on his killer whale boarding any vessel that dares to cross this realm. The other explanation is that it comes from the phrase “Duppy Jonah”, duppy being the African West Indies name for “ghost” and Jonah being the Old Testament prophet who was thrown into the sea. To go to Davy Jones’ locker is to be buried at sea.

## The Ceremony Proper

Traditionally, the night before the line crossing ceremony takes place, King Neptune (played by a suitably sized crew member), the most senior of all shellbacks will send a messenger to the Captain of the ship. He will state his intent to board the ship and summoning a list of slimy pollywogs to appear before him. The list of pollywogs does not exclude any uninitiated individuals because rank, seniority or age does not matter.

During the ceremony, the pollywogs, under the supervision and direction of King Neptune and his helpers, will go through a series of challenging and difficult actions. If the pollywogs are able to endure through the ceremony, they will be proclaimed as shellbacks by King Neptune in the presence of his entire retinue. Each new shellback will receive a fancy certificate as proof of his initiation but lost of it might mean that he or she shall have no excuse not to be re-initiated in the ceremony during the next transit across the Equator!

## An Endearing & Enduring Tradition

One might ask why this tradition has endured centuries and is still religiously practiced by many navies today. The truth lies in the fact that as there are imaginary lines that we travel through and we attach special significance to these occasions to mark our experiences at sea. Enthusiasm for this age-old practice has not waned due to the bonding of the ship’s crew having gone through the fun-filled activities associated with crossing the line!

“It was a novel experience for me as a midshipman to go through the equator crossing tradition. Being ‘punished’ together as a batch was rare and that opportunity came with the equator crossing and sure helped us to bond as a batch!”  
- 2LT Andy Siow, AO RSS INDEPENDENCE

“Having been through an Equator crossing makes me a proud member of the Navy. It is a tradition unique to the Navy and the fun-filled event makes my life in service memorable.”  
- 1SG Jackie Thang, CTAS RSS VALOUR

**Article contributed by CPT Christopher Tan and CPT Herbert Pang**

# MSTD 02/07

On 4 Aug, 40 Midshipmen embarked on a 42-day long voyage, visiting three ports-of-call - Ho Chi Minh (Vietnam), Muara (Brunei) and Cairns (Australia), to experience for themselves what life at sea is all about.

Setting off on their voyage, the midshipmen were subjected to a rigorous schedule consisting of lessons, tests, presentations and bridge-watch keeping, to name a few. Sleep was limited to only a few hours a day and the cadets had to overcome the many challenging tasks they faced daily.

"We pressed on," said MID Jonathan Ma Kuan Chau. "Knowing that this was part of a training programme to induct us into what life at sea was about, we eventually adapted to grabbing whatever little sleep we could, whenever and wherever while continuing to carry out our duties."

Recalling a particular occasion onboard the ship, MID Wong Wen Yi said: "One memorable event that was conducted out at sea was the Defaulter's Parade - a form of corrective training meant to stiffen discipline in the batch. Our first defaulter's parade tested the batch's unity. What occurred was a 'tornado' where we were required to take out our mattresses, blankets and pillows and pile them accordingly on the tank deck, all within a limited time frame. Change parade followed suit, from our coveralls to PT attire. The takeaway was that the batch [of MIDS] was able to work efficiently together when pushed, and understood that this had to be a sustainable team effort, not a one-off display."

After five days out at sea MSTD, the cadets arrived at their first port-of-call. "Ho Chi Minh City will always be of special significance to us midshipmen as it was our very first port-of-call. Beside the sights and sounds that struck us once we stepped ashore, we also experienced what mariners refer to as 'sea legs' which is the sensation that the land is rolling and swaying like the sea. It certainly was a unique experience 'bouncing' up and down the winding paths of Ben Thanh Market that first night," MID Desmond Zhuo recollected. The cadets also had the opportunity to speak with a number of senior officers and some Singaporean businessmen residing in Ho Chi Minh City at the cocktail reception onboard RSS Endurance. "I gained much insight into Vietnamese culture and way of life beyond what one can learn from textbooks," MID Zhuo added.

The cadets' next destination was to Muara, Brunei. "Being one of the richest countries in South-East Asia, it boasted a couple of places of interests, one of which was the night

market," said MID Ma. "Located just a short walk away from the shopping mall, the open-air night market brought back memories of home to us. Similar to a typical Pasar Malam, it had a wide variety of food that was sold at really value-for-money low prices. A typical meal of Nasi Ayam for just a dollar! It definitely was a gastronomic experience!"

The final port was Cairns. As the cadets came alongside in the harbour, they were greeted by a soft cool drizzle and a rainbow falling just beside our ship. "On our first day there, we visited the Royal Australian Navy base, HMAS Cairns, and went on board their new patrol craft. It was great learning - observing how other navies operate their ships and the different systems they employ. The next day, we had friendly games of soccer and volleyball with our Australian counterpart. Later that evening, we were treated to a sumptuous meal of authentic Aussie barbecue back at the base. The servicemen and women of the two navies certainly got to know each other better during the port call," recalled MID Wong.

"As we left Cairns and headed for home, we reflected on what was a very enriching experience overall. Despite the tough training we had to undergo, this was part and parcel of the highlights that made this voyage an unforgettable one. We got to learn a lot about seamanship, astro navigation, and life on the sea," said MID Ma. "And after all this testing of our character and mettle, these 42 days certainly made us better men - stronger and more knowledgeable mighty men of the Republic of Singapore Navy!" ~KS



# APSN Excellent Service Award (Silver) to 182/189

182/189 SQN has been awarded the APSN (Association for Persons with Special Needs) Excellent Service Award (Silver). The award is given to organisations that have contributed significantly to their adopted institutions. This year's award was presented to the Squadron's representatives by Mr Gan Kim Yong (MOS for Education) at the Civil Service Club on 20 Oct. Receiving the award on behalf of the Squadron were MAJ Lee Soon Tat, CO RSS FREEDOM Crew 1 and 1SG Derrick Ang Wei Jun, who was chief co-ordinator for the Squadron.

The relationship between the Squadron and Katong School can be traced back to the 1980s. This carried on until now where the crew members regularly catch up with the students through events such as cycling in Pulau Ubin, the COSCOM Chinese New Year Celebrations and recently, the RSN Open House at Changi Naval Base.

The moving of Katong School from their old premise at La Salle Street to New Upper Changi Road saw about 100 crew members from the Squadron volunteering their personal time to help the school move equipment to the new premises without the help of professional movers.

1SG Ang spoke about his role as the Chief Co-ordinator: "I liaised with the staff from the school to look at how we can organise events for the students at least once every quarter. Our work will not stop here and we will continue to do our part to help the students fulfill the vision of the school, which is to provide our children with the necessary skills for independence and integration into society by developing their potential to the maximum."

"This award is a recognition of the long-standing relationship between the school and the Squadron. I am particularly touched when I see our men and women spending their personal time for the school amidst our work at the Frontline, 24/7. This speaks a lot of the people we have in this Formation – Cohesive and Committed in all that we do, including extending our care to others in our wider community who need them," said MAJ Lee.

**Article contributed by  
1SG Derrick Ang**



MAJ Lee Soon Tat and 1SG Derrick Ang holding the award with pride

## Community Chest SHARE Awards

The annual Community Chest Awards Presentation Ceremony is organised by the Community Chest as a gesture of appreciation towards corporations and organisations that actively and consistently contribute towards society. The RSN, as an organisation, is no exception.

On 16 Oct, the SHARE Awards were presented to the various organisations that had contributed to the SHARE Programme. The SHARE Programme allows an organisation or an individual to donate to the Community Chest regularly to help the disadvantaged.

The SHARE Platinum Award is awarded in recognition to an organisation's regular monthly contributions through the SHARE Programme. Receiving this award was the Naval Surface Warfare Centre (NSuWC), RSS Chieftain and RSS Conqueror. Also, the 5-Year Outstanding SHARE Award was presented to Changi Maintenance Base, Changi Naval Base, NSuWC and Tuas Maintenance Base.

"Contributing to the Community Chest has always been an integral part of the identity of the crew," said LTC Steven Tan, Commanding Officer of RSS Chieftain. "We know that there are people out there who are less fortunate than us and we hope that through our contributions, we are able to bring some cheer to others. The act of giving reminds us constantly to be thankful for what we have." ~KS



LTC Alec Lim receiving the award on behalf of RSS Chieftain



COL Ding Chin Kee,  
RADM(Ret) Kwek Siew Jin and  
LTC Steven Tan



# NSFs who Volunteer To Extend Service!

National Service is a rite of passage for male Singaporeans, spanning across two years of their lives. For most, the final few months of a serviceman would entail the gradual transition from military life back to civilian life as they approach their 'Operationally Ready Date (ORD). While most would start to brace themselves for study or work in 'civi street', a group of highly motivated NSFers have decided to extend their familiar length of service beyond 2 years, in a scheme known as VES, or short for Voluntary Extension of Service.

For a period not exceeding 9 months, NSFers may choose to extend their service immediately upon ORD, provided there is an organisational need for them to do so. Some may think this to be a still-born scheme, but from their perspective, 2SG Christopher Yap, 3SG Leon Lim and CPL Siew Chin Hoong have found VES to be a most excellent idea. *Navy News* talks to the young men to find out what drives these men to go the extra mile, serving their nation with pride and conviction beyond the normal tour of duty.

## 2SG Christopher Yap & 3SG Leon Lim

Hailing from Changi Defence Squadron's (CDS) training wing, these two 22-year old instructors are among six Sea Soldiers currently serving onboard RSS Persistence in its mission to support the reconstruction of Iraq in the Arabian Gulf. The chance-of-a-lifetime knock at their doors could not have been timed any better – both were in the midst of finishing up their final NSF leave days and contemplating life after the Navy.

3SG Lim was not one to let such an opportunity slip through his fingers: "I'm a person who believes that when opportunity knocks on my door, I will answer that call... this mission is indeed a rare opportunity for any NSF, allowing us to apply what we have been trained to do in a real operational environment." Along with 2SG Yap, he had extended his service by four months to participate in the mission.

"Both our family members and friends have been very supportive of our decision. Even before training commenced,



3SG Lim (2nd from left) and 2SG Yap (2nd from right) with CDS commanders at their OBO sendoff.



Holding the Chief's fort: CPL Siew.

senior officers have spoken to us and gave us strong words of encouragement to do our best for this deployment," said 2SG Yap.

## CPL Siew Chin Hoong

"Siew!", as the people of the CNV Office fondly calls him, takes on a wholly different scope of responsibilities. Although exposure to the sun at his workplace is occasional, the heat he has to deal with on a regular basis can fray the most competent of NSF clerks. Handling protocol assignments, registry work and logistics for the office, CPL Siew is a man on the move juggling coolly the many assignments he has been tasked.

"My colleagues are a really cohesive bunch and it encourages me to know that I am working with people that I treasure and appreciate," said CPL Siew. With the extension of his service, CPL Siew will continue widening his horizons while working with various MINDEF and external agencies. Next year's inaugural Singapore Airshow '08 is one event to tackle during his extended stay, and having dealt with the complex nature of organising

something on a grand-scale such as IMDEX 07 in May, CPL Siew looks forward to working on his next major event.

What's in it for our NSFers after their extended ORD has come to pass? Both 2SG Yap and 3SG Lim intend to work in the private sector and continue with studies in the following year, while CPL Siew's endeavours will take him to the Life Sciences Department in NUS. Leaving us with some parting inspirational thoughts -

2SG Yap: "Although many of us onboard RSS Persistence come from different units, we are ultimately serving our country, Singapore."

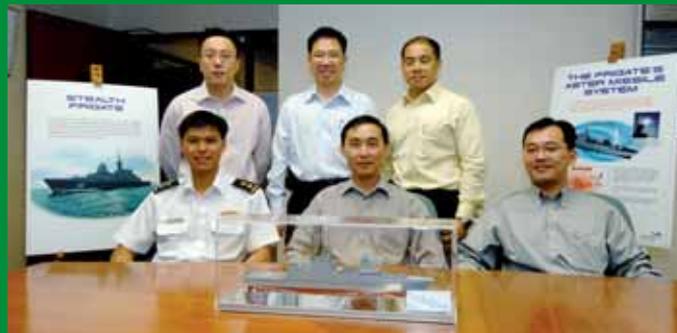
CPL Siew: "In my opinion, it's not so much about the tangible recognition, but the deep sense of achievement and experience gained from my extended stay in the Navy that matters most!" ~RO

# DTP Awards 2007

The Formidable-class stealth frigate was conceptualised with developmental details firmed-up only around 2000, but has since become a reality. On 26 Oct, the project team, made up of personnel from the RSN, Defence Science & Technology Agency, DSO National Laboratories, Singapore Technologies Electronics and Singapore Technologies Marine, won the Defence Technology Prize (DTP) Team (Engineering) Award for its significant contributions towards defence science and technology.

The team had successfully combined and integrated more than 15 state-of-the-art combat, management and other complex automation features and systems to develop the Combat Management System of the stealth frigates. The innovations and ingenious solutions managed to meet the RSN's requirements of a class of ship that would be able to efficiently utilise the ship's manpower, enabling the Formidable-class stealth frigates to operate with less than half of the 150 crew members required to run a similar sized frigate.

The 114m-long RSS Formidable's weapon and sensor suites, indigenously designed by the Frigate Integrated Programme Management Team, was put to the test during the recent Ex MALABAR 07 against some of the most advanced ships and submarines from the other navies, including the United States of America and India. RSS Formidable stretched its sea legs by putting up a robust performance which show-cased its suite of multidimensional warfare capabilities. ~LL



## *Sailor's Scoop: New TV Commercial in the Making!*

Word has gotten out that the Navy is filming a new TV commercial; and from the nuggets of information that we have gathered from sources, it is going to be more exciting than ever!

Navy News spoke to MAJ Eric Tan, Head of the Navy's Recruitment Centre, and this is what he revealed about the new commercial: "The Navy career is a fun, exciting and adventurous one that we have always sought to communicate through our advertisements, which are witty and engaging. As the RSN is always leveraging on new technologies for everything that we do, the new TV commercial's will be incorporating latest technology as we continually explore new frontiers in our advertising efforts".

Further probing of the production staff involved revealed that work is in progress now with renowned UK production house, Blinklnk, which has produced works for major brands like Sony, Adidas, MTV and celebrities like Robbie Williams' music video: Rock DJ. We can feel

the enthusiasm and the excitement of the production team over this project.

We asked MAJ Eric why the excitement?

"From 'The Sand and the Sea' to 'Got you Ducky!', we have always shown that a TV commercial for an Armed Forces like the Navy, can achieve the double-effect of creating a lasting impression as well as getting our key messages across to our target audience, without appearing too serious or conventional." He added: "We feel that we may be at yet another cusp of creating another successful campaign through this new TVC, allowing us to stretch the viewer's imagination as well as giving us more creative space to create a commercial that people will remember and talk about."

So, for fans of latest media technology, be sure to look out for our new TV commercial's debut by year end/early next year!



Cohesion and friendship was strengthened amongst 50 Officers-Under-Training (OUTs) amidst the "pings" and "blocks" at the bowling alleys of HomeTeamNS@Bukit Batok on 7 Sep. Besides concentrating on achieving the highest possible scores at the 9-pin Tap Bowling Tournament at Star Bowl, the OUTs from the different squadrons also took that chance to catch up with one another. Many OUTs had not met each other since their return from studies or their commissioning from Midshipman school.

The atmosphere was constantly abuzz with sound, both from excited chatter and the clatter of falling pins. All

participants did well to achieve some very good scores, with CPT Aaron Yap, CPT Derek Koh, and LTA Vincent Chan capturing the top 3 prizes respectively.

The prizes were given out after lunch by Deputy COSCOM Comd COL Harris Chan who concluded the day with these thoughts: "It is important to keep contact with, and maintain good relations amongst batch mates and fellow OUTs in the future, even though the job might take us along divergent paths."

Article contributed by LTA Vincent Chan

# Nauti Knot

by Kool Krab



# FINEX Syndrome

**Commencement of night serial.....**

All units this is BIG BOSS, radio check over!

...static no response

19:25H



**3 hours later... half way through exercise...**

This is BIG BOSS, nothing heard from all units.

23:59H



**Completion of exercise serials....**

All units this is BIG BOSS, end of exercise, report for RTB over!

03:00H



This is HAWKEY Roger out!

This is RIP CURL Roger out!

This is HOT ROD Roger out!



# AVIVA Ironman Race

Singapore held the first Ironman Triathlon in Asia on 2 Sep – the Aviva Ironman 70.3. Throngs of competitors through the streets in the early hours of the Sunday morning. Among there were 55 SAF personnel, including a number of Navy sportsmen, sponsored by SAFSA for the competition.

Completing the gruelling course of a 1.9km swim, 90.1km bike and 21.1km run stretch in 2nd place for the Female group of 30-34 years was MAJ Esther Tan. This frequent participant of endurance competitions, managed to complete the race in an impressive 5:15:18.

"Being able to even attain second placing makes me so very thankful and yet humbles me to strive on!" she shared. "With the limited time I have for training, I've been learning and re-learning over the years to adjust, re-adjust and improve my training regime." ~LL



## SAFSA Awards 2007

It was a night of applause and cheers, with a number of the most coveted awards going to the RSN's very own naval personnel from different departments. The SAFSA Best Coach Award went to 1WO Tan Hong Boon. He shared: "Managing Team SAFSA has always be my passion, it gives me a sense of achievement when the boys do well in competitions. Dealing with NSF boys is a challenge too. Moulding them to do their duty while contributing towards sport is not an easy task. This gives me a strong satisfaction when I am able to get them on track and ORD with something in their pocket." 1WO Tan is also the RSN Sports Secretary.

The athletes from the Navy did us proud as well, especially in Swimming, Shooting, Table Tennis, and of course, in Water Polo by winning the SAFSA Colours. The RSN also won the Best Formation Award. CPL (NS) Yip Ren Kai of the victorious Water Polo team explained: "One of the crucial factors for our team's success is the support provided by our bosses, allowing us to take time off to train."

Chief of Air Force MG Ng Chee Khern was the guest-of-honour for the SAFSA Awards Dinner 2007 held at Pasir Laba Camp Leaders' Hall on 11 Oct. In all, a total of 165 prizes were given out with the RSN receiving 31 Colours awards. ~LL



## 36th RSN Cross Country Meet

Dark, rolling clouds, overcast skies. That was the conditions on the morning of the 36th RSN Cross Country Meet held on 24 Aug. Did the conditions deter of the competitors into backing down from the challenge? The answer was a definite NO!

Despite slippery and water-logged forest tracks that the contestants had to run through, the meet concluded successfully with no injuries. What made the win even more spectacular was the fact that NDU's main competitive runners were not around. According to 2WO Lawrence Jeremiah who helped coach the team, it was "the strong

mental attitude and the never-say-die attitude" that brought home the gold.

The results of the meet are as follows. Congratulations to all the winners!

MEN'S RESULTS	WOMEN'S RESULTS
1 <sup>st</sup> place: NDU Team 1	1 <sup>st</sup> place: TRACOM Team 1
2 <sup>nd</sup> place: FLEET Team 1	2 <sup>nd</sup> place: NALCOM Team
3 <sup>rd</sup> place: NDU Team 2	

~LL

## HQ RSN Beach Volleyball Competition

HQ RSN Healthy Lifestyle Beach Volleyball Competition took place at Siloso Beach, Sentosa on 11 Sep. Comprising of teams of four from NOD, NLD, NID/NPLD and NPD, the competition pitched each team against the other in a Preliminary Match and a Round-Robin Play Off.



The event, held over four hours, concluded with NOD emerging as champion, edging out its competitors.

MWO Chris Liang from NID said: "The outdoors environment at Sentosa Beach provided a care-free out-of-the-office activity which is both healthy and conducive for the fostering of cross-departmental cohesion. The event was well organised, with sufficient refreshments and safety measures provided throughout the event. Three cheers to the organising committee!" ~KS



***“We carry the mission  
In our ship of state  
Across any gulf,  
Let no one fault us for  
Wearing our hearts on our sleeves!”***

