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USS NASSAU (LHA-4)

FAMILY GRAM

NASSAU Awarded Meritorious Unit Commendation



*Meritorious
Unit
Commendation*



It's rare for a ship to receive significant recognition for her efforts during her first year in commission, however, the USS NASSAU (LHA 4) has just received a Meritorious Unit Commendation for actions occurring only 81 days after her commissioning.

On October 2, 1979, NASSAU received orders to serve as Flagship for Commander Amphibious Squadron Six in a task force comprised of USS PLYMOUTH ROCK (LSD 29), USS SPARTANBURG COUNTY (LST 1192) and NASSAU. The ships were assigned as units of Combined Joint Task Force 88 and assigned the mission of transporting a Marine Reinforced Battalion Landing Team (BLT) and their supplies and equipment to reinforce the Guantanamo Bay, Cuba Naval Base. This operation, named REINFORCEX 1-79, was conducted in

response to a presidential directive in reaction to the presence of a Soviet combat brigade in Cuba.

Without benefit of shakedown or Amphibious Refresher training, NASSAU's crew embarked, transported and landed 1700 Marines, 26 helicopters, 750 tons of cargo, and 248 vehicles without injury or accident. In all, more men, supplies and equipment than are normally used in a six-month Mediterranean deployment were transported aboard the three amphibious ships. This was also the first time an LHA class ship was utilized to its full capability in an amphibious operation.

All Navy and Marine Corps units that participated in REINFORCEX 1-79 have subsequently been awarded the Meritorious Unit Commendation.



Executive Officer, Commander Ianucci unfurls the Commendation pennant while Captain Kearns tells of the award.

A Note From The Commanding Officer

COMMANDING OFFICER
U.S.S. NASSAU LHA-4)
FLEET POST OFFICE
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 09557

28 July 1980

Dear Family and Friends of Nassau,

It has been a year since NASSAU was commissioned and during that time your NASSAU men have compiled an impressive and proud record. These events have included the reinforcement of the U.S. Naval Base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba last October in support of Presidential policy (only seventy days after commissioning) and subsequent award of the Meritorious Unit Commendation. Also our Caribbean Cruise in March and April as a demonstration of U. S. resolve in that area and naval presence was a major success. Both these operations were unprecedented for a newly commissioned ship still in her shakedown period. Additionally, many training evolutions such as our Gun and Missile Systems qualification test had outstanding results.

It is no accident that all these things happened as all our pre-commissioning training and organization efforts were focused precisely on goals of combat readiness and top notch mission accomplishment. However none of this would have or could have happened without the high level of personal effort, professionalism, and superior performance of duty which our crew has put forth. You can be justifiably proud, as I am, of this record of achievement. I have consistently received most favorable comments for all levels concerning the positive atti-

tude and cheerful demeanor of our men. In summary it takes good men to make a good ship—NASSAU has both. Perhaps most satisfying to me has been the **individual** accomplishments of our crewmen — advancements, awards, etc.

On 9 August 1980 I will complete my tour of duty as Commanding Officer and I will be relieved by Captain H. C. Atwood, USN, therefore this will be my final Familygram.

In closing I would like to express my thanks to all of you who support the NASSAU and her Officers and Men—Wives, Mothers and Fathers, Family and Friends. I have appreciated your letters and enjoyed meeting you at various NASSAU events. I know you will continue this very important support to Captain Atwood in future months.

Sincerely,
William A. Kearns, Jr.
Captain, U. S. Navy

*Editor's note—Upon being relieved as Commanding Officer USS NASSAU Captain Kearns will be promoted to the grade of Rear Admiral and will assume the duties as Inspector General U.S. Atlantic Fleet.

NASSAU visits NYC

The NASSAU paid a visit to New York City on April 18-21 while conducting training operations. The visit enabled the NASSAU crew to relax and enjoy the many varied recreational activities available in the "Big Apple."

Since many members of the NASSAU crew are from the Metropolitan area the visit also gave them the opportunity to show off their ship to family and friends.

An open house was held that Saturday and over 5,000 visitors toured the NASSAU during the four hours that tours were conducted. Many of the visitors were amazed at NASSAU's size and complexity.



This photo taken from the Empire State building shows NASSAU dwarfed by New York's many tall buildings.

Sunset Parade Ceremony

During NASSAU's Caribbean Cruise the military ceremony of "Tattoo" (observing sunset by taking down the National ensign and Navy jack in a formal setting) was performed regularly by Marines from the CINCLANTFLT Detachment honor guard and the Navy's Atlantic Fleet Show Band for dignitaries visiting the ship.

Operations during this period were very demanding and so many members of the ship's company did not have a chance to observe the ceremony. In order to give the crew, their families and friends, as well as the guests of the Marine Honor Guard and the Navy Band a chance to see this impressive ceremony, it was performed one last time aboard NASSAU on April 30 in Norfolk.

Approximately 450 members of the NASSAU crew with their guests attended the ceremony and reception that followed it.

Vice Admiral John D. Johnson, Commander Naval Surface Force, Atlantic, was the reviewing officer.



Members of the Marine Honor Guard during the ceremony.

NASSAU begins overhaul

The NASSAU is now entering her third month in the Norfolk Naval Shipyard for a Post Shakedown Availability overhaul.

Many changes will be made to the ship including improvements to living areas, updating ship's systems and removing the ship's Automated Propulsion Plant (APS).

NASSAU will be berthed at Pier 3 in the shipyard for the remainder of the ten-month yard period and the NASSAU crew is adjusting to shipyard life. Many NASSAU sailors are using this period to attend various Navy training schools and to take high school completion and college courses.



USS NASSAU (LHA-4) arrives at the shipyard.

NASSAU receives retention award

R

For the sixth straight month the USS NASSAU (LHA 4) has achieved "superstar status" in retention, entitling the ship to display the blue retention "R".

Career Counselors NC1 Donald J. Wilhelm and NC1 Donald Mize maintained a 100 percent reenlistment rate among first term, second term and careerist groups for the six month period covered by the award.

The NASSAU received its "R" in category two competition (newly commissioned ships within six months of commissioning) and was one of 14 category two units to receive the award.

The USS NASSAU (LHA 4) Commanding Officer is Captain William A. Kearns, Jr., USN. The NASSAU Familygram complies with NPPR P-35. The content does not necessarily reflect the official views of the Department of the Navy.

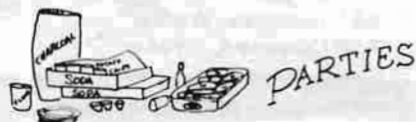
Welfare and Rec at work

The NASSAU Special Services Organization (also known as Welfare and Rec) has been busy this past month getting ready for a summer of sports and activities.

In addition to their support of the NASSAU softball and bowling teams (see story; page 7) Special Services has a number of other plans for making crewmembers liberty time more enjoyable.

Departmental teams are being formed in these events and first and second place teams will be awarded prizes. There will also be events for children with first place trophies for three children's age groups.

In addition to the competitive events, facilities for tennis, basketball, bowling and swimming will be available. The only charge to crewmen and their dependents will be for the bowling.



Monday, July 28 marks NASSAU's first full year in commissioned status and Special Services will hold an All Hands Party that day at the Norfolk Naval Shipyard's Scott Center. Activities at the party will include competition in softball, volleyball, tug-of-war, and a three mile run.



WELFARE AND RECREATION



Special Services has also purchased a bus which will be used for trips to the beach, shopping centers, local museums, etc. The bus will also be used for weekend trips receiving sufficient interest from the crew.

Other Special Services projects include a Ticket Rebate program which refunds up to ten dollars a month for entertainment and recreational events (except movies), and more intramural teams.

Crewmembers receive Navy Achievement Awards



NAVY ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

During the USS NASSAU's GTMO and Caribbean cruises an extraordinary amount of hard work was done by many members of the ship's company while still maintaining the high level of excellence the NASSAU is known for.

On May eighth, ten of these outstanding and dedicated performers were presented Navy Achievement Medals in recognition of their efforts.

NASSAU Navy Relief drive a success!

When NASSAU began its Navy Relief fund raising drive, her fund raising committee set a goal of \$4444.44.

Using posters, plan of the day notes, a network of departmental and divisional "key" men, culminating with a raffle, the committee met and exceeded their goal, raising \$5,250.10, an average donation of over \$6 per crew member.

The ship's Operations Intelligence division donated the most money to the drive, \$562.00, while X-division accounted for the most money per crew member with an average of \$38 per man.

Special thanks goes to the divisional "key" men who gathered support for the fund raising drive.

Divisional Key Men

Lt. Butts, Committee Chairman; FTGC Calles, Assistant Chairman; PC1 Sellers, QM3 Johnson, AC1 Williams, DP2 Samuels, OS2 Thalman, DT1 Graham, RM3 Gregovich, AG1 Lehman, SM1 Weeks, ABH3 Martin,

Nine sailors and one Marine received their medals during an award ceremony held in the NASSAU Hangar Bay.

Receiving Navy Achievement medals were:

IC2 Conrad E. Coffield, Jr.
BM2 Charles N. Curtis
ET2 Daniel H. Leive
FTM2 Aaron A. Lewis
LI1 Thomas R. Morey
DS2 Gary L. Morris
ABF1 Ronald K. Primous
GYSGT Darrell K. Terry, USMC
AS1 Thomas L. Walker
ABH1 Duane C. Weber

Congratulations and Well Done to these NASSAU professionals.

ABH3 Scott, ABF1 Primous, AS1 Walker, DSC Brooks, ETCS Cummins, EW1 Edwards, ETMC Saxon, GMGC Starke, BM2 Finley, BM2 Finley, BM2 Reheiser, MM1 Krol, IC2 Simons, HT2 Wright, MMC Richards, EN3 Bullers, SK1 Lapid, MS1 Hebron, SH2 Sherrod, DK1 Fernandez, MS1 Malabanan, and AK2 Shoenight.



Principal Navy Relief fund raisers: GMGC Starke, EW1 Edwards, Lt. Butts, chairman, FTGC Calles, assistant chairman.

Ship's athletes in high gear!



In our last issue of the Familygram we reported on the many activities of our NASSAU athletes.

In the three months since the last issue our sports enthusiasts have not been idle. NASSAU is rapidly becoming known and feared in softball, bowling, racquet sports, soccer, and swimming. In addition the NASSAU Roadrunners (a dedicated group of joggers and runners) are piling up the miles both in competition and just for the fun of it as they strive to meet personal and club goals they have set for themselves.

The ship is sponsoring two softball teams who are presently ranked second and third in league play and both are keeping the pressure on each other over the first place position.

The NASSAU "A" softball team is currently in first place with an 18-3 won/lost record. The "B" team is holding the third spot in the league standings with a 17-6 record.

Welfare and Rec is also sponsoring two bowling teams in local league competition. The Bowling "A" team's 25-3 record is the best in the league and the "B" team isn't far behind with a 21-7 mark.

In a recently held racquet sports competition NASSAU teams took second and third place honors. There was competition in racquet ball, tennis, badminton, table tennis, and squash. The "A" team's second place finish was rewarded with a team plaque, the first athletic award a NASSAU team has won.

Members of the NASSAU Roadrunners club also have reason to feel proud of their achievements. Four of the club's members have run over 500 miles since January and one, EN1 D. Coffin should pass the 1000 mile mark by the time this issue is in the mail. Other Roadrunners with over 500 miles to their credit are: Major R. Geary, USMC, Lt. M. Opsahl, LCDR G. Rogers and Cdr D. Dwyer. Several more members are very close to attaining 500 miles run also.

Some 70 members of the NASSAU crew have joined the club and about half of these are considered truly dedicated runners. Members of the club have run close to 7,000 miles total since January of this year.

Several club members have been competing in local events through Welfare and Rec's sponsorship and their results have been good. In one team event entered so far the NASSAU team placed fourth out of eight teams entered.



Surface Warfare goals reached by NASSAU officers

Four of NASSAU's junior officers recently qualified for Surface Warfare Officer designation, authorizing them to wear the distinctive gold SWO insignia. LTJG Eric Baron, LTJG Michael Musser, LTJG Phillip Russell, and LTJG Lee Sykes were the first officers to complete their Surface Warfare qualification aboard NASSAU since the ship was commissioned in 1979.

The SWO insignia is the culmination of an intensive Surface Warfare Officer Personnel Qualification Standard Program (PQS). This program starts with the junior officer attending the 18 week Surface Warfare Officer Basic Course which provides the comprehensive theory and systems training required in the fleet. The qualification process is consummated aboard ship when the junior officer pursues and completes the requisite PQS in watchstanding and satisfactorily completes an oral examination administered by a Qualification Board comprised of the ship's senior officers.

The major areas of study required for Surface Warfare Officer qualification are: Officer of the Deck in Port, Officer of the Deck Underway, CIC Watch Officer, Basic Warfare Fundamentals, Shipboard Engineering, and Shipboard Division Officer. This rigorous training has fostered a

steadfast pride in Naval professionalism readily apparent aboard many surface ships today.



Newly qualified surface warfare officers: (left to right) LTJG's Eric Baron, Michael Musser, Phillip Russell, and Lee Sykes with Captain Kearns and Commander Ianucci. (Fourth and first from right respectively)

Congratulations and best wishes to the following NASSAU crewmembers who have retired and transferred to the Fleet Reserve:

ETCM Thomas A. Edwards, Jr.
HMCS James M. Christiansen
ABFC James T. Jenkins
ABHC Carlton M. Weatherburn
ABH1 Thomas P. Bagley
AD1 Lloyd G. Sims, Jr.
MS1 Juanito P. Yamane
ADJ1 James E. Washington

Petty Officer and Sailor of Quarter chosen

Operations Specialist Petty Officer Second Class Milton Saracho has been selected as NASSAU's latest Petty Officer of the Quarter. Petty Officer Saracho has been in the Navy for four years and is currently the Command Information Center Technical Publications Library custodian, Planned Maintenance Systems assistant, and a member of the NAS-

SAU Human Relations Committee.

The newest NASSAU Sailor of the Quarter is Yeoman Petty Officer Third Class Darrell Enoch. Recently promoted to the rank of Petty Officer Third Class YN3 Enoch is the ship's legal yeoman.

Congratulations and well done to these two outstanding sailors.

New Command Master Chief and New Ombudsmen too!

The USS NASSAU now has a new Master Chief Petty Officer of the Command, Master Chief Storekeeper Frederick E. Haisten has taken over for Master Chief Electronics Technician Thomas A. Edwards Jr., who retired last month. Congratulations to Master Chief Haisten and many thanks and good luck to Master Chief Edwards.

We also have two new Ombudsmen: Anita Williams (489-1978) and Linda Louk (466-1718) who are now serving with Harriet Riddle (425-8968).

NASSAU crewmen "re-up"

The following NASSAU crewmembers have reenlisted or extended, many for new assignments or schools, and the Familygram staff would like to wish them the best of luck as they continue their Navy careers:

STAR Program

DS2 Stolze	DS2 Watson	DS2 Albritton
DS2 Abbott	DS2 Wilber	DS2 Austin
DS2 Hill	DSSN Powell	

Guard III

SH1 Price	YN2 Mingledorff	HM1 Tinsley
PC1 Sellers	SM1 Williams	SM2 Davis

Regular Reenlistments

AE1 Campbell	HTC Sackett	MM1 Lippus
BT2 Mulcahy	DP2 Johnson	OS1 Moore
EW2 Strickland	ET2 Oliver	MS2 Lawrence

Extensions

IC2 Coffield	FTM2 Lewis	HT2 McLellan
DP1 Godtland	RM3 Henderson	ASM2 Gallagher

Did someone get promoted?!

Congratulations to the following NASSAU crewmen promoted during the current advancement cycle:

AK1 Shoenight	AC1 Bratton	ABH3 Hurt
HT1 Simmons	GMG2 Anderson	EM3 Jones
BM1 Fowler	DS2 Austin	ABH3 Jones
RM1 Hamblin	GMG2 Birdwell	GMG3 Kelley
GMG1 Hough	PN2 Bowman	GMG3 Lewis
EM1 Labaco	OS2 Brunner	OS3 Limpert
HT1 Lamar	ABH2 Carter	MM3 Lindberg
MS1 Monzon	ABF2 Cochran	AG3 Lombardo
MM1 Pifer	BT2 Dandrea	IC3 Lonski
MS1 Pozas	AD1 DeCastro	HT3 Luurs
RM1 Ringo	DTG3 Alexis	EN3 Maki
MM2 Dillow	AK3 Austin	EM3 Manalili
SM2 Fyock	AG3 Beck	SK3 Mann
AT2 Graham	BT3 Bell	OS3 Masten
EN2 Geisen	DP3 Bergland	OS3 McCarty
BM2 Hackett	OS3 Bludworth	AZ3 McMahan
HM2 Hoyt	GMG3 Braxton	BT3 Mills
RM2 Hubbard	OS3 Caudill	IC3 Moncada
SK2 Jacob	BM3 Clack	AC3 Moss
EM2 Jester	SK3 Clark	SH3 Narciso
HT2 Jones	ABH3 Cooley	PH3 Neuwander
BM2 Lile	EM3 David	MM3 Nolan
OS2 Miller	EN3 Ellers	DP3 O'Connell
BM2 Mitchell	YN3 Enoch	IC3 Osiecki
IS2 Morgan	OS3 Ewing	EM3 Perrier
BT2 Fulcahy	MS3 Fennessey	GMG3 Rabbitt
ABH2 Rioscruz	RM3 Ferguson	DP3 Reinders
FTM2 Ruschlag	HT3 Fura	BT3 Rennie
OS2 Saracho	BT3 Frank	OS3 Runnels
YN2 Shelton	EM3 Fruits	ABH3 Sample
JO2 Simon	EM3 Fugler	ABH3 Sanders
RM2 Smallwood	AK3 Gilmore	QM3 Sheats
PH2 Smith	OS3 Ginn	PH3 Shoup
BT2 Stokes	HT3 Goins	OS3 Stephens
GMG2 Titus	EM3 Gore	IS3 Warren
ABF3 Hodges	RM3 Gregovich	QM3 Wheatley
FTM2 Wehmer	EW3 Hallet	BT3 Wiecek
MS2 Willett	DTG3 Haynes	EM3 Williams
EM2 Wilson	MM3 Herman	IC3 York
DP3 Hopkins	HT2 Cherry	QM3 Buch

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

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