

PLANESIDE

The Quarterly Magazine of the Maritime Patrol Association

2020: Issue 3



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Cover Photo

MCBH KANEOHE, Hawaii (Feb. 2020) P-8A Poseidon aircraft assigned to VP-9 Golden Eagles on the flight line in Hawaii. (U.S. Navy photo by LTJG Leland Hertig) VP-9 is currently responsible for maintaining the Homeland Defense Detachment in MCBH Kaneohe Bay Hawaii for the U.S. THIRD Fleet area of responsibility in the Pacific.



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Letter From the President



Greetings to all our MPA warriors around the world! I hope this letter finds you and your families healthy and happy!

What a year 2020 has proven to be, as all of us learn to adapt to the new "normal" in which we live. In spite of the challenges we face, one constant has been the strength, resilience, and professionalism of our Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance community around the globe. MPA stands behind each and every one of you in that noble endeavor, providing support and stability in this ever changing world.

To say that we all were disappointed that we couldn't gather for our annual Symposium and Reunion this year, to celebrate the accomplishments, history, and greatness of our Navy family, is an extreme understatement. MPRF and MPA leadership recognized that it was in our collective best interest to postpone our events this year and prepare for a time when we can all get together and truly celebrate our past and present heroes.

In the meantime, MPA is still going strong as the MPRF community organization, a tribute to the steadfast support of our members and industry partners. We are grateful for the loyalty shown by all and want to personally say **THANK YOU** for continuing to stand behind us. This organization exists because of generous people like you, who continue to grow and strengthen our community, our Navy, and our Nation.

There is still so much we can do and we need your help!!!!

We currently have 750 active members, down from over 1,000 this time last year, and over 2,000 lapsed members. Being a member is more than just the Symposiums and Reunions.

Did you know that each year we grant over \$10,000 in Scholarships to member dependents?

This year, amidst COVID-19, we were able to gift \$15,000 in the form of 15 \$1,000 Scholarships to dependents of active MPA members. Almost half of the applicants received a Scholarship – those are great odds for your dependents to earn some much needed money at the college of their choosing. Over the last 9 years we have awarded \$81,000 in Scholarships and we're just getting started.

MPA has also inducted 27 individuals into the MPA Hall of Honor. These individuals were deemed the best of the best by our members and are honored in the MPA Hall of



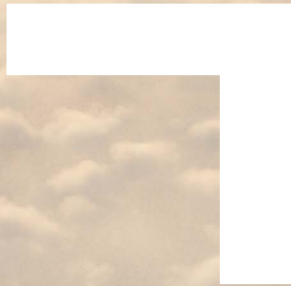
Heroes located on NAS JAX. Through member support we found these heroes, and their families, and honor them for their contributions and dedication to the great MPRF community.

2021 marks the 10th Anniversary of the Maritime Patrol Association!

With your support, 2021 will be the finest of the past decade! We are counting on YOU to help us make that happen. So if you haven't already, please join our mission to be the strongest organization that we can be – an organization that represents the very best of the MPRF community.

It is my honor and privilege to serve you as President of MPA. I am humbled to have the opportunity to work with incredible people and am excited to see what all of us can accomplish together. Through selfless service, generous support, and a love for our community, MPA will continue to flourish!

With gratitude,
Erik (EE) Estenson
President, Maritime Patrol Association



**It's impossible to tell
a wake from a wave.
Until it's not.**



ngc.com/triton

Info & Benefits

What's in Your Wallet?

Renew your annual membership today and enjoy the benefits of free monthly member happy hours, a quarterly magazine, discounted event tickets and participation in an organization that was established to preserve the history and legacy of the Maritime Patrol & Reconnaissance community.

With more than 1,000 members across the country that represent the spectrum of pay grades, active and retired, uniformed and civilian, the member networking opportunities are invaluable. And the association also supports dependents of current and former community members through a partnership with the Wings Over America Scholarship Foundation. Since 2012, MPA has awarded more than \$51,000 in scholarships.

Join or renew today at:
www.maritimepatrolassociation.org



PLEASE UPDATE YOUR CONTACT INFO!

Log-in to the Membership page of our web site or by using our app to access the secure member directory and other features. Don't forget to update your contact information in your online profile each time you change locations or positions, or general contact info. MPA Membership cards are mailed out each time you renew. We need your updated mailing address to make sure you get yours!



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Checking On Station



Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance Warriors Past and Present,

It is my honor to "check on-station" as the 39th Commander of Patrol and Reconnaissance Group / Patrol and Reconnaissance Group Pacific. I extend my gratitude to RADM Pete Garvin for his outstanding leadership of the Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance Force (MPRF). Admiral Garvin expertly led the community through an unprecedented transformation that included the transition of the final P-3C squadron to the P-8A Poseidon and the Fleet introduction of the MQ-4C Triton Unmanned Aerial System (UAS). His focus on lethality, agility, and professionalism set us on the proper course and the Navy is fortunate to have him in a new role as Commander, Naval Education and Training Command (NETC) at NAS Pensacola, Florida.

It is a dream come true to be back with the MPRF in this capacity. I am inspired by the transformation results thus far and since taking command, have been diving into the many changes that have occurred. Chief among them is the delivery of 106 P-8As to the U.S. Navy to date. We have 13 more jets contracted for Fleet delivery over the next 12 months with ongoing efforts to fund more jets to bring us to the 138 required. Meeting this inventory objective will

fully outfit the Fleet and recapitalize both our reserve squadrons, VP-62 and VP-69, with P-8As. Maintaining a strategic reserve, along with commonality of aircraft among MPRA international partners, significantly increases our combat effectiveness at a time when numbers matter and by definition, is a force multiplier.

With our new aircraft comes new capabilities. As the Nation's only long range, broad area search, cue to kill, Air ASW platform, the P-8A can extend its considerable reach even further with Air-to-Air refueling (AAR). We completed AAR introduction to half of the Fleet in Jacksonville this year and commenced training in Whidbey Island last month. Building relationships with Air National Guard and U.S. Air Force refueling wings across the AAR enterprise has improved our training and proficiency opportunities to keep our crews current. Our forward Task Forces and deployed crews continue to expand operational applicability across mission sets. MPRF will be an all AAR qualified force by September 2022.

Achieving yet another milestone in our evolution, the Fleet is now flying its first two MQ-4C Triton Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) operationally in the Pacific. Flying air vehicles from Guam, but controlled from Mission Control Stations (MCS) in NAS Jacksonville, FL, the jets are fully engaged in support of Seventh Fleet missions and exercises. VUP-19 or "Big Red," the Navy's first UAV squadron, is gaining invaluable operational experience, developing UAS tactics, techniques and procedures, and gleaned lessons learned in preparation for Triton Multi-Int's first deployment in late 2022.

We are also evolving the key member of our Family of Systems that supports our aircrews both at home and abroad. Two new O5 commands, named TOCRONs, have stood up in Jacksonville and Whidbey Island. These commands organize TacMobile into a squadron concept with six M-TOCs each, increasing command and control and warfighting effectiveness. With the resurgence of Great Power Competition around the globe, and increasing demand for MPRF capability, the TOCRONs will expand to provide both technical and operational analysis support to ensure we stay ahead of would be adversaries and our crews are ready to execute.

To this end, it is also necessary that we increase our ability to operate seamlessly with our allies around the world. Tac-

Mobile is making progress in removing technical barriers to provide operational support to U.S. and allied P-8As anywhere in the world. Our cooperative partner Australia now possesses 12 P-8A aircraft and receives its first Triton Multi-INT in 2023. The UK has taken possession of its second of nine planned P-8As, and Norway will receive its first of five P-8As in 2022. South Korea and New Zealand also receive their first of five and four P-8As respectively in 2022. Our TOCRONs and TacMobile stakeholders are leading the way in increasing this critical interoperability and have my full support. We must be able to operate jointly with not only multiple US units, but also key allies and partners any time, any place.

As we proceed to the next chapter of our transformation, we must maintain the delicate balance and deliberate application of available resources to ensure that the Force remains ready to meet global demand and retains the ability to fight tonight. My focus is mission first, but with the realization this can only be accomplished with a well-equipped, fully manned, superbly trained, and healthy squadron. We are not immune to the impact of COVID-19, but are taking every precaution in adhering to guidance and a conservative common-sense approach to keeping our Sailors and their families safe. Of all the skill sets and attributes that I have observed in my short time on board, the most impressive is the resiliency of our people and the families that support them. We have not missed a beat. I

am in awe and eternally grateful for that support and know that we cannot be successful and carry on the legacy of this great community without it. I look forward to one day soon getting out and thanking you in person. Until then, I wish you peace and good health, and as always, we will continue to Fly, Fight, Lead and Win!

With great respect,

Lance Scott
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy
Commander Patrol and Reconnaissance Group /
Patrol and Reconnaissance Group Pacific



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Wings Over America (WOA) administers the Maritime Patrol Association (MPA) scholarship. Applicants who are eligible for the MPA scholarship will also be considered for available WOA scholarships. Application for the 2021 award year will open in October 2020.



In the News



What Would Vince Do? Remembering Vince Segars

Foreword: A few months ago our community lost Captain Vince Segars. This article, although it will never do him justice, is in memory of Vince. If you take nothing else away from this article know this, he was simply a great person; a husband, father, leader, aviator, and friend. He loved his God and family and cared deeply about his Sailors. Many of which are serving in our community today. All of which are undoubtedly better for having known him.

Vince seemed to have a handful of big loves in his life: God, family, country, his Sailors, flying, and of course ice cream! If you knew him, you were better for it, if you're not sure you knew him, trust me, you did. Someone in your squadron, chain of command or sphere of influence was affected by Vince Segars in some way, shape or form. The following are a collection of personal stories about Vince that were meant to memorialize him but, as in most things that he touched, they wound up doing as much for us as being about him. They illustrate the deep and lasting impression that he made on so many. Thanks for letting us share our most treasured memories with you, although I venture to guess that you have just as many Vince Segars stories of your own.

-To say that his reputation preceded him is a gross understatement. Instead of six degrees to Kevin Bacon, it was usually about two degrees to Vince Segars. When meeting another member of the MPRA community, it was almost a race to name drop in order to prove (and on some level, brag) that you knew and had flown with Vince. The experience of having personally known and served with him gave you an instant level of credibility that upped your status - that is how incredibly respected he was by everyone that had any experience or interaction with him. And there is no doubt, when sharing stories of him, it was nearly a guarantee that one of those stories was about how he helped you or got you out of a pickle in some way. His reach across Naval Aviation is unparalleled. It's comforting to know that there are generations of Officers and Sailors alike who will carry on his legacy.

- Vince Segars had that special gift to make you feel like you mattered. He made you feel like you played a key role in making the squadron better. Regardless of your seniority, job title, detachment experience..Vince Segars made you feel like part of the team. He spent time with each of us, connecting on a personal level, not just forming work relationships based on transactional deals. We wanted to perform well within the squadron because we believed in the mission, but we believed more in the person leading us. Vince Segars understood the basics of Leadership 101...take the time to develop authentic personal relationships with those you lead. The trust that grows from those relationships will ultimately pay dividends for the greater good, i.e., the squadron. Was he loaded with talent across all paygrades, both officer and enlisted? Yes. But that's not why we were successful. We were successful because we had his trust. When mistakes were made, we knew we STILL had his trust. And when he made mistakes? We trusted him right back. It enabled us to lean forward, make decisions at the appropriately level and grow as the leaders he knew we could be. And by the way, we became better human beings along the way.

- Vince was a man of deep faith, never pushy or judging. He stood for truth and demonstrated love through his leadership style. We cherish his infectious smile, his passion for compassionate service, and his timely words of encouragement and wisdom. He understood the importance of teamwork, but more importantly, knew how to build a team. He started a tradition that continues in many Wardrooms today with coffee talks.

- He used to always say, "I know something about pretty girls". He was talking about his wife Alisa, and daughters Amanda and Kaitlyn Rose. I always admired him for putting his family first. His family and his faith. He was a true north compass. I find myself



asking, what would Vince do? How would he guide me to the right answers and the decisions that secure the faith of our Sailors?

- Vince never forgot his military family. Upon his first encounter with you, he made you feel like a life-long friend.. and he continued to foster those relationships into the future. Vince was a true servant leader, always putting other's best interest before his own.

- As the CO of VPU-2 he took a Department Head cadre of VP ASW Warriors and taught us terms like linger and EWOP and SIGINT. He would say things like, "I'm gonna mow his grass". I'm still not sure what he meant by that, but I laughed anyway - but I didn't laugh as hard as he did. I taught him how to loiter an engine and fly at 300 feet, which was a mistake because he never gave me the controls back.

- One night we were flying back to Bagram and the weather had rolled in. The Air Force controller wouldn't let us shoot the approach even though we could clearly see the runway from ten miles out and 20,000 feet overhead. Vince was flying and I was on the radios and not having much luck making my case for the approach. He jumped in and said, "Sir, I'd just like the opportunity to shoot the approach and if I go missed we'll head down to Kandahar". He was so courteous and calm, and it worked. That was his gift - just be courteous and calm and treat people the way you would want to be treated.

- As a CO I had the good fortune to lead Valiant Shield several years back. Like any large exercise the beginning was a scramble to get everything setup, from the tents to ensuring the crews had what they needed to execute their missions. It was long days of spinning your wheels to ensure everything was covered and we met or exceeded our obligations. Fortunately, many of us that were filling key positions were housed on base. Some of us were in actual base housing with temporary furniture. Vince, Commodore Segars back then, saw this as an opportunity to get leaders together from both wings. He and I put our heads together and came up with a watch bill for the COs, XO's, department heads staying on base, Commodore and myself. Basically everyone was in charge of a dinner for the group one night a week. This went on for about two and half weeks and as COs and XO's came to check on their crews they would be thrown onto the watch bill. Each night we would meet at someone's house, share meal together and then discuss solutions to the world's (and MPRF's) problems. Most would have a beverage or two but Vince's beverage of choice was of course not a beverage but ice cream. Vince would facilitate the post dinner conversations night after night. Those two weeks of camaraderie, mentorship, and honest conversations were some of the most memorable and impactful in my entire career. To this day I try to create those moments with Sailors as often as possible.

- I was sitting in the waiting area of Commodore Segars' office one day getting ready to brief him. In less than 30 minutes of waiting I probably witnessed 20 people scurry in and out of his office and Yumi had put another half dozen

through on the phone! I remember thinking to myself, "There is no way I could handle that job." So I went through my brief as fast as I could with Commodore Segars and after I asked if he had any questions, he smiled and said he had no questions and jokingly asked me if I had any questions? I told him as a matter of fact I did! He laughed and told me to fire away and I asked him how he kept his day straight citing the chaos I had just witnessed, while at the same time telling him I could never keep up as a Commodore! What he told me after that has stuck with me and I lean on his words to this day, he said "being a pilot and a leader in the Navy is easy, all you have to do is never accept being off centerline, sound awesome on the radios, smile, and take care of your sailors. If you can do that, you can do anything."

- One of the things that we share is commanding Patrol and Reconnaissance Wing 10. It's an honor and a privilege to walk where he walked. I feel the pressure to be as great a leader as he was, but I also know that he never judged, and that he would want me to be the leader that I need to be for Wing 10. It was one of his gifts. You never felt like you weren't as good as he was, even though we weren't. We spent hours on the phone over the last few months talking about the effects of the shooting in Pensacola and how it would shape those young, hopeful, future Naval Aviators, about the effects that COVID and the lockdown would have on Naval Aviation, about his retirement at the end of June, and about my future beyond Wing 10. It never occurred to me that we wouldn't navigate that future together. He is and remains my most trusted mentor and friend. I hope I can live up to his expectations. His last flight in an EP-3 was on Aircraft 528 - she sits outside my office window today. A constant reminder of the man who had such an incredible influence on so many of us.

Written with contributions by the following people, none of which would be where they are today without Vince's leadership, mentorship and friendship.

- CAPT Erin Osborne, Commodore, Patrol and Reconnaissance Wing 10
- CAPT Jon Voorheis, Deputy Commodore, Patrol and Reconnaissance Wing 10
- CAPT TJ Grady, Commanding Officer, VP-30
- CAPT Jamie Johnston, Commodore, Task Force 57
- CAPT Dan Papp, Program Manager, PMA-264
- CDR (Ret) Jason Zaharris, Commanding Officer, VQ-1
- LCDR Derek Bader, Maintenance Officer, VQ-1



In the News



VP-26 Assists in Ramped-Up Counternarcotics Op

Aug. 15, 2020 - Ordinarily, patrolling the waters near Central and South America for drug traffickers is a job largely left to the U.S. Coast Guard. But since April 1 of this year, the U.S. Navy has surged assets to the region to assist with the mission -- and helped reel in more than \$2.5 billion worth of contraband to date.

The operation has gotten presidential attention and is ongoing, with the Navy destroyer Pinckney publicizing a recent major bust this week. The Pinckney, homeported in San Diego, executed a seizure with an embarked Coast Guard law enforcement detachment July 24, seizing more than 120 kilograms, or 265 pounds, of suspected cocaine from a single ship. In total, the haul was worth some \$4.5 million.

"While on routine patrol, approximately 200 nautical miles southwest of Jamaica, a helicopter assigned to the 'Wolf Pack' of Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron 75 located the vessel and Pinckney soon arrived on scene," Navy officials said in a release. "After coordination with the Government of Colombia and Colombian Navy, the vessel was searched and six suspected drug smugglers detained. The mariners are now in Government of Colombia custody."

The crew of the Pinckney also secured medical evacuation for one detainee for whom treatment was deemed necessary for survival.

Heads of U.S. Southern Command have long expressed their wish for more U.S. Navy assets in the region to stop a drug trade tied to tens of thousands of U.S. deaths every year. Under the enhanced counternarcotics mission, those ships and aircraft are in place, at least for now.

Top officials say the \$90 billion drug trade, which thrives in unstable regions, has taken advantage of the added instability of the global COVID-19 pandemic.

"Since the end of March, we have employed, in the U.S. Southern Command Area of Responsibility, 75% more surveillance aircraft and 65% more ships than normal for drug interdiction," Defense Secretary Mark Esper said in a July 10 news conference from Doral, Florida. "These additional assets include four Navy destroyers, five Coast Guard cutters, and eight aircraft. Currently, nearly a dozen Navy and Coast Guard ships and over 15 aircraft from across the interagency are supporting our efforts, in addition to security forces deployed to the region."

A spokeswoman for the U.S. Navy's 4th Fleet, Cmdr. Katherine Meadows, said in a statement to Military.com that additional Defense Department capabilities added in the ramp-up include a continuous rotation of Navy destroyers and MH-60 Seahawk helicopters; Navy littoral combat ships; P-8 Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft; Air Force E-3 AWAC and E-8 JSTARS aircraft for reconnaissance; and an Army Security Forces Assistance Brigade company for advisory support. The Coast Guard has also increased its cutter and helicopter presence, and 22 partner nations have aided the effort.

"All of our ships have an embarked [Coast Guard] Law Enforcement Detachment onboard," Meadows said. "The Navy supports the detection, while the Coast Guard has the authorities to seize narcotics and detain illicit trafficking suspects."

To date, she said, the Navy has participated in the seizure of 16,396 kilograms of cocaine -- more than 36,000 pounds -- and 16,601 marijuana. The overall enhanced mission has "disrupted or seized" more than 38,000 pounds of marijuana and more than 98 metric tons of cocaine, she said.

"The operation has denied transnational criminal organizations more than \$2.5 billion in criminal profits from the smuggling of narcotics that kill thousands of people every year and cause substantial human suffering in the U.S. and around the world," she added.



More than 30,000 pounds of pure cocaine sit on the pier next to the USS McInerney (FFG-8) just after it was offloaded. The \$3.9 billion in drugs were seized in two separate busts in the Eastern Pacific Ocean. (U.S. Coast Guard/Bobby Nash)

That's up from under \$2 billion on July 10.

Meadows did not provide comparison figures for the same period last year, but Esper said the U.S. military had been able to increase targeting of known drug operations by 60%. And at the Doral news conference, SOUTHCOM Commander Adm. Craig Faller said drug "disruptions" had increased by 15%.

"And 60 percent more targeting is a big deal for us because that means we can put more assets on more targets. And the enemy has seen that," Faller said. "We've gotten information from our intelligence agencies that says the enemy has watched that and they're waiting, and they're stockpiling and they're trying to change their

tactics."

-- Hope Hodge Seck can be reached at hope.seck@military.com. Follow her on Twitter at @HopeSeck.



Published on Military.com, August 15, 2020

In the News



Poseidon Touches Down in the UK

RAF KINLOSS - On 4 Feb 20, The RAF's new submarine-hunting Poseidon Maritime Patrol Aircraft touched down for the first time in the UK. The aircraft is the first of a new £3 billion programme.

A crew from 54 Sqn with CXX personnel brought the aircraft from NAS Jacksonville to RAF Kinloss at 13:30 BST, on a crisp Scottish afternoon. ZP801, "The Pride of Moray" was intercepted as planned by 3 Typhoon FGR4 jets based at Lossiemouth; they joined up over Stornoway on the Isle of Lewis, and conducted a fly by of RAF Lossiemouth before landing at RAF Kinloss. Lossiemouth will be the Poseidon's permanent base, but runway construction means that Kinloss will be the main base until the autumn.

The Poseidon MRA1 aircraft will protect the UK's continuous at-sea nuclear deterrent and be central to NATO missions across the North Atlantic, co-operating closely with the US and Norwegian Poseidon fleets.

The UK's purchase of the Poseidon is in response to increased threats such as Russian submarine activity in the Atlantic returning to Cold War levels, while China is also investing heavily in new Arctic facilities, infrastructure and ice-breaking ships.

The crew that flew the jet over the Atlantic are ex-Project Seedcorn, based at NAS Jacksonville since 2012. All the crew were instructors on VP-30, and have been returning to Jacksonville to teach the Post Graduate School course in the synthetic environment in the Integrated Training Center recently. The RAF personnel have worked extremely closely with their USN colleagues over many years, undertaking professionally rewarding duties on IUT, Fleet IUT and also being heavily invested in the Maritime Patrol Reconnaissance and Weapons School. Project Seedcorn worked within the UK Ministry of Defence and Commander Patrol and Reconnaissance Group.

"The Poseidon MRA1 is a game-changing Maritime Patrol Aircraft. I am delighted and proud to see the 'Pride of Moray' and her crews returning to maritime patrol flying from Scotland, working alongside the Royal Navy to secure our seas and protect our nation.," said Air Chief Marshal Mike Wigston, Chief of the Air Staff.

First Sea Lord, Admiral Tony Radakin, said: "The arrival of the first Poseidon marks a significant upgrade in the UK's ability to conduct anti-submarine operations. This will give the UK the ability to conduct long range patrols and integrate seamlessly with our NATO allies to provide a world-leading capability. This will maintain operational freedom for our own submarines and apply pressure to those of our potential foes. I look forward to working with the RAF and our international partners on this superb aircraft."

All nine UK Poseidons will be delivered to the RAF by the end of 2021 and achieve full operational capability from RAF Lossiemouth in 2024. The aircraft will be flown initially by 120 Squadron the leading anti-submarine warfare squadron in World War 2, with 201 Squadron joining the programme in due course. 54 Squadron is the ISTAR Operational Conversation Unit (FRS) and is presently training crews for the front line.



Story By Royal Air Force, 54 Sqn Public Affairs

ZP801 is escorted by two Typhoon jets.



Squadron Leader Mark Faulds landed the first ever Poseidon MRA Mk1, named "Pride of Moray" on British soil in February. Photo courtesy RAF 54 Sqn.

The first UK Poseidon arrived at Kinloss Barracks.





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<https://maritimepatrolassociation.org/home/events/symposium/>





Golden Swordsmen Reach Halfway Point on Deployment

SIGONELLA, Italy (NNS), July 26, 2020 – The Golden Swordsmen of Patrol Squadron Four Seven (VP-47) reached the halfway point, also known as "over the hump," of their deployment to the U.S. 4th and 6th Fleet areas of responsibility (AOR) in support of Maritime Security Operations at the end of July 2020.

The Golden Swordsmen deployed early April in a partial capacity to the 4th Fleet AOR in support of Enhanced Counter Narcotics operations.

Due to the outbreak of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, travel and movement restrictions forced the remaining Golden Swordsmen to extend their time at home before deploying to the 6th Fleet AOR in May.

"While navigating the challenges of COVID-19, VP-47 has continued to demonstrate ASW and ISR excellence across the 6th Fleet AOR," said LCDR David Shultz, VP-47's Operations Officer. "The squadron's continued presence has enhanced maritime security and promoted US/NATO interoperability throughout the region."

"In 4th Fleet, VP-47 has been integral to the presidentially directed Enhanced Counter Narcotics mission, aiding in the seizure of over 1.5 billion dollars' worth of cocaine," said Shultz. "Although COVID-19 has added an additional layer of complexity to deployment, the Squadron has fluidly adapted and continued to ensure aircrafts are on-station and ready to perform throughout both AORs."

While deployed, VP-47 has supported several multinational exercises to help strengthen regional allied and partner relationships. These allied forces include Mexico, Honduras, Guatemala, Belgium, France, Georgia, Greece, Italy, Romania, Spain, Turkey, Iceland, Norway, and the UK.

"Over the past few months, we have participated in numerous real-world operations and exercises spanning from Central America to the Eastern Mediterranean," said LCDR Andy Rump, Commander Task Group (CTG) Operations. "Multinational exercises like MARTILLO, BALTOPS, DYNAMIC MONGOOSE, BREEZE AND SEA BREEZE were conducted in the Eastern Pacific, Western Atlantic, Caribbean Sea, Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea, and North Atlantic. The interoperability demonstrated during these exercises enhanced the tactical cooperation between participating naval units and staff, such as conventional and non-conventional warfare procedures, counter-drug operations, and asymmetric threats."

The next exercise on the horizon for VP-47 is MIGHTY SHIELD. This opportunity will allow the Swordsmen the opportunity to work alongside NATO in support of maritime warfare procedures and support forces taking part in maritime security operations.

The Golden Swordsmen are currently deployed to the 4th Fleet AOR with VP-26 and the 6th Fleet AOR with VP-16. VP-47 is concurrently serving under CTF 47 and CTF 67 performing maritime patrol and reconnaissance missions throughout Central and South American, European, and African theaters. The P-8A Poseidon provides the fleet with essential information from operations supporting both peace and conflict.

For more information, visit www.navy.mil, www.facebook.com/usnavy, or [ww.twitter.com/usnavy](https://www.twitter.com/usnavy). For more news from VP-47, visit www.vp47.navy.mil.

★
Story by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Brandon J. Vinson, VP-47 Public Affairs



Ships come into formation during the 20th annual Baltic Sea exercise ‘Sea Breeze’. Sea Breeze is an annual Ukraine and U.S. co-hosted multinational maritime exercise held in the Black Sea and designed to enhance interoperability of participating nations to strengthen maritime security and stability within the region. Photo by MC2 Brandon J. Vinson.



Community

VP-5 Holds Holiday Safety Stand-Down

JACKSONVILLE, Fla.—Despite the ongoing battle against the Coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19), Patrol Squadron (VP) 5 continues to complete their mission in the safest manner possible. The “Mad Foxes” upheld their continued reputation of professionalism and proper social distancing during their pre-holiday weekend safety briefings in the P-8A hangar bay on the first of July.

Following the guidance of Health Protection Condition Charlie Minus (HPCON C-) set forth by U.S. Fleet Forces Command (USFFC) on March 20, 2020, VP-5 has continued to operate effectively while maintaining force health protection as their top priority. The Mad Foxes took prudent measures to limit the spread of COVID-19, while simultaneously ensuring its Sailors stay well-trained, healthy, and ready to defend the nation.

Implementing the best tools in the fight against COVID-19, the Mad Foxes ensured Public Health Mitigation Measures including physical distancing to limit close contact, washing hands frequently, and wearing masks to prevent the spread of droplets/secretions were adhered to at all times during the squadron's safety briefings prior to the holiday weekend.

Lt. Alicia Smith, the flight surgeon for VP-5, hosted a dedicated COVID-19 station where she fielded questions and delivered the latest information regarding the virus. Lt. Smith reaffirmed that the some of the most effective means of limiting the spread of COVID-19 include thorough cleaning and sanitization of heavily used areas, frequent hand washing, smart use of personal protective equipment (PPE), and reliance of individuals to adhere to these standards at all times.

The presenters continued to drive home the importance of these measures before sending Sailors home for a much-deserved liberty and time at home with friends and family. “The presenters did another great job at informing the Sailors efficiently and effectively, ensuring everyone's safety, especially during these unprecedented challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic”, stated VP-5's Ground Safety Officer, Lt. Gabe Merla.

The VP-5 safety team will continue to follow the guidance put forth by the Department of the Navy, as well as continuously evaluate and critique their own measures to ensure the squadron remains safe at all times. The squadron will continue to operate for the remainder of their home-cycle and into their deployment to the Indo-Pacific region later this year.

The Mad Foxes are based out of Jacksonville, Florida, and are currently taking part in the year-long Fleet Readiness Training Program (FRTF) in preparation for their upcoming operational deployment in the Fall of 2020.



By Lt. Reed Arce, VP-5 Public Affairs

(Upper Right) JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (July 1, 2020) Lt. Alicia Smith, the flight doctor for Patrol Squadron (VP) 5, gives a presentation on the importance of the safety measures being taken to control the spread of the COVID19 pandemic. The “Mad Foxes” are based out of Jacksonville, Florida, and are currently taking part in the year-long Fleet Readiness Training Program (FRTF) in preparation for their next operational deployment. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist Sergio Montanez)



(Right) JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (July 1, 2020) - Patrol Squadron (VP) 5 held a safety stand down while implementing Health Protection Condition (HPCON) Charlie Minus protective measures to inform Sailors on various programs and resources available for utilization. The “Mad Foxes” are based out of Jacksonville, Florida, and are currently taking part in the year-long Fleet Readiness Training Program (FRTF) in preparation for their next operational deployment. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist Sergio Montanez)



Community

VP-9 Change of Command Flight

WHIDBEY ISLAND, WA – Patrol Squadron Nine “Golden Eagles” conducted a change of command flight in lieu of a ceremony, maintaining COVID-19 social distancing requirements.

CDR Brian J. Schneider was relieved by CDR Michael A. Bender as the Commanding Officer of VP-9 on April 24 after the flight landed at NAS Whidbey Island.

CDR Schneider joined the Golden Eagles in May of 2018 as the Executive Officer and assumed command in June of 2019 as the squadron’s 70th Skipper.

“Golden Eagles, it has been a great honor to serve as your Commanding Officer,” Schneider wrote in his farewell remarks. “During our time together, you were tasked with many challenges from a very dynamic training cycle leading up to our very first P-8A deployment ... and you met every objective on time, and on target!”

Schneider then addressed VP-9’s success during the previous deployment. “The deployment to the European Theater was a tremendous success. As a team, we accomplished more than I could have ever imagined... covering down the entire EUCOM Area of Operations, from the Norwegian Sea to the North Sea, the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea, and of course the Mediterranean Sea to the North Atlantic Ocean.”

“I am PROUD to have been your Commanding Officer and to have had the privilege of being called Skipper.”

After assuming command, CDR Bender addressed the squadron. “It is with great honor that this morning I as-

sumed command of VP-9 and the outstanding men and women who comprise this incredible unit... As you have done to this point, continue to execute with excellence!”

CDR Bender graduated with distinction from the United States Naval Academy in 2003 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Naval Architecture and in 2011, earned an Executive Masters of Business Administration degree from the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California. He has played a critical role in the fleet’s transition to the P-8A Poseidon, serving on the P-8A Integrated Test Team (ITT) while attached to VX-1 and later on the Fleet Integration Team (FIT) attached to VP-30. Before checking into VP-9 in June 2019, he served as the P-8A Training Systems Integrated Product Team Lead (IPTL) for the Naval Aviation Training Systems Program Office (PMA-205) and the Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance Aircraft Program Office (PMA-290).

The squadron welcomes aboard CDR Branden Woods as Executive Officer.

The “World Famous Golden Eagles” continue to prepare for their upcoming deployment this fall. Patrol Squadron Nine received the Meritorious Unit Commendation Medal for its work in support of US 6th Fleet (C6F) from 10 April to 10 October 2019. Additionally, the squadron was recently awarded the “Golden Wrench” for maintenance excellence and the “Battle E” for combat readiness and battle efficiency. The squadron works every day to carry this level of excellence into the next deployment.

★
By LTJG Sheldon, VP-9 Public Affairs



Left to Right, CDR Bender, CAPT Osborne, CDR Schneider

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Patrol Squadron 47 Participates in BALTOPS 2020, Annual Maritime Exercise

SIGONELLA, Italy – Patrol Squadron Four Seven (VP-47), the Golden Swordsmen, participated in the 49th Baltic Operations (BALTOPS) 2020 exercise while deployed to the U.S. 6th Fleet area of operation.

BALTOPS is an annual maritime exercise designed to enhance interoperability, flexibility, and demonstrate resolve among allied and partner forces in defending the Baltic region.

This year marked the sixth time that Commander, Strike Force NATO has led BALTOPS, which ensured the health and safety precautions for all participating forces including Canada, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, the U.K., and the U.S.

LCDR Brett Butterfield, VP-47 Detachment Officer in Charge, commented on the exercise: "BALTOPS 2020 was significant as it was the first international military exercise since the COVID-19 pandemic began.

In addition to strengthening NATO interoperability, we proved to ourselves, our allies, and all those watching, that we can safely and effectively operate in and around the maritime environment during uncertain times and no obstacle will deter us from successfully completing our mission."

"We train to win wars when called upon," said Maintenance Master Chief Petty Officer Carrie Barry, "and BALTOPS is a NATO tradition and continuing exercise to train [participants] to do just that."

Operating as Commander Task Group 67.1, locally known as CTG "WE", VP-47 sent multiple crews alongside CTG

sister Squadron, VP-16, to participate in BALTOPS. In early June, crews were sent from Naval Air Station (NAS) Sigonella to Keflavik, Iceland to participate in the exercise.

"Our teammates worked together closely with Commander Task Force-67 and VP-16 to get the planes to Iceland," said Barry. "Good communication between the Squadron shops allowed this to happen effectively."

Twenty-eight air and twenty-eight maritime assets from NATO and partner nations participated in the live training event that began on June 7, 2020.

"BALTOPS 20 was a great opportunity for coordinated operations between NATO allies and partners," said LT Gabriela Baez, Tactical Coordinator (TACCO). "We were able to execute multiple mission sets on dissimilar platforms in dynamic maritime and air environments."

At home and abroad, VP-47 strives to promote relationships through teamwork and extensive exercises.

"This exercise allowed us the unique opportunity to collaborate with other countries and branches," said AWO2 Sean Lyonnais. "As the training progressed, we worked to improve upon our crew cohesion and our performance on-station."

BALTOPS 2020 concluded on June 16, 2020 and is one of many exercises planned for VP-47 while deployed to NAS Sigonella.

For more news from Commander, Patrol Squadron 47, visit www.vp47.navy.mil or www.facebook.com/goldenswordsmen47.



By LTJG Amber Morgan and LTJG Hannah Hughes, VP-47 Public Affairs



Mad Foxes Excel During Aviation Maintenance Inspection

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – The "Mad Foxes" of Patrol Squadron (VP) 5 continue to operate at a high tempo while maintaining force health protection as their top priority this summer.

The VP-5 maintenance team underwent a thorough evaluation known as an Aviation Maintenance Inspection (AMI) July 20-24.

This inspection is typically completed four to six months prior to a command's operational deployment, and inspects over 40 separate Naval Aviation Maintenance Programs (NAMP) to ensure they are being conducted properly and, safely.

The AMI team consisted of experienced representatives from Commander, Naval Air Forces (CNAF) Aviation Maintenance Management Team Three (AMMT 3).

The inspection team graded individual programs within the command, looking to identify any "Critical," "Major," or "Significant Administrative" discrepancies based on the efficiency and effectiveness of the program during the inspection process: The Mad Foxes passed with a grade of 89, which is well above the CY 2019 fleet average.

In addition, AMMT-3 conducted five contingency response drills, and 50 practical proficiency examinations, all of which were passed by the VP-5 maintenance team.

The Mad Fox program managers and personnel who merited special mention for their programs were: AT1 Blakeslee, AM2 Bledsoe, AM1 Ferrara, AZ2 Wilczewski, AZ3 Delapena, AD2 Burns, AO2 Merrit, and AZ3 Sanders.

"I am thoroughly impressed with the performance of the Mad Fox maintenance team", stated VP-5's Commanding Officer, Cmdr. Ron Rumfelt.

"Bravo Zulu and job well done to all of our hard-working sailors for their dedication and professionalism during this inspection."

The maintenance team will continue to self-evaluate, and critique their performance to ensure the lessons learned from this year's AMI are carried forward into the next Mad Fox Indo-Pacific deployment.

The Mad Foxes are based out of Jacksonville, Florida, and are currently taking part in the year-long Fleet Readiness Training Program (FRTTP) in preparation for their next operational deployment beginning Fall 2020.



By Lt. Reed Arce, VP-5 Public Affairs



VP-4 Receives Coast Guard Awards for Recent 4th & 6th Fleet Deployment

OAK HARBOR, WA. (Aug. 25, 2020)– Following the completion of an eight-month deployment, the “Skinny Dragons” of Patrol Squadron (VP) 4 were recognized for their significant achievements while operating in the Navy’s 4th and 6th Fleet areas of operation in support of Operation Martillo and Navy’s Exercise for Maritime Operation (NEMO) between Oct. 2019 through May 2020.

VP-4, operating out of Cooperative Security Location (CSL) in Comalapa, El Salvador, were awarded the U.S. Coast Guard Special Operations Service Medal for its direct involvement in Operation Martillo from Oct. 1, 2019 to April 12, 2020.

“VP-4 effectively demonstrated the ability of our personnel to work hand in hand with our Joint Interagency counterparts in accomplishing Operation Martillo objectives, targeting illicit narcotic trafficking routes throughout the SOUTHCOM AOR” said Cmdr. John Harkins, VP-4 commanding officer.

“Our Sailor’s daily sacrifice allowed for the successful execution of this mission, benefiting national security and

enhancing maritime law enforcement throughout the region.”

Utilizing the P-8A Poseidon aircraft, VP-4’s combat air crews provided an “eye in the sky” delivering time sensitive intelligence to locate targets of interest and vector in assets.

In total, VP-4 flew 353 operational hours and, as a result of the high capability of the operators and aircraft, its participation led to a seizure of over 18,200 kilograms of illicit drugs with an assessed value of more than \$688 million.

VP-4 has also been awarded the Coast Guard Meritorious Team Commendation ribbon for its participation in the Navy’s Exercise for Maritime Operation.

As part of a successful 6th Fleet detachment to Albidjan, Ivory Coast, VP-4 participated in five mission flights from Oct. 28, 2019 to Nov. 5, 2019 which provided associated support to the Maritime Operations Center.

“The Skinny Dragon’s combat aircrew 8 exuded a high degree of professionalism and expertise in support of the exercise,” said Lt. Cmdr. Ryan McFeely, VP-4’s detachment officer in charge.

“With a focus on long range maritime law enforcement against piracy and illegal fishing, VP-4’s contribution to the exercise displayed the capability of the maritime patrol and reconnaissance community and the ability of our operators to adapt to the ever-changing maritime environment.”

NEMO included 19 participating countries in the Gulf of Guinea, which increased the interoperability among forces in order to increase maritime security and sustain global commerce.

While participating in this exercise, VP-4 worked directly with the US Coast Guard providing tactical cueing for maritime law enforcement.

★
Story by LTJG. Christian Daniels,
VP-4 Public Affairs



VP-47 Participates in Exercise Sea Breeze 2020

ODESA, Ukraine — Sailors assigned to Patrol Squadron (VP) 47, alongside maritime forces from eight nations, are participating in the 20th iteration of the Ukrainian-U.S. co-hosted multi-national training exercise Sea Breeze in the Black Sea.

Sea Breeze 2020 is taking place from July 20-July 26 and focuses on multiple warfare areas including maritime interdiction operations, air defense, anti-submarine warfare, damage control, and search and rescue operations.

“Every participant involved in the exercise is professional, efficient, and responsible,” said Lt. j. g. Hannah Hughes, a Navy pilot assigned to VP-47. “We will all acquire new skills, experience and knowledge because of Sea Breeze.”

The exercise is an annual event designed to enhance interoperability amongst participating nations and strengthen regional security. Beginning in 1997, the exercise brings Black Sea nations together to train and operate with NATO members in the pursuit of building increased capability.

“Sea Breeze serves to build a rock-solid foundation of partnership in the Black Sea,” Vice Adm. Gene Black, commander, U.S. 6th Fleet, said during the opening day press conference. “Our ships, aircraft, and personnel train together unified in our goal of maritime security and stability.”

The eight nations participating in Sea Breeze 2020 are Bulgaria, Georgia, Norway, Romania, Spain, Turkey, Ukraine, and the United States.

“Sea Breeze challenges us to hone our skills in real time operations,” said Lt. j. g. Joel Davis, assigned to VP-47. “The events are dynamic, requiring both operational and tactical decision making that not only furthers our own training, but improves the standing relationships with our allies.”

U.S. participation includes one P-8A Poseidon from VP-47 and the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Porter (DDG 78). Total service member participation from the U.S. is approximately 400 Sailors.

VP-47 is currently assigned to commander, Task Force (CTF) 67 and is deployed to the U.S. 6th Fleet area of operations. CTF 67 is composed of land-based maritime patrol aircraft that operate over the waters of the Mediterranean in anti-submarine reconnaissance, surveillance, and mining roles.

U.S. 6th Fleet, headquartered in Naples, Italy, conducts the full spectrum of joint and naval operations, often in concert with joint, allied, and interagency partners in order to advance U.S. national interests and security and stability in Europe and Africa.

★
By U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa/U.S. 6th Fleet Public Affairs



The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Roosevelt (DDG 80) as seen from the window of a P-8A Poseidon multi-mission maritime patrol and reconnaissance aircraft assigned to Patrol Squadron (VP) 4, April 23. The ship and aircraft are forward deployed to U.S. 6th Fleet. Photo By: Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Josh Cote

Events»Community

The 2021 MPA Symposium in Jacksonville, Florida is scheduled for April 19-23, 2021.

Watch for more information at: www.maritimepatrolassociation.org

Events»Reunion Groups

Patron Four Five Association (VP-45)

Reunion Oct 7-11, 2020, Jacksonville, FL:

POC: Doug Mitchell

Email: poohbearmit@aol.com

Phone: (678)650-7500

Web: www.vp45association.org

VP-1 POPS (P-3 Orion Pioneers)

Join/Renew your VP-1 POPS Membership:

Check out membership information at: www.vp1pops.com

ANA Patriot Squadron, Boston, MA

Monthly Meeting & Lunch @ 11 am, last Saturday of the month at the museum: This group operates a small naval aviation museum on the site of former NAS South Weymouth called the Shea Naval Aviation Museum. A number of members were formerly VP-92 and predecessor reserve patrol squadrons that were based at NAS South Weymouth. For details see: www.anapatriotsquadron.org



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CAPT Tom Spink, USN (Ret.)

Stay tuned for upcoming events!



VP Images Around the Globe



JACKSONVILLE, Fla (June 11, 2020) – Commander Russell White, Commanding Officer Patrol Squadron (VP) 10, greets Naval Aircrewman (Operator) 2nd Class Jacob Fisher upon return from deployment. The final aircraft returned home at Naval Air Station Jacksonville on June 11. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Louis Rojas)



OAK HARBOR, WA (June 5, 2020) During the ceremony, Cmdr. Clay Waddill relieves Cmdr. James Samman as commanding officer of VP-46's "Grey Knights". VP-46 has recently transitioned from the P-3C Orion platform to the P-8A and is making preparations for their upcoming deployment to the 6th Fleet Area of Operations. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Austin Ingram/Released)



OAK HARBOR, Wash.(June 4, 2020) Cmdr. Joseph Parsons, VP-40's Commanding Officer, Salutes Capt. Erin Osborne, Commodore, Patrol and Reconnaissance Wing (CPRW) 10, during a change of command ceremony onboard a P-8A Aircraft. During the ceremony, Parsons relieved Cmdr. Matt McKerring as commanding officer of VP-40's "Fighting Marlins." (U.S. Navy Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jakoeb Vandahlen/Released)



JACKSONVILLE, Fla (June 12, 2020) Cmdr. Rodney "Hot Rod" Erler, left, transfers command of Patrol Squadron (VP) 8 to Cmdr. Jeremy "Remy" Lyon, during a change of command ceremony onboard Naval Air Station Jacksonville. VP-8 is currently conducting its Fleet Readiness Training Plan in preparation for their upcoming deployment. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Jerome D. Johnson)



(Aug. 18, 2020) A 914th Air Refueling Wing KC-135 Stratotanker conducts air refueling operations over the continental U.S. with a U.S. Navy P-8. (U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Joshua Williams)



MISAWA, Japan (July 28, 2020)- Aviation Ordnanceman 3rd Class Evan Tu'ua, right, Chief Aviation Ordnanceman Ryan Ward, center, and Aviation Ordnanceman Airman Mason Cleveland, assigned to the "Screaming Eagles" of Patrol Squadron (VP) 1, load a Mark 54 torpedo onto a P-8A Poseidon aircraft during a scheduled exercise. VP-1 is currently deployed to Misawa Air Base in Misawa, Japan conducting maritime patrol and reconnaissance and theater outreach operations within U.S. 7th Fleet (C7F) area of operations in support of Commander, Task Force 72, C7F, and U.S. Indo-Pacific Command objectives throughout the region. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Dylan Sharp)



OAK HARBOR, Wash. (June 26th, 2020) Naval Aviators assigned to VP-46's "Grey Knights" learn about some of the features of their new platform the P-8A Posiedon.VP-46 has recently transitioned from the P-3C Orion platform to the P-8A and is making preparations for their upcoming deployment to the 6th Fleet Area or Operations. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Austin Ingram/Released)



(OAK HARBOR, Wash.) Lt. Alex Miller assigned to the "Grey Knights" of VP-46 looks out the window of a P-8A during intercept drills. VP-46 has recently transitioned from the P-3C Orion platform to the P-8A and is making preparations for their upcoming deployment to the 6th Fleet Area of Operations. (U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Austin Ingram/Released)



(Aug. 13, 2020) Bravo Zulu to Lt. Alcorn for completing his Tactical Check Ride. Red Lancer's newest Tactical Coordinator. Photo courtesy of VP-10 Facebook page.



(July 30, 2020) Golden Eagles working hard out in Whidbey Island. Photo courtesy of VP-9 Facebook page.



(Aug, 22, 2020) Shop in the spotlight: Lineshack. Lineshack gets our planes mission ready by starting, launching and retrieving planes before and after their flights. Photo courtesy of VP-8's Facebook page.



JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (Aug 2, 2020)
The aircrew and maintenance Sailors assigned to our P-8A Poseidon and P-3C Orion squadrons worked through the night and into this morning to evacuate these aircraft to pre-determined safety locations ahead of Hurricane Isaias. Commander, Naval Air Force Atlantic authorized the evacuation of 31 P-8A Poseidon aircraft and five P-3C Orion aircraft from NAS Jacksonville with remaining aircraft assigned to Commander, Patrol & Reconnaissance Wing (CPRW) 11 and Patrol Squadron 30 to remain safely in their squadron hangars. (Photos by MC2 (SW/IW) Nick A. Grim/released)



(Aug. 21, 2020) CAC-2 of VP-47 has been forward deployed to 4th Fleet! Pictured here, the crew celebrates a successful mission flight in support of Enhanced Counter Narcotics. Photo courtesy of VP-47 Facebook page.



(Aug. 21, 2020) From VP-47 AOAN Kolyn Paswater prepares to download ordnance from a P-8A Poseidon after a flight while deployed to Sigonella, Italy. Photo courtesy of VP-47 Facebook page.



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Heritage

P-3C Orion BuNo 156515 Celebrates Second Anniversary

Time flies! It's been two years since Hickory Aviation Museum, Hickory NC officially opened P-3C BuNo 156515 to the public on May 19, 2018, and what an amazing two years it has been! The museum has welcomed thousands of visitors and former VP Community members to tour this piece of history.

The first big gathering was the Open House for the grand opening with well over a hundred past and present VP members enjoying some good North Carolina hospitality in 2018. The ribbon was cut and the main cabin door was opened for the first big day of tours.

In August 2019, the aircraft turned 50 years old and HAM hosted another open house gathering for former VP members and the event was even larger than the grand opening.

Over the past two years, the aircraft has been open to visitors six days a week for guided tours. Many returning aircrew have shown their families for the first time the inside of "their" aircraft and museum Docents usually just stand back and let them conduct their own tours. The Docents have worked hard learning about the aircraft so that they can give all visitors great insight into maritime patrol aviation as many are completely unfamiliar with the aircraft and the mission.

The Museum has hosted many school groups and summer camps as well and the look in the children's eyes when they walk inside the aircraft is priceless. The questions that are asked are quite interesting, as well.

Over the past two years, HAM has been able to add bits and pieces from P-3C's that are being disposed of and it's a nice thought that many items inside 156515 have come from other bureau numbers. We have recently added all of the walk-around oxygen bottles, EEBD's, anti-exposure suits and parachutes from the last deployed P-3C of VP-40 BuNo 162776 that will be going on static display at the National Naval Aviation Museum in Pensacola, FL.

Unfortunately, the two year anniversary was a very quiet celebration, as due to Covid-19, the museum had been closed since March, with no date yet as to re-opening. When the museum reopens, the P-3C interior tours will not be permitted for the near future, but we look forward to when we can start them back up again. Future visitors should contact the Museum for the current status.

Our thanks to the National Naval Aviation Museum, NAS Pensacola who have entrusted Hickory Aviation Museum with the permanent loan of our P-3C Orion.

Hickory Aviation Museum is active on social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and Twitter, and the museum webpage is www.hickoryaviationmuseum.org please follow along with us!



By Bill Baker, LCDR USN (Ret)

Bill Baker, LCDR USN (Ret'd) is a volunteer at the Hickory Aviation Museum as well as an MPA Plankowner. As an NFO, he logged over 3,100 hours in P-3C's in VP-31, VP-40, 10 Squadron RAAF, VX-1, VP-64, plus a tour as a Shooter and V-4 Division Officer onboard CVN-65.



**P-3C Orion BuNo 156515 at the Hickory Aviation Museum in Hickory, NC.
Photo courtesy of Bill Baker.**

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