MERLION STAR

Serving the Sembawang Community

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FLEET MASTER CHIEF MINYARD VISITS SEMBAWANG

Singapore (Feb. 3, 2012) Pacific Fleet Master Chief (SW/AW) John Minyard, talks to Sailors assigned to Commander Logistics Western Pacific during an all hands call on Feb. 9, 2012. U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jessica Bidwell.

CNIC Welcomes New Commander

By: Patrick Foughty, CNIC Public Affairs

WASHINGTON- Vice Adm. William French relieved Vice Adm. Michael Vitale as Commander, Navy Installations Command (CNIC) during a Change of Command ceremony in CNIC Headquarters at the Washington Navy Yard, Feb. 3, 2012.

Vitale has served as the chief officer leading the Navy's entire shore infrastructure for nearly three years and was the third Commander in the history of CNIC. This infrastructure, also known as the CNIC Enterprise; includes 11 Navy Regions, 70 Installations, and 127 Naval Operations Support Centers, and is responsible for 31 business lines and 122 critical shore capabilities across three major categories; operations, quality of life, and facilities management.

Throughout his tenure Vitale lead efforts to standardize, align, synchronize and innovate new methods and processes that furthered CNIC's mission to deliver effective and efficient readiness from the shore that sustain the fleet, enable the fighter, and support families.

Vitale praised the numerous accomplishments of the personnel under his command and of the entire CNIC Enterprise; from molding the Navy Family Accountability and Assessment System (NFAAS) into the

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Newest CMCs/CSCs

Navy Announces Selection of Newest CMCs and CSCs

By: Navy Personnel Command, Public Affairs

MILLINGTON, Tenn. – Results from the Fiscal Year 2013 Command Master Chief (CMC) and Command Senior Chief (CSC) Selection Boards were released Feb. 9

"I offer my heartfelt congratulations to the newest members of our command master chief and command senior chief communities," said Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy, MCPON (SS/SW) Rick D. West. "Your selection for this challenging program is a result of your proven commitment to our Sailors and our Navy. I am confident you will remain visible leaders who set the tone for performance, standards, and integrity, and will continue to lead through personal example."

More than 170 active duty and Reserve senior enlisted Sailors were selected by the FY-13 selection board.

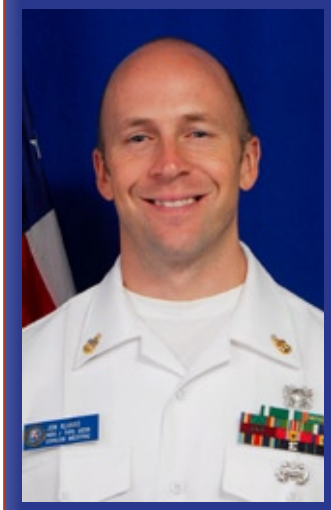
The Command Master Chief and Command Senior Chief Programs are intended to ensure Sailors are effectively led and developed. Senior enlisted leaders selected for these programs are responsible for leading the alignment efforts of the chief's mess with the Navy ethos, Navy core values, and the MCPON's mission, vision, and guiding principles.

CMCs and CSCs are also charged with ensuring active communication throughout the chain of command and report directly to their respective commander or commanding officer.

They advise their respective commander or commanding officer and provide input in the formulation, implementation, and execution of policies concerning morale, welfare, job satisfaction, discipline, utilization, family support, and training of enlisted Sailors, as well as providing input and advice in matters affecting mission and operations as required.

CMC and CSC selection boards convene annually. The board reviews and selects the best qualified applicants for assignment into the CMC and CSC program.

Upon selection and receipt of orders for assignment as CMC, master chief petty officers' ratings will be changed to CMDCM. Senior Chief Petty Officers filling CSC billets will retain their source rating.



Congratulations to Master Diver Jon Klukas, left and Senoir Chief Hospital Corpsman Tom Gilham on being selected as two of the newest members of the command master chief and command senior chief communities!

China's Extravagant Holiday Celebrated Singapore Style

By: MC2 Jessica Bidwell, CLWP
Public Affairs

SINGAPORE - Thousands of lanterns hanging over the wide street cast a red hue over the enormous crowd. The smell of tangerines, a symbol of prosperity bought and given by the bushel as gifts, mingled with the acrid smoke of fireworks as brightly colorful dragons, some 100 feet long, danced down the street to usher in the Chinese New Year in Singapore.

Strangers of all ethnicities gathered in the island-state's traditional Chinatown enclave to kick-off Chinese New Year celebrations Jan. 23. Chinese New Year is the longest and most extravagant of Chinese holidays, with festivities lasting a total of 15 days. For 2012, the festivities ran from Jan. 23 to Feb. 5. This exuberant holiday comes with countless auspicious traditions, ranging from family reunion dinners to Singapore's Chingay Parade.

SINGAPAORE (Jan. 28, 2012) – Singaporeans gather in the home of Mr. Tan Siow Leng to view a traditional lion dance. The lion dance was presented by a local Lion Troupe. U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jessica Bidwell

SINGAPAORE (Jan. 25, 2012) – Singaporeans participate in a yusheng toss. A tradition where fish is lied out on a tray then tossed while chanting prosperous new year wishes. U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jessica Bidwell.

Though the Chinese have used fire works as a way to ward of evil spirits throughout history, fireworks were banned in Singapore in 1972. The Chinese did not let that hold them back. To keep celebratory spirits high, the Chinese organized a simple procession where they would play music and cheer. This tradition has grown into what is known today as the Singapore's annual Chingay Parade.

Chinese New Year falls on a different date each year, it is celebrated on the first day of the lunar year. While the western Gregorian calendar is based on the earth's orbit around the sun, the Chinese lunar calendar is based on the moon's orbit around the earth.

Celebrations of the new year are both literal and symbolic. Each Chinese year is associated with one of twelve animals: the rat, ox, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, goat, monkey, rooster, dog and the pig. The animal qualities are said to "animate" the year with their distinct natures. The year of 2012 is the year of the Water Dragon.

Alongside a year's animal qualities is a 10-year cycle with each prospective year being associated with one of the five Chinese elements: fire, earth, metal, water, and wood. These elements are rotated every two years in order to offer the yin and yang association with each element. Often referred to as the 'theory of five," these elements represent an aspect of earth's dynamic processes. Together the animal qualities combined with the elements create a 60 year cycle, the year of the Water Dragon was last celebrated in 1952.

Mrs. Wong Li Lin, a Singapore of Chinese decent, religiously joins the New Year festivities in Chinatown year after year.

Mrs. Lin conveyed that, "This year is a particularly special year in the Chinese calendar. It is believed that the Water Dragon will quench the excesses of past years and will settle the chaos in the world."

Comparable to most celebrations, several days throughout the Chinese New Year are dedicated to time spent with family and friends. Distant families will gather for "steamboat"

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Vice Adm. French Takes the Helm at CNIC

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model Personnel Accountability System used across the services, to the development of new shore integration methods and a Total Workforce, capable of continuously supporting operations and services.

"The personnel here at the Headquarters, and throughout the entire Enterprise have faced growing numbers of issues and challenges," said Vitale, "I've had the pleasure of witnessing this Enterprise solve complex and dynamic problems, some self-imposed, some caused by outside forces, and forge a way ahead toward a model of shore integration that has forever changed how we do business and provide service the Fleet, Fighter and Family."

Vitale also thanked the many Navy communities throughout the world that support and allow the Navy to operate in close proximity to their homes and livelihoods, acknowledging the importance of maintaining close ties from the smallest Installation to the Headquarters level.

"It's the communities, both in the U.S. and abroad, that invite us to live and operate in their backyard, and it's the communities, both within the Navy and outside, that are the anchor of our ability to maintain and operate the best Naval force in the world, and I want to thank each one for their support, patience, and welcoming spirit," said Vitale.

French thanked Vitale for his wisdom and guidance and spoke briefly about his optimism and vision for the future of CNIC.

WASHINGTON (Feb. 3, 2012) Commander, Navy Installations Command (CNIC) Vice Adm. William French, right, assumes the duties and responsibilities as CNIC from retired Vice Adm. Michael Vitale during CNIC's official change of command ceremony. U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Peter D. Lawlor.

"During the last 6 years I have been with the CNIC Enterprise I have learned that we have some of the best, brightest, and most talented professionals in the Navy," said French. "Under Vice Admiral Vitale's leadership the CNIC team has set the example for how an Enterprise should function and have established immense credibility on how you are meeting customer needs. I'm honored to be taking command at this point in the history of the command."

Vice Adm. French was promoted shortly before the event after having a successful tour at Navy Region Southwest in San Diego, Calif., where he accomplished major milestones towards energy and water conservation and numerous other green initiatives. French, the son of an Air Force officer and native of San Antonio, is a graduate of Vanderbilt University where he received commission through the Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps program in May, 1979. He earned a Master of Science degree from Naval Postgraduate School in 1985 and a Master of Arts from the Naval War College in 1999.

A career submarine officer, French has served on a number of submarines and commanded USS Salt Lake City (SSN 716) and Submarine Squadron 3 in Pearl Harbor. His prior Flag Officer commands include tours at Navy Region Northwest, Navy Region Marianas in Guam, and Navy Region Southwest.

"I am proud to be part of such a superb organization, and look I forward to working with you over the next few years," added French.

CNIC oversees a $10 billion budget, more than 83,000 facilities and 58,000 personnel.

Appreciation Dinner Held for IAPF/SAC

On February 10, 2012 an appreciation dinner was held for the Installation Auxiliary Police Forces (IAPF) and the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF). Both the IAPF and SAF provide law enforcement and force protection services on the Sembawang facility and the near-by family housing area. Dinner was hosted by Rear Adm. Tom Carney, Commander, Logistics Group Western Pacific and Capt. Paul Foster, Commanding Officer, U.S. Navy Region Center, Singapore.

Photos By: MC2 Jessica Bidwell

Chinese New Year

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reunion dinners, animated lion and dragon dances and zestful yusheng tosses, where various fish are tossed (similar to a salad) with chopsticks while chanting wishes for good luck. Juicy tangerines are also served as they symbolize wealth.

Miss Lin Li Yuan, a young Chinese woman living in Singapore described her family's steamboat dinner traditions as sacrosanct. "As far back as I can remember each and every one of our reunion dinners involved a lavish steamboat dinner complete with loads of fish balls, chicken slices, pork belly, and fresh bean curd."

Lion troupes are groups of approximately 25 people that volunteer to spread cheer throughout the Chinese New Year festivities. The troupes will travel to housing areas, the loud beats of the drum and the deafening sounds of the cymbals together with the distinguished face of the lion dancing aggressively, announces their presence. The ancient dance is believed to evict bad or evil spirits, and welcomes good luck for the year ahead. Some families will even choose to invite a lion dance troupe in their home as a symbolic ritual to usher in the Chinese New Year.

"I don't even schedule the lion troupe anymore; they just show up, and when the neighbors hear the all the commotion they are sure to follow" Mr. Tan Siow Leng said with a smile. "I welcome them, I believe the ceremony frightens away evil spirits that may be lurking in my home and bring luck in with the New Year. I also enjoy that the neighbor kids get to see the ceremony, I believe it helps keep the traditions alive"

On Feb. 5 the Chinese New Year celebrations came to a close. While an American custom is to make a resolution for the new year, the Chinese believe each new year automatically brings with it fresh start.

As Miss Yuan puts it, "Chinese New Year is my favorite holiday because when we enter the New Year, we are able to put all things of the past behind us. This allows us to look to the future and all the great things that are sure to come with it!"