

**Information Warfare and Cryptology Community 76th Anniversary
Renaissance Hotel, Portsmouth, VA
RADM Edward H. Deets, III, USN
Information Warfare and Cryptology Community Leader
11 March 2011**

Admirals, Commanding Officers, Navy Civilians, Force Master Chiefs, Command Master Chiefs, Senior Enlisted Leaders, wives, husbands, and friends of our Information Warfare and Cryptology Community. Welcome to the celebration of our 76th anniversary. Thank you for accepting my invitation.

Many of you have come a great distance: England, Hawaii, and Florida, to name a few. Thanks for making the trek.

Thanks Force Tardona for your invocation and Force Best for your remembrance.

And a special welcome to Sergeant Ives Bowman and his wife Rhonda, representing the Canadian Forces; he's working for CAPT Keck at Navy Cyber Defense Operations Command. It's great to have you here.

Sadly, I must report the early morning passing, at 0311, on 03/11, on our 76th anniversary, of CAPT Fred Demech, a pioneer in naval cryptology. His life made a permanent mark upon the character of our community. He will be deeply missed by all who had the privilege of serving with him. Please celebrate today in remembrance of his great contributions. And keep his wonderful wife Janet in your thoughts and prayers. I just saw the CAPT a few months ago at the annual NCVA reunion. He was the same positive, energetic guy we all knew, and he loved being around Sailors.

We invited Paula McFarland and told her how much we missed RADM Jim McFarland, and how important he had been to all of us. I received the following note:

“Dear Ned, Thank you so much for your kind invitation to the 76th Anniversary Celebration. Unfortunately, I will be travelling and so I am unable to make it. And thank you for your kind words about Jim. He so loved the Community and it's wonderful to know he is still remembered so fondly. Please raise a glass to him and for him at this event.”

There are lots of luminaries in this room tonight, but one in particular stands out: Navy Cyber Forces' Sailor of the Year, IT1 Skees. Stand up shipmate. Congratulations.

Let me start with a very special thanks to our spouses and families. There are hundreds of years of dedicated service in this room, none of which would have been possible without the family team in full support. That support means lots of separation, lonely nights, and fear of the unknown. But it's vital. Your support allowed these Sailors to do what they needed to do, without fear of what was happening at home. We love you, and America respects you.

Tonight is all about remembering: Honoring our past.
And all about looking ahead: Embracing our future.

And speaking of that theme...in this august group is retired Cryptologist, Captain Greg Blackburn and his wife. And with them tonight, is their son, Ensign Ryan Blackburn, an Information Warfare Officer. Welcome shipmate, it's great to have you in our ranks. You're going to love it, just like we have. What brought us here was the prospect of exciting travels to foreign lands, camaraderie, and service to our country. What kept us here was all that, and the people. Simply the best group of people you could ever hope to work with. All volunteers dedicated to the greatest of causes—our national security.

Petty Officer David Sawicki, excellent job on providing us with an overview of our history. You didn't know what you were getting into when CAPT Keck had you present your briefing to me last Fall, did you?

When I announced this concept for a ball, which we haven't done in eight or more years, CAPT Stephanie Keck, and CAPT Brian Johnston volunteered to co-sponsor. And what a great job they've done on a very short timeline.

Special thanks to our 76th Anniversary Committee:
Co-chairmen: LCDR Will Hubbard - NIOC Norfolk and CTNC Mike Tonglet-NCDOC
LTJG Kelly Steele-NAVCYBERFOR
CWO3 Matt Arnold-NCDOC
CTMCS Don Harris-NIOC Norfolk
CTNC Tammy Sternberg-NCDOC

CTTC Clemesha Cooper-NIOC Norfolk
CTR1 Rhiannon Freeman-NCDOC
CTM1 David Decker-NIOC Norfolk
CTT1 Alvinna Young-NIOC Norfolk
CTR1 Sierra Orrick-NIOC Norfolk
CTR2 Random Fry-NIOC Norfolk

This crew did an incredible job fundraising, planning, and executing, all in less than six months. Thank you.

Our Master Of Ceremonies, CAPT Steven Parode – the new Commanding Officer of the new Navy Cyber Warfare Development Group. Thanks for stepping up Steve. I'm hopeful we'll get you out of your shell tonight!

Our photographer, MC2Wahl - NETWARCOM
And the developer of our programs, MCC James Perkins- NETWARCOM

And now, it is an honor for me to announce the approval of a new annual award for a deserving Information Warfare Officer, similar to the On the Roof Gang award that we give to our Senior Sailors.

I want to thank a couple of our Community members who asked me specifically to not mention their names, and so I won't. As they said, this is their work, but not their award. This award recognizes an Information Warfare Officer for achievement in leadership, teamwork, operations, and innovation, and adherence to the principles by which the award's namesake served. To quote him, "We can accomplish anything provided no one cares who gets the credit."

Ladies and gentlemen, I'm honored to announce the establishment of the Captain Joseph John Rochefort Leadership Award. You will see criteria and a solicitation for nominations shortly.

As all of you know, Captain Joe Rochefort was a major figure in the U.S. Navy's cryptologic development from 1925-1947. He led the Navy's fledgling cryptanalytic organization in the 1920s and provided superb cryptography and cryptanalysis to the Navy during WW II, leading to victory in the Battle of Midway, which turned the tide in the Pacific war. He was a pioneer in our business. I notified his daughter, Linda Elerding of the award.

Now, I'm reminded of that law of Physics which relates that light travels faster than sound, which is why some people appear bright until you hear them speak. I'll keep that in mind as I proceed.

Let me quote from Earnest K. Gann's 1953 novel of flight, *The High and the Mighty*. The story's protagonist, Garfield said:

"These are 2 dozen people who only this morning awakened as other people, and looked at the sun, perhaps, without the faintest notion they might never see it again. How much difference it would make to them if they had known...They would change, he thought. Each one of them would change in his own way. Certain things that seemed important before would suddenly become valueless—because you had to stand very near to complete destruction before you could see anything clearly. Then, only then, did the chromatic scale of values become brilliant. Red became red, and blue, became pure blue."

And now let me put our heritage in historical context with a singular example. Any inaccuracies are the author's, mine:

He awoke with a start but with the practiced senses of a career Navy man. He was well ahead of his alarm clock.

Picking his way quietly through the dark so as not to wake his wife or disturb the kids just a few feet away in the meager two-bedroom base house, he grabbed his flight suit, his lucky boxer shorts and headed for the shower.

Why did he wake up so early this morning? He had gone to bed late after helping his oldest kid with homework and after reserving a precious few minutes with his wife to talk about all the things they never had time for.

She had reminded him to lay out the tax paperwork so that she could mail it in the morning, April 15th. She would never be late with anything. And that, he realized, was what woke him up. Put the tax forms by the front door.

A pretty ironic chore—a guy pays Uncle Sam and then mans up a 12-hour reconnaissance flight to help preserve the national security of the United States and its allies. Interesting.

At 0515 he was in his car headed for base ops at Naval Air Station Atsugi. The morning was crisp and the forecast said it would be a perfect flying day. He was glad to have on his second skin—lots of hours on that old flight jacket.

And if he turned his head just so, he could still smell his wife's perfume on the fur collar, left over from that long ago night, their first real date since recovering from their move to Japan.

Through his head ran all the personal thoughts that all flight crew have before they start the very dangerous and demanding job of high tech spying.

And then he was through the mid-field gate and headed for the VQ-1 squadron door as the first glimmer of pink and orange crept into the sky from the Pacific Ocean.

Yea man, this is what it's all about. A beautiful day, an exciting mission, a great crew, lots of flight time, and flight pay to boot.

Then back to the barn by dinner time, a drink with the wife at the club, dinner with her and the kids at a great local Atsugi dive. Glad everyday he didn't stay in Smallville with his dad's insurance practice. Live forever but die of boredom in the third month. Not for him.

He entered the ready room 30 minutes ahead of the scheduled briefing time and counted 29 heads. Two guys missing. He hoped it wasn't any of his cryppies, there weren't any extras on hot standby. Nope, he recognized all his buddies.

The brief was normal: Beautiful day over the South China Sea. Outside Air Temperature 50 degrees at sea level, water temp about 55. He did the quick mental calculation: 3 hours in the water then dead from hypothermia—plenty of time to get help if their old airplane decided to give it up today.

They checked their parachutes and the rest of their flight gear, and then he branched off with the spooks.

As he walked across the tarmac he looked up at the Super Constellation bathed in the soft light of sunrise. If you loved airplanes as he did, this was an ageless beauty. If you didn't, this thing was ugly, times 2.

In Navy speak, this was designated AIRCRAFT: EC-121M, Bureau Number 135749, squadron PR-21, call sign: Deep Sea 129.

The spooks loved this flight because they got to go against the three big bad guys: the Soviet Union, North Korea, and the Chinese. The North Koreans remained stuck in everyone's craw since their capture of the Pueblo and the 11 months of torture they put the crew through. Whenever they were airborne and doing their thing against North Korea, he felt he was providing some small amount of payback for the Pueblo.

With preflight complete the big bird lumbered down the taxiway. He looked at his watch—0703 as they went wheels up.

His wife was just getting up. She'd be looking out the kitchen window as Deep Sea climbed almost gracefully into the morning sky. She'd be making sure they weren't late, and doing the mental math to calculate their precise return time so she and the kids could be waiting at the field. They always were.

Now she'd eat and shower and get the kids moving on the morning routine. Man she was great. She was enduring the tough and wonderful life of a Navy wife. And to make it harder, he had a job he couldn't even talk about. But she was always there for him and he was sure glad of that.

They climbed slowly to the east into the rising sun and began a gentle bank to the southwest that would take them back over the Japanese Islands, west into the Sea of Japan, and then on station for the mission down into the South China Sea.

Climb out was slow and uneventful. The crew eased into the routine as the Willie Victor's engines droned and gently vibrated.

And then, just as the routine became as comfortable and mundane as it could possibly be in a spy plane at 15,000 feet, the MIGs appeared from somewhere in North Korea.

He knew what they were up to—nothing else of interest to the North Koreans but them. Happens all the time. Couple of MIGs launch, they track you, you track them. Each side would flip the other the bird—and then they're screaming for the deck, heading back to the North Korean barn, and a drink with their wife at the club, and dinner in town, and life goes on in that bizarre cycle of cat and mouse.

But you sure do feel vulnerable while they're there—no weapons, no armament, no nothing—just flapping in the breeze. Confident only in the fact that you're more than 50 miles off the coast of the Korean Peninsula. That's a 38 nautical mile cushion. Plenty of room.

A couple of scruffy old MIGs, but MIGs with missiles. MIGs with cannon. MIGs with robotic pilots just out to shake you up and to remind you that they know you're there, that they can reach out and touch you.

And the ballet begins: the Willie Victor flying at cruise speed at just over 175 knots. Happy as a hippo in the mud. The little MIGs like fleas on Fido. The deadly missiles flash in the sunlight.

And the dance progresses in accordance with the well practiced choreography. The little birds trade places, one high, one low, first left, then right. Almost hypnotic.

His pilot decides it's time to take Deep Sea off track and head for home.

And, per the norm, the MIGs disappear aft of the tip tanks, then aft of the horizontal stabilizers, then out of sight, and the heart rates come down. But no collective sigh from the crew yet. They know it ain't over till they're back in sight of Japan.

The mission continues. Life continues. The young guy's are nervous.

Inside the tube it's silent except for the drone of the engines. At a time like this when everyone's doing his job, no jokes, no horseplay—you could almost hear a pin drop.

He wonder's what his wife's doing now. Two different worlds. Three miles below she's volunteering at the elementary school, worried about the youngest's slow reading progress—thinking about getting to the field on time with the kids cause they love to welcome dad back. Her routine.

And there he sits at 15,000 feet eavesdropping on a bunch of Neanderthal knuckleheads incapable of feeding their own people but always willing to spend whatever it takes to start world war 3. His routine.

And then it's done. The call comes from the cryptic on the active position. They can hardly believe it. The MiG's aren't returning to base.

And suddenly, with a whoosh, it's daylight. The cool, dusty, darkness of the back end of the tube is interrupted by a rush of air, and then he's floating, and the others are floating too. Must be a dream.

The surreal image of the Willie Victor, Deep Sea 129, floating below them, torn open like a soda can with the nation's secrets pouring out into the clear blue sky. Greasy black smoke roils from the gaping wound. And two silvery bugs disappear in the distance, their routine complete, heading back to the North Korean barn for dinner with the wife.

31 souls slipped the surely bonds of earth that day. Clad in the armor of righteousness, they did their part for America and the free world, and when the mission was done, they simply never landed. They stayed aloft where they loved to be. Called home by a greater power who decided it was time. They felt no pain. World War 3 never started, nukes never flew.

That day a group of unsung Navy cryptologic heroes went home. And their names are just a handful on the list of dozens who have died in the quiet war which is never, ever won; the quiet war that Navy Cryptologists have fought as a Community for 76 years.

Deep Sea 129's brothers went down to the sea on 15 April 1969 as their friends at home wore bellbottom pants and flowers in their hair, and Jimmy Hendricks crooned his version of the National Anthem and Janice Joplin and Bobby McGee had nothing left to lose.

But those 31 who perished that day weren't alone. For 62 years our cryptologists have been in the back of airplanes going in harm's way. For 76 years our cryptologists have been in ships and later in submarines, and on foreign soil risking their lives for all we hold dear.

The first reconnaissance aircraft shot down by the Soviet Union happened 8 April, 1950. It was a PB-4Y2 Privateer on a "routine" flight out of Wiesbaden, Germany. It was engaged and destroyed in international waters over the Baltic Sea. CT3 Edward Purcell and the aircrew ceased to be factors in what, to everyone else, was known as the COLD war.

November 6th of 1951 a P2V Neptune on another ROUTINE mission was shot down by the Soviets over international waters off of Vladivostok. No survivors.

On 22 August, 1956, a P4M-1Q Mercator on a night RADAR reconnaissance mission was jumped by Chinese MiG 15's and 17's 32 miles off the coast of China. AT1 Haskins, a cleared ECM operator and the rest of the crew ceased to be factors in that same "Cold War."

That same week another Mercator was engaged by a Chinese aircraft but the tail gunner chased it off. Then AT1, later CT Master Chief John Brady almost ceased to exist. Several on the Mercator were shot up but no purple hearts were awarded—the mission was Secret. And there were many more.

And the Kami Seya fire that claimed many more heroes.

Almost two years before the North Koreans shot down Deep Sea 129, on 8 June 1967, the *USS Liberty* found itself in the middle of the 1967 Arab-Israeli 6 day war.

On a beautiful, sunny afternoon, it cruised off the coast of Israel. Without warning it was attacked by Israeli jets and torpedo boats.

There were 294 Sailors, three Marines and three civilian advisors aboard the *USS Liberty* that day. By the end of the attack 34 lay dead and 171 wounded. On May 2, 2002 several of the surviving *USS Liberty* crewmen and family and friends gathered at Naval Technical Training Center Corry Station to remember that day and pay tribute to their fallen shipmates. Of the 34 dead that day, 23 were cryptologic technicians.

7 months later, on 23 Jan 1968, the *USS Pueblo* was attacked by North Korean gunboats in international waters. It was the first US Navy ship to be hijacked on the high seas in more than 150 years. Remarkably only one crewmember was lost but the remainder of the crew was imprisoned and tortured for almost a year. The lessons learned from that event simply remind us that the quiet war is not a safe war. And it's clear how critical our work is.

In times of war Information Warfare Officers and cryptologists, and those who support their efforts, must carry out their work on the front lines. In such times, these brave men and women must go in harm's way. It was in this vane that CTT1 Steven Daugherty, CTM3 Matthew O'Bryant, and CTRCS David McClendon lost their lives in our latest wars; all far out on the edge, in very frightening and lonely places, doing what needs to be done.

Today we honor all of those who have gone before us, all of those who serve today, all of the survivors, and all of those who paid the ultimate price. It is their collective souls that make the flame of freedom burn all the brighter.

Guys like me are very proud to see the new generation of Sailors, Marines, and Civilians that carry on the great tradition of this wonderful Community. Their patriotism, dedication, and honor in this all volunteer force, are what will keep this country great.

I cut my teeth on a few patient Chiefs many years ago, guys like retired Force Master Chief number 9, CTRCM Chris Vertin. Those were demanding times just like today.

I remember being aboard the USS Brumby, FF 1044, an old Garcia Class Frigate where very little worked—except our guys. In the maintenance log one night at about midnight I left what I thought was a very SPECIFIC note for the MATMAN on the 0400 watch. In the log I wrote: “Antenna coupler almost needs replacement.” The next day the MATMAN’s entry read: “Almost replaced antenna coupler.”

I had the wisdom of youth and the energy of old age!

And today, you, we, are all at the vanguard of a great undertaking.

Oliver Wendell Holmes said, “Greatness is not in where we stand but in what direction we are moving.” And we are moving fast.

Change is inevitable, it is liberating, and it is natural. Without it we lose our ability to move forward, we lose progress, we lose adaptability, we lose agility, and we lose the awesome power and potential of young and imaginative minds.

Think of the change that has occurred over the past 76 years. We are all the more capable as a Community, as a Navy, because of that change—from the On The Roof Gang, and OP-20G, to the Naval Security Group, and now to 10th Fleet—each era brings the need to flex, to morph, to adapt—if we are to succeed. And succeed we must—from a Japanese Naval Target to terrorism and the cyber domain. You have paved the road to this critical juncture with your successes over the years.

Today, we have 8 Flag officers. When I was selected 7 years ago, we had 3. Our Community has grown over 20% in the last 5 years—that's unprecedented. We are all about operating—we have a warfare device which announces to everyone our war fighting bona fides. All that says just one thing: our Navy needs us more than ever, with our unique mission and our core skills. You, we, are vital to our nation's security.

In another few months I will move on, and so will this wonderful group. And I expect Bill Leigher will soon be a two star, and Mike Rogers, uniquely experienced, positioned, and capable, will move to a level we've not yet experienced in the Community. The future of this wonderful organization is in great hands, as it always has been.

Thank you shipmates and Happy Birthday.

We can't have a birthday without cake. Force Master Chief Vertin, please join Chief Tonglet, LCDR Hubbard and me. Captain Parode, PARADE THE CAKE and strike up the band!