



# Direct Line

Vol. 18, No. 1

"Serving The Senior Enlisted Leadership of the Navy"

May 1998

## *Herdt relieves Hagan as MCPON*

By JOC(AW) B. Natalie Dias

With a crowd of more than 800 Sailors watching, Master Chief Petty Officer Jim Herdt assumed the duties as the ninth Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy at ceremonies held March 27 at the Washington Navy Yard.

"As I embark on this mission, I am thankful for many fundamentals of Navy life that will guide me through this magnificent opportunity to serve," Herdt said in his acceptance speech.

A machinist mate, Herdt relieved ETCM(SW) John Hagan who is retiring from active duty after more than five years as the Navy's senior enlisted leader and more than 33 years of active duty.

"MCPON Jim Herdt, today I join the retired chiefs and will support your efforts from there," Hagan said in his remarks.

"Your future success is certain, only the details are unknown. Lead the chiefs -- they are the key for you. Lead the chiefs and they will lead the crew, and we will not fail," Hagan added.

Chief of Naval Operations, Admi-



*ETCM(SW) John Hagan, the eighth Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy, hands over the enlisted cutlass to his successor, MMCM(SS/SW/AW) Jim Herdt, during ceremonies March 27 at the Washington Navy Yard. (Photo by PHAN Fredrick McCahan, Naval Media Center)*

ral Jay L. Johnson, served as the ceremony's guest speaker.

"Superior enlisted leadership is essential to the success of our Navy," Johnson stressed. "Their wisdom, counsel, experience and honesty help put issues into perspective."

The CNO also presented MCPON Hagan with a Navy Distinguished Service Medal for his instrumental role in revising the evaluation system, upgrading enlisted warfare qualifications, improving physical fitness standards and revitalizing the chief initiation season.

## **MCPON Herdt on CPO initiation season**

It is with a great deal of pride in our Navy, in our enlisted force and in our CPO mess that I relieved MCPON Hagan a few weeks ago. Since that time I have set about getting acquainted with everything and everyone here in D.C. and have set a very aggressive travel schedule to visit as many of you in the fleet as I can just as soon as I can. I have already discovered the best part of this job, as all the former MCPONs have warned me, is being away from D.C. and being with the Sailors of the fleet.

In nearly every CPO call I've held since the change of office, I have been asked for my views on CPO initiation

and whether I planned to change the course we've set in years past. The question has surfaced so often in fact that I wanted to get this special abbreviated issue of the *Direct Line* to you to specifically address the question.

The short answer is, "MAINTAIN COURSE, INCREASE SPEED!"

Through the hard work of my predecessor, the CNO and the entire CPO mess, we have turned our initiation into not only a powerful preparatory period for those joining our

*See CPO INITIATION, page 2*

## CPO INITIATION

*Continued from page 1*

ranks but also a shining example of our core values. I believe we have successfully and correctly redirected the focus of our energies from initiation day itself to the period from selection announcement through Sept. 15. It is this time period when all the learning about what a CPO does, is and represents takes place.

This change of focus does not mean initiation day is out! It does mean that initiation day should be used to welcome our new shipmates into the mess by sharing in camaraderie, our heritage and good-natured fun, capped by a truly meaningful pinning ceremony. It should not be used as a poor substitute or excuse for not doing the very hard work of training prior to initiation day.

The timing of the release of SECDEF's policy on hazing last year caused some agitation and concern in almost every mess in the Navy. After having a year's experience with the policy, I hope that you have joined me in coming to appreciate what it says and do not see it as a challenge to being able to conduct a meaningful initiation. I have included the operative part of that message in this issue for information purposes only and not to stifle anyone's initiative (*see page 3*). I think you really need only be able to ensure two things to be in compliance.

First, that your training/skits/events not be abusive or cruel, in line with our core values and above reasonable criticism.

Second, and I'm hard over on this, no food/drink in the mouth or down the gullet. I do not see any limitations here on really imaginative CPO messes being able to capture the imagination of selectees.

The real challenge to every CPO mess and it's CMC continues to be achievement of full participation of the mess during the season. The typical CPO mess continues to receive the support of about 10 percent of the mess in the events

leading up to the 16<sup>th</sup> and nearly 100 percent attendance on the 16<sup>th</sup>. We are all very thankful for the nearly unanimous support at initiation, but we need the same participation at all other events. There is no good reason, at a very minimum, there shouldn't be 100 percent participation at the PT periods. ALL SAILORS (CPOs included) ARE REQUIRED BY THE CNO TO PT THREE TIMES PER WEEK! Why not do it where leadership by example really counts ... with the CPO selectees?

I believe we only have our toe-in-the-door on the heritage reading initiative and I'm hopeful that we will be able to expand it to encompass our whole Navy in the future. It is a rich and do-able opportunity to better understand and appreciate where we have come from to better shape and serve the Navy of today and the future.

Although we got off to a great start last year with the

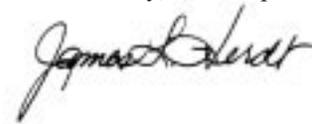
readings there were too many instances of not using the opportunity to best advantage. Please make this a focal point of your training this year.

Assign the readings early ... right after the selection message comes out. Assign only those readings on the approved list. Then follow up with a good dis-

ussion of our core values using examples each selectee found in their reading to show how our core values served us in the past. I recommend the CMC personally conduct this discussion and consider inviting the skipper down to participate.

I intend to write more on initiations in a longer *Direct Line* in the June time frame. This is just a down and dirty snapshot of how I see it to get you started on the preps for the season. This is also an open invitation for you to give me success stories you've had. They will help me put the next *Direct Line* together and may even appear in their entirety.

I'm proud of our CPO community, and I'm proud to be your MCPON!



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### ***Direct Line***

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## Can other services participate in CPO initiation?

I've been asked several times whether military personnel from other services may participate in chief's initiation. For those messes which want to include non-Navy personnel, approval must be given by their appropriate fleet, force or CNO-directed command master chiefs. If approved, non-Navy participants must take part in all initiation events from the selection announcement through Sept. 16.

## SECDEF asks for leadership in implementing hazing policy

*Editor's Note: This excerpt is from the Secretary of Defense Aug. 28, 1997 memorandum.*

National security and prosperity depend on the ability to optimize the talents and selfless service of our Nation's total force – soldiers, Sailors, airmen, Marines, and civilians. We must create and maintain an environment that encourages personal development and teamwork, and allows members to reach their full potential. In this regard, all events which commemorate and instill the customs and traditions of military service should be conducted with the highest degree of professionalism and dignity.

Treating each other with dignity and respect is essential to morale, operational readiness, and mission accomplishment. Hazing is contrary to these goals. Hazing must not be allowed to occur; and when it does, action should be prompt and effective – not only to deal with the incident, but also to prevent future occurrences.

The attached policy (below) defines the prohibited conduct which constitutes hazing and sets forth guidance for dealing with violations. Our men and women in uniform and the civilian employees continue to make great sacrifices for this Nation. We owe them full support and respect at every level of command.

## Defense Department defines hazing and sets policy

Hazing is defined as any conduct whereby a military member or members, regardless of Service or rank, without proper authority causes another military member or members, regardless of Service or rank, to suffer or exposed to any activity which is cruel, abusive, humiliating, oppressive, demeaning or harmful. Soliciting or coercing another to perpetrate any such activity is also considered hazing. Hazing need not involve physical contact among or between military members; it can be verbal or psychological in nature. Actual or implied consent to acts of hazing does not eliminate the culpability of the perpetrator.

The above definition can include, but is not limited to, the following: playing abusive tricks; threatening or offering violence or bodily harm to another; ... or forcing or requiring the consumption of food, alcohol, drugs, or any other substance.

Hazing does not include command authorized mission

or operational activities; the requisite training to prepare for such mission or operations; administrative corrective measures; extra military instruction; command authorized Physical training, and other similar activities that are authorized by the chain of command.

Hazing is typically associated with initiations or "rites of passage." Such activities, if not cruel or abusive and if properly supervised and authorized by the chain of command, can be effective leadership methods to instill unit esprit de corps and Service loyalty. Any such activity should be strictly scrutinized by the chain of command to ensure that the dignity and respect of all participant are maintained, while preserving historical customs and traditions.

Compliance with this policy is the responsibility of every Service member. Commanders and senior noncommissioned officers will promptly and thoroughly investigate all reports of hazing ....



May 1998

## Selectees focus on teamwork

When selectees work on their charge books as a team of individuals, the creative efforts are impressive. Chief selectees at Naval Air Station Cecil Field, Fla., (*pictured left*) combined their efforts in creating charge books. When the 12 selectee charge books are placed together, they form the "Sailors Creed."

Combined efforts like help make charge books invaluable keepsakes. When we all make thoughtful, creative or humorous entries, it enhances CPO pride in general and contributes immensely to the value of the charge book.

Direct Line

# Parting Thoughts

## Holy Stone

The sandstone formerly used for scouring ships decks, got it's nickname from some witty Sailor who declared as its use always brought a man to his knees, it sure must be "HOLY."

## Salt From The Sea

## August Chief Petty Officer

The term august (o gust') means inspiring reverence or admiration; of supreme dignity or grandeur; majestic. The term August Chief Petty Officer is a description of any CPO; inspiring reverence or admiration; representative of supreme dignity or grandeur; majestic.

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