



Cpl. Jeff M. Nagan

Sailors celebrate Navy's 229th birthday

The oldest Sailor, Capt. Kevin R. Kerrigan, and the youngest, Seaman Dorian Amerson, cut the Navy birthday cake during a ceremony celebrating the Navy's 229th birthday Wednesday. More than 50 servicemembers from all branches of the military attended the celebration.

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sance, Wucher said.

"We are part of a coalition maritime team operating in international waters and airspace that locate, monitor, track and query suspected merchant vessels that have links to the Al-Qaeda terrorist network," Wucher said. "The purpose of our operations is to widen the net of capture of any suspected fleeing terrorist should they attempt to escape via sea."

The aircraft conducts weekly patrols along with French and German aircraft and coalition ships from Combined Task Force-150 in the Gulf of Aden, Red Sea,

western Indian Ocean and Horn of Africa in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and the global war on terrorism, according to Wucher. They look for any illegal activity, fleeing trans-national terrorist, illegal arms shipments including weapons of mass destruction, illegal drug shipments and acts of piracy.

The VP-9 PATRON Detachment will be flying out of Djibouti for a few more months before returning back home to Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii. The P-3C and its coalition partner naval and air forces will continue to be used in the GWOT to deter and disrupt the use of commercial sea-lanes by terrorist networks such as Al-Qaeda.

Comptroller's Corner

MAJ. JEFFERSON HOLDEN

COMPTROLLER OFFICE

Each day servicemembers ask me about 'smart stewardship' of their hard-earned income. We are in luck here, because in the Horn of Africa, most of us are eligible for the best investment opportunity you will find anywhere in the world. Take advantage of the Savings Deposit Program, and you are on your way to financial freedom, one day at a time.

The Defense Finance and Accounting Service, in accord with the Department of Defense, implemented the Savings Deposit Program in August 1990. This program includes Operation Iraqi/Enduring Freedom servicemembers assigned to a combat zone or in direct support of a combat zone.

"A servicemember can contribute up to \$10,000, but interest of 10 percent will not accrue after that amount," said Roger Castillo, program director for the Savings Deposit Program. "A member can participate in the program if the member is serving outside the United States or their possessions in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, and has served at least 30 consecutive days in an area that has been designated as a combat zone or in direct support of a combat zone."

To make a deposit into the fund, troops are asked to contact their financial services office. Withdrawing the money before leaving the combat zone is not authorized, unless there is an emergency. The last day to make a deposit into the fund is the date of departure from the assignment. However, interest will accrue for up to 90 days after return from deployment.

"This is a great opportunity for servicemembers to accrue at a higher interest rate than at an average interest rate of 2 or 3 percent," said Patrick T. Shine, acting director of DFAS. "We are always taking the extra step to assist our troops and their families in any way possible, especially while members are deployed."

DFAS will post the savings deposit balance of active-component members to their Leave and Earnings Statement.

Any interested service members may bring a current copy of their Leave and Earning Statement to the disbursing office.

Customer service hours are:

- Monday thru Thursday 8:30 a.m.-6 p.m.
- Friday 1 p.m.-6 p.m.
- Saturday 8:30 a.m.-6 p.m.
- Sunday 1 p.m.-6 p.m.

Please visit www.dfas.mil for further information. Please direct questions/comments to The Comptroller Corner: holdenj@hoa.centom.mil.