

USS RONALD REAGAN

NOVEMBER 2016

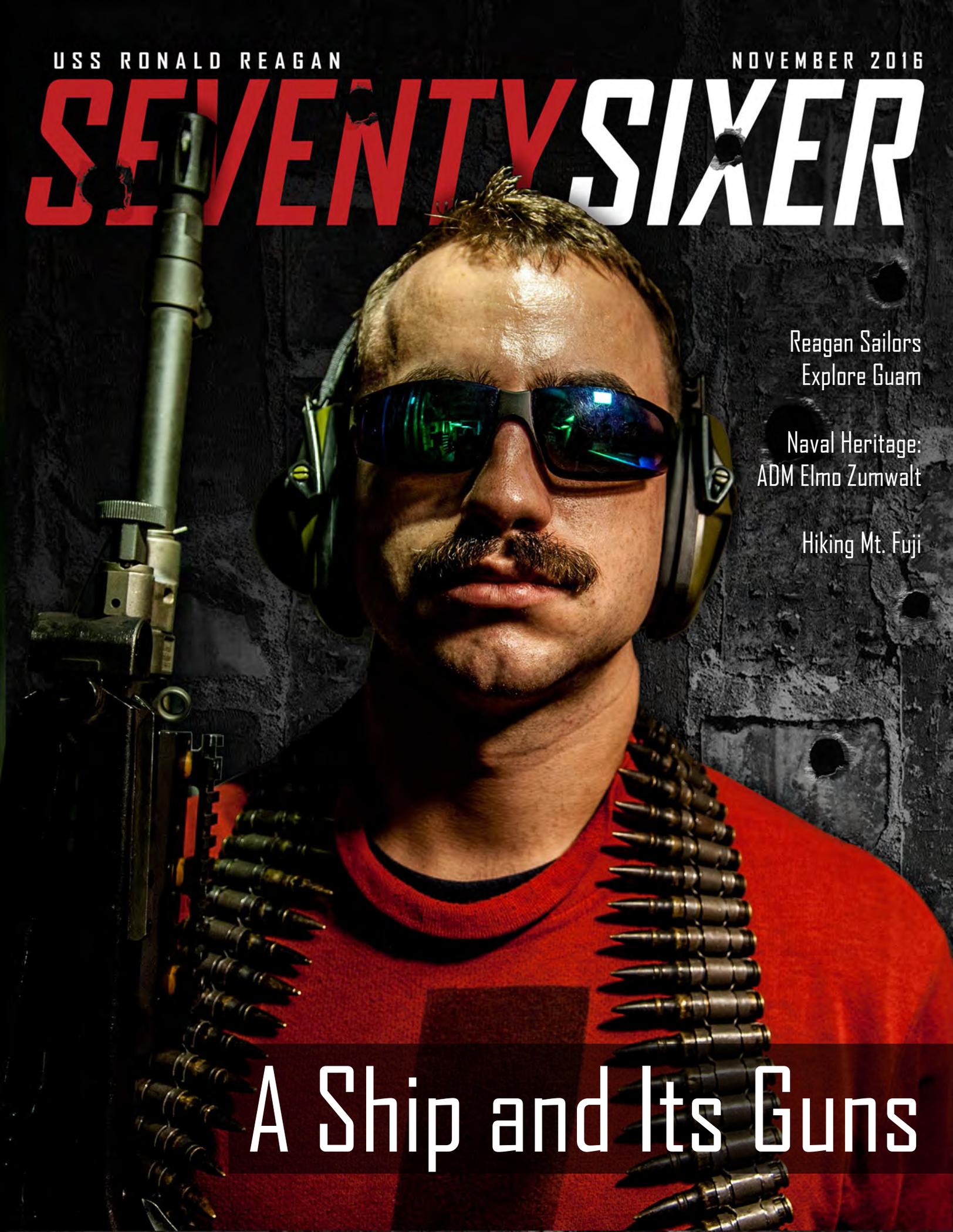
SEVENTY SIXER

Reagan Sailors
Explore Guam

Naval Heritage:
ADM Elmo Zumwalt

Hiking Mt. Fuji

A Ship and Its Guns



Reagan Sailors
Discover a Piece
of America

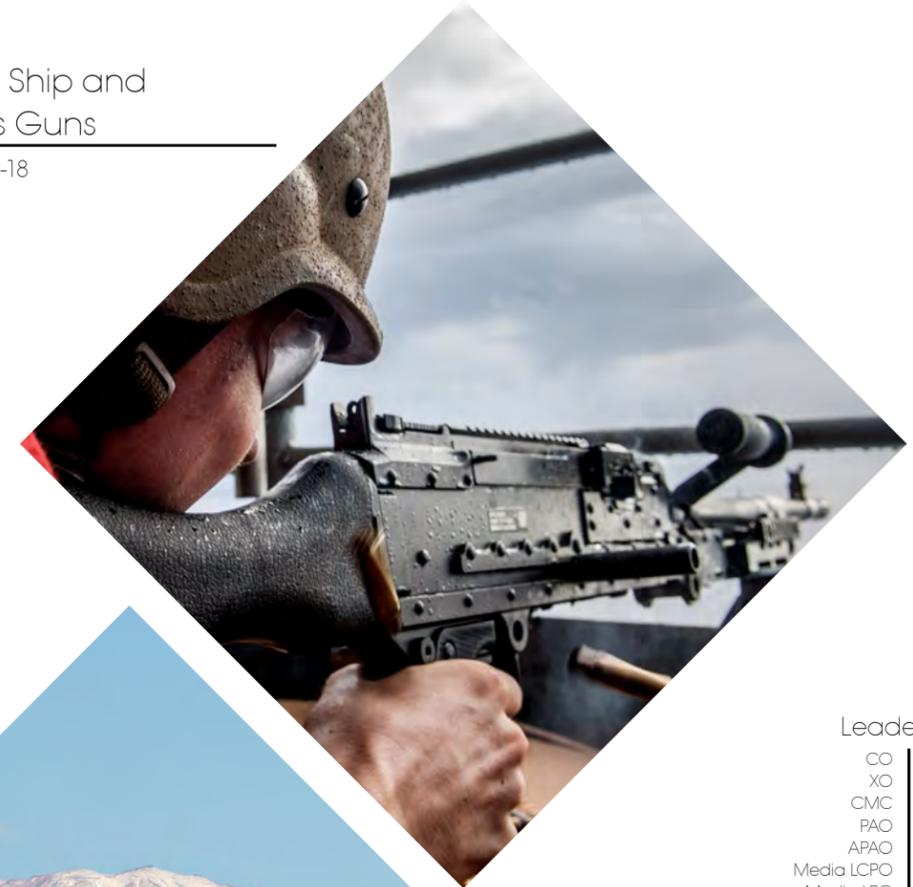
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PO2 Melissa Rodriguez, from Pensacola, Florida, gives a thumbs-up before diving into the water during a dolphin-watching and snorkeling tour in Guam. The tour was one of 13 different tours offered by Ronald Reagan's Morale, Welfare and Recreation Department. (Photo by SN Jamaal Liddell)

Reagan Sailors Discover a Piece of America

Story by PO3 James Lee

Sailors aboard America's flagship, USS Ronald Reagan, immersed themselves in what Guam had to offer Sept. 15-21 during the ship's first port visit of 2016. They danced with Guamanian children, wandered through a jungle with dangling spiders, kayaked through a river with jumping catfish and braved the open ocean with playful dolphins.

From Tumon Beach to Dededo, Reagan Sailors seized the opportunity to participate in a variety of activities offered by the Command Religious Ministries Department (CRMD) and Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR).

Some Sailors participated in the Wettengel Elementary School and Island Girl Power community relations projects organized by CRMD. Others enjoyed MWR tours, such as the Valley of the Latte tour and dolphin-watching adventure.

The Wettengel Elementary School community relations project involved 27 Reagan Sailors, who visited with children, shared information about the Navy and played games on the school's playground.

"Being here is special in so many ways," said Chief Kwelisha Jackson, a San Diego native who volunteered for the event. "This is important to build these close relationships with locals. It shows a positive aspect of the military; our presence makes a difference and inspires."

The students mingled happily with the Sailors, as they smiled and laughed together throughout the visit.

"The Sailors came and they answered our questions," said Jaelamae Manibusan, a fifth-grade student. "While they played games with us and helped us in math, they showed us pictures of the ship, planes and jets."

Elementary students and Sailors sat in groups, as they weaved coconut

leaves into fish shapes. They also danced together on a stage and played games, like "Duck, Duck, Goose," on the playground.

"My favorite part was when the Sailors were answering and we were learning about what happens in the Navy, how to get in it, what happens on the super carrier Reagan and when we played a game," said Viguel Co, a fifth-grade student.

Seaman Christian Perez, a volunteer from Houston, received many handwritten letters of thanks and appreciation from the students as he returned to the ship.

"This helps us understand new communities," Perez said. "Where we go helps us grow as humans, and it helps give a piece of who we are and what we do to everybody we meet."

Perez also said the personal interaction with everyone at the school was the highlight of his visit.

"My favorite part of the day was being able to see the kids smile — not only the kids, the people with them, as well," he said.

Elsewhere, in the dense jungles of the island, the Island Girl Power cleanup project attracted 45 Reagan Sailors, who were eager to connect with local people and provide a service to the community.

The Sailors were guided by Petty Officer 1st Class Thurman McDowell, from Muskegon, Michigan, who was their team leader.

"We had several jobs to do," said McDowell. "We had a crew inside the jungle area, where we cut down trees, vines and bushes to the side; we had a crew picking up trash alongside the street and another crew clearing out dirt for a path."

According to McDowell, the locals started clearing the jungle, but the Sailors



CPO Kwelisha Jackson, from San Diego, chases a student while playing a game of "Duck, Duck, Goose" during a community relations project at Wettengel Elementary School. (Photo by PO2 Kenneth Abbate)

"My favorite part of the day was being able to see the kids smile — not only the kids, the people with them, as well."

- SN Christian Perez





PO3 Violet Lonemurray, from Portland, Oregon, weaves a fish out of coconut leaves with students during a community relations project at Wettengel Elementary School. (Photo by PO2 Kenneth Abbate)

made the biggest push in clearing the path to rebuild the playground.

“The story goes that 40 years ago there was an actual playground, but due to stormy weather and lack of care, it went to the wayside,” said McDowell.

McDowell added that the Sailors encountered lizards, mosquitos and many types of insects and had to endure hot weather while they worked.

“I found it extremely rewarding, even though it was pretty hot and we got

bit up by mosquitos,” he said. “At the end, when you see the expression on the project coordinator’s face and how he was sincere about the progress we had made, it made the trip well worth it.”

After the cleanup, Island Girl Power representatives Daren Mendiola, the project coordinator, and Joshua Camacho, an environmental specialist, took time to thank the Sailors for volunteering their time.

“We spent many weekends working in

there,” said Mendiola. “We spent a lot of time swinging machetes. To have this amount of people at one time has already been a huge blessing,” said Mendiola.

Mendiola said he was impressed with the amount of work the Sailors completed and was already thinking about ways to utilize the park.

“Up until now, we were thinking about trying to connect different trails and hoping to go further every week,” said Mendiola. “Seriously, from the bottom of



Sailors swim in tropical waters off the coast of Agat Village during MWR's dolphin-watching and snorkeling tour. (Photo by SN Jamaal Liddell)

our hearts, thank you so much, because what you guys did today means a lot.”

After the project, Camacho spoke to the volunteers and expressed his appreciation.

“We were fixing the damage done by illegal dumping,” Camacho said. “It’s what we’re trying to do for the community, so I’m really grateful for all of you.”

Camacho said he was surprised at the amount of work the Sailors were able to do in one day and extended an invitation for the Sailors to return.

“I look forward to another one of these days,” Camacho said. “I don’t know when, but next time you guys visit, you should definitely come by.”

On another part of the island, on the brownish waters of the Ugam River, Sailors like Cmdr. Mike Car, Reagan’s supply officer, from Kittanning, Pennsylvania, were well into the Valley of the Latte tour.

The Sailors kayaked down the river until they arrived at a hut with a roof made of coconut leaves and wood. On the way, they saw wildflowers, wasps and exotic fruit trees.

“It was interesting, kayaking under a canopy of trees,” said Car. “I enjoyed taking a close-up look at the jungle and seeing the wildlife. I saw catfish as they were jumping out of the water and the spiders were colorful and very large. I know they scared a few people, they were probably two inches in size.”

Car said the visit was his second to Guam. He also visited 11 years ago with another ship, USS Princeton.

“This port visit, I got to see more and do some MWR activities,” said Car. “It was good times.”

Meanwhile, in the blue waters surrounding the island, Sailors who

attended MWR’s dolphin-watching adventure were enjoying the ocean breeze on a chartered boat and swimming with schools of colorful fish.

“I picked this tour because I really like dolphins, and I always wanted to snorkel,” said Seaman Davis Dyson, from Crestview, Florida. “The tour went really well and I would do it again.”

Seaman Jamaal Liddell, from Jacksonville, Florida, described the day.

“The group headed out on a charter boat, early in the morning,” he said. “We went out into the open ocean until we spotted dolphin fins in the water.”

Liddell said the tour guide attracted the dolphins by driving the boat in circles until the wake caught the dolphins’ attention.

“They jumped out of the water and showed us their playful side,” Liddell said. “They swam alongside the boat and followed us for about 20 minutes. Afterward, we anchored out and ended the tour with some snorkeling.”

Petty Officer 2nd Class Melissa Rodriguez, from Pensacola, Florida, said she picked the tour, because she is interested in marine life.

“It’s really great to see all the different sea life here,” said Rodriguez. “My favorite parts were the dolphins and the close encounters with the fish during the snorkeling. I love Guam.”

Whether Sailors helped out the local community by volunteering for a CRMD community relations project or chose to enjoy an MWR trip, they found their own way to explore the island of Guam and take full advantage of the adventures it has to offer. During the visit, CRMD coordinated 10 community relations projects involving 131 volunteers, while MWR sponsored 13 tours that drew 600 participants. 🌴



Dolphins emerge from the water during MWR's dolphin-watching and snorkeling tour off the coast of Agat Village. (Photo by SN Jamaal Liddell)

“I picked this tour because I really like dolphins, and I always wanted to snorkel”

- SN Davis Dyson



PO2 Pamela Collins, from Fairfax, Virginia, dances with a student during a community relations project at Wettengel Elementary School. (Photo by PO2 Kenneth Abbate)



Reagan Sailors join Island Girl Power staff members on their way to clear brush and debris from a park path during a community relations project. (Photo by SN Macadam Weissman)



PO3 Sean Michael
James Mckenna



Hometown	Quantico, Virginia	Perfect day	Summer vacation at a legit lakehouse, enjoying the simple pleasures of life.
Can't live without	Port Visits	Favorite food	Gorkah Palace outside of Womble Gate
Proudest moment	Picking up HM3. It's very competitive for HMs.	Dream job	Radiologist
Someone who inspires you	My mom, physical therapist, and dad, retired commander.	Hobby	Working out and videogaming



Adm. Elmo Zumwalt



Provided by history.navy.mil

A veteran of World War II and the conflicts in Korea and Vietnam, Admiral Zumwalt exemplified honor, courage and commitment during 32 years of dedicated naval service, earning a Bronze Star with Valor for his actions during the Battle of Leyte Gulf. As the 19th Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Zumwalt embraced innovation—strategically, technologically, and with his personnel programs—to modernize the U.S. Navy.

Admiral Zumwalt's embrace of innovation resulted in a number of new programs, such as the Oliver Hazard Perry-class frigate, the Ohio-class

ballistic missile submarine, and the F-14 Tomcat, all of which had lasting impacts on the warfighting readiness of the Navy. A battle-seasoned surface warfare expert, Admiral Zumwalt instituted the creation of the surface warfare pin to enhance a sense of community and expertise within the surface Navy. Perhaps most importantly, Admiral Zumwalt knew the primary force-multiplier of the United States Navy continued to be Sailors. As a social reformer, he began quality of life improvements for Sailors and the institutionalization of equality for minorities and women in the Navy.



A native of San Francisco and a 1939 graduate of the United States Naval Academy, Zumwalt became the youngest Chief of Naval Operations in 1970 at the age of 49.



Zumwalt speaks with the Human Relations Council, at Fleet Activities, Yokosuka, Japan, July 2, 1971. (Photo by PH2 Edward C. Mucma)

A ship and Its Guns

Story and photos by PO3 Nathan Burke

“Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, that the President of the United States be and he is hereby empowered, should he deem it expedient, to cause the frigates United States, Constitution and Constellation, to be manned and employed.”

These words forged with the passing of the Naval Act of 1794, sparked the reactivation and establishment of a permanent-standing U.S. naval force following the disbandment of the Continental Navy after the Revolutionary War. By the order of President George Washington, six frigates were to be built, charting the course for what would become the present-day U.S. Navy.

The frigates were to be built in 44 and 36-gun variants. Crafted from live oak, iron and copper, they were a far cry from the hulls of our modern Navy. However, one constant holds true — a ship needs its guns.

Today, the men and women of USS Ronald Reagan's Weapons Department, G-2 division, are responsible for managing the ship's armory and its components, providing weapons training, maintaining

“It's a badass gun. We use high-explosive, semi armor-piercing incendiary rounds, so it'll Swiss cheese a small boat in like five rounds.”

- PO3 Felix Dominguez



PO3 Travis Richardson, from Miami, fires a .50-caliber machine gun during a live-fire exercise on Ronald Reagan's fantail.



SN Taylor Hines, from Springfield, Illinois, fires an M240B machine gun during a live-fire exercise on Ronald Reagan's fantail.



G-2 personnel disassemble and perform maintenance on crew-served weapons in a Ronald Reagan weapons magazine. The ship's crew-served armament consists of the M9 service pistol, M4 rifle, M16 rifle, M14 rifle, M240 machine gun, M2HB .50-caliber machine gun, pyrotechnic pistols, drill rifles and M500 shotguns.

and operating the MK 38, 25 mm machine-gun system, maintaining the ship's weapons magazine sprinkler systems and providing torpedoes to the embarked Carrier Air Wing Five (CVW 5).

"We make the MK-54 and M-46 torpedo," said Petty Officer 3rd Class Angela Fair, a G-2 production supervisor from Panama City, Florida. "It's a complicated, yet simple system if you've done it a couple times, and it has a lot of different parts that are more fun than building a missile or a bomb. We attach everything — the parachute, the banding, the lugs, etc. It's really cool."

G-2's variations of tactical and training MK 46 and MK 54 are lightweight torpedoes designed to counter subsurface targets and can be launched from fixed or rotary-wing aircraft.

"HSM (Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron) 77's primary mission is anti-submarine warfare (ASW)," said Petty Officer 1st Class Paul Robertson, from Trenton, Michigan, assigned to HSM-77. "The squadron relies heavily upon G-2 to provide us with one of our primary ASW weapons, the MK 54 torpedo. The torpedoes built by G-2 personnel are essential to our mission and the success of HSM-77."

To support the mission of the Reagan Carrier Strike Group and CVW 5, Reagan may house hundreds-of-tons of missiles, bombs, torpedoes and other explosive



SN Katelynn Morgan, from Elsmere, Kentucky, disassembles an M9 service pistol for maintenance. The M9 service pistol is carried by Ronald Reagan armory and security reactionary force watch standers.

materials within the ship's weapons magazines.

"We have 39 magazine sprinkler systems on board," Fair said. "Basically, they are going to flood the magazines in case anything goes off, because if one goes off, another's going to go off."

According to Senior Chief Petty Officer Terrance Wright, G-2's leading chief petty officer, Reagan's magazine sprinklers can flood a magazine space in 45 minutes or less.

G-2's involvement with the sprinklers includes daily maintenance on their exterior components, as well as the routine monitoring and flushing of the system's components and lines to prevent build up and corrosion.

"The 30 people in our division hold

down a lot — the mag sprinkler systems for the magazines and all the weapons for security," Fair said. "That's two major divisions rolled up into us, and if we don't know the knowledge, then they're not going to know the knowledge. It's a lot of stuff."

Reagan's armory Sailors are responsible for the issue and receipt of 229 small firearms, 7,000 rounds of ammunition, 46 night-vision devices, high-security keys and locks for 38 weapons magazines, 10 ready-service lockers, and maintenance of 10 .50-caliber machine-gun mounts. They also provide weapons training to the ship's security reactionary force (SRF) and full-bore watchstanders.

"There will be a duty armorer ready to respond to any type of ship evolution. Twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days out of the year, the armory is manned up, operational and ready to go," said Petty Officer 3rd Class Anthony Layton, a G-2 armory supervisor from Auburn, Kentucky.

The ship's crew-served weapons include the M9 service pistol, M4 rifle, M16 rifle, M14 rifle, M240 machine gun, M2HB .50-caliber machine gun, pyrotechnic pistols, drill rifles and M500 shotguns.

"The daily life of an armorer in G-2 division starts with an inventory," Layton said. "Any time the watchstander is relieved by another qualified duty armorer, both oncoming and off-going do



SN Jonathan Ortiz, of Newark, New Jersey, assembles an M14 rifle in a Ronald Reagan weapons magazine.

a complete sight check of every piece of equipment or small arms we have in the armory and any weapons we have checked out to security personnel. Accountability, accountability, accountability. We have to be sure we have everything we're supposed to have."

Before Reagan Sailors can become armed sentries of the ship's SRF, they must qualify in each weapon they intend to carry.

"G-2 is essential to Reagan's Security Department, as they are our primary location for uploading and downloading all small arms and crew-serve weapons," said Petty Officer 2nd Class Lance Shults,

from Mount Pleasant, Texas. "Security also relies on G-2's RSO (Regional Security Office) qualified PO1s to qualify security personnel in small arms and crew-serve weapons. Without them, since Security doesn't have its own small arms/crew-serve instructors, Ronald Reagan would not meet force-protection requirements."

"We run qualifications twice a year for everyone to maintain proficiency on all weapons," said Petty Officer 1st Class, John Barkmeyer, G-2's leading petty officer, from Palm Springs, Florida. "That equates to approximately 1,200 individual courses of fire. For example, a security

patrolman will shoot three courses of fire for an M9 twice a year, so he or she will shoot that gun alone six times. That puts us in the ball park of around 170,000 rounds yearly for security forces."

Another aspect of G-2's role is the maintenance and operation of the ship's MK 38 Mod 2 machine gun systems. The MK 38 Mod 2 is a single-barrel, air-cooled, heavy machine gun with an effective range of up to 2,700 yards.

"The MK 38 is important to our mission as a tool to aid the protection of the ship," said Petty Officer 3rd Class Felix Dominguez, a G-2 MK 38 technician from San Antonio. "Not only can it put rounds down range, but it can also be used as a surveillance tool, monitoring the sides of the ship at all four corners."

Each of the ship's MK 38 weapons systems incorporates a forward-looking infrared sensor, a closed-circuit television camera and a laser rangefinder.

"The MK 38 system is primarily for fast-moving small to medium-sized surface craft," said Dominguez.

According to Dominguez, the MK 38 would be ideal for preventing an attack like the one on USS Cole, which was bombed Oct. 12, 2000, by a small boat carrying explosives and two suicide bombers.

"We'd take out those boats," he said. "My favorite part is watching the system operate to its full potential when we have a shoot and it puts rounds on target as it is supposed to, knowing that all my sweat and blood is not wasted. And it's a badass gun. We use high-explosive, semi armor-piercing incendiary rounds, so it'll Swiss cheese a small boat in like five rounds. If a projectile like that were to hit a person, you'd be lucky to have a pair of boots left."

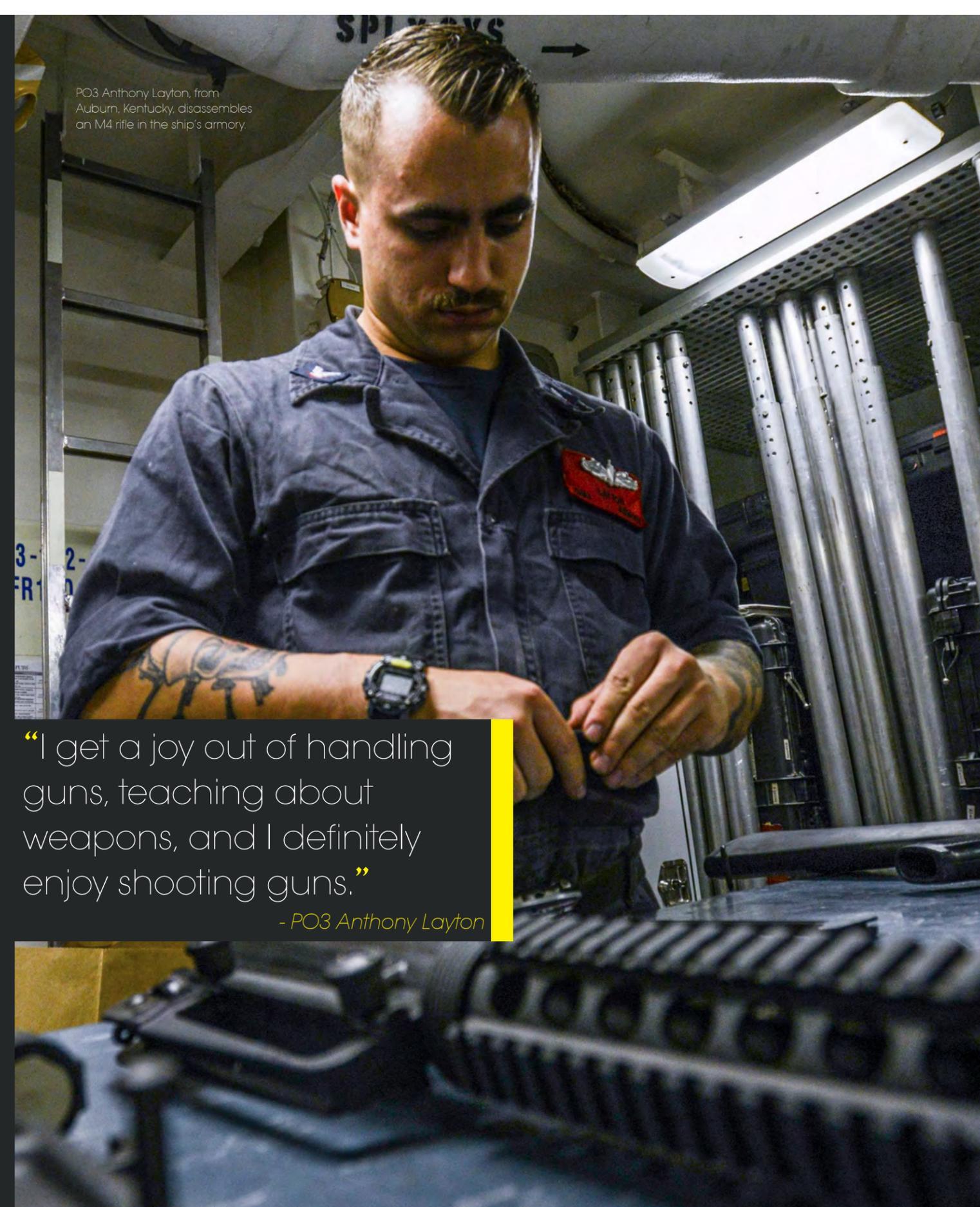
In the hours of anxious preparation leading up to each gun shoot, G-2 Sailors are cleaning, logging and inspecting each weapon. Then the moment arrives, and the call for 'open range' resonates against the ship's haze-gray bulkheads and nonskid decks. A green flag is raised,



Ronald Reagan conducts a live-fire exercise of its MK 38 Mod 2 machine gun. The MK 38 Mod 2 is a single-barrel, air-cooled, heavy machine gun with an effective range of up to 2,700 yards.



PO3 Felix Dominguez, from San Antonio, and SN Walter Johnson, from Redlands, California, feed 25 mm rounds into a storage container following a live-fire exercise of the MK 38 Mod 2 weapons system.



PO3 Anthony Layton, from Auburn, Kentucky, disassembles an M4 rifle in the ship's armory.

"I get a joy out of handling guns, teaching about weapons, and I definitely enjoy shooting guns."

- PO3 Anthony Layton



PO3 India Campbell, from Euclid, Ohio, fires a .50-caliber machine gun during a live-fire exercise on Ronald Reagan's fantail.

one marked with the notorious crossed cannons of the gunner's mate. Now, time seems to accelerate, and hours go by in what seems to be a flash. Clusters of rapid fire roar as Sailors train their sites on their targets and piles of hot brass casings build at their feet, while shipmates motivate each other through each course of fire.

"Reload, go, go, go!"

"The best part of my job is watching my guys and gals train and provide weapons fundamentals to the ship," said Wright.

"I wouldn't trade it for anything in the world," Layton said. "You can ask my peers. I get a joy out of handling guns, teaching about weapons, and I definitely enjoy shooting guns. It's an honor to be in charge of the only forward-deployed carrier's ship's armory. It really is a great privilege and I'm proud of it."

For the nostalgic hours following each gun shoot, G-2 is performing maintenance — breaking down each weapon to clean every component and every crevice.

"If we ever needed these small arms for anything, we are the people who know how to do it," Fair said. "Security has its weapons, but at the same time, they don't train like we do, like taking it apart and putting it back together. If a gun malfunctions or something happens while we are trying to use it for real wartime, then we're going to know how to fix it right there on the spot and get right back in there."

Today, just as the gunner and his mates at the inception of the Navy filled cartridges of powder and cleaned their muskets, blunderbusses and heavy cannons, the men and women of G-2 hold a close bond with their weapons. Day and night, with fingers crowned by dull-blue fingernails filled with the carbon and soot from expended rounds, G-2 proudly ensures Ronald Reagan is ready for battle.

"Got guns? Get some!" Ⓢ

NATIONAL AMERICAN INDIAN HERITAGE MONTH

NOVEMBER 2016

SERVING OUR NATIONS



566
FEDERALLY
RECOGNIZED
TRIBES

Mt. Fuji



Story and photos by PO3 Christopher Gordon

Along with eating fresh sushi, going to a sumo match or riding the Shinkansen (bullet train), one of the most popular things to do in Japan is hiking the world-famous Mt. Fuji. But make no mistake, the journey up Japan's highest mountain is no easy quest.

There are many ways to challenge Fuji-San, but there are only two options for those looking to make the climb with Ronald Reagan's Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) Department: a one-day or a two-day trip. Both are only offered from July to August due to heavy snow and hazardous conditions during cooler seasons. The one-day trip leaves Yokosuka at 1:00 a.m., arrives at the base of the mountain at around 4:30 a.m., then returns to Yokosuka at 4:00 p.m., giving you 11.5 hours to get to the top, enjoy the view, then head right back down. I did the two-day trip.

The Hike Day 1

The bus leaves at 4:00 a.m. from Yokosuka and arrives at Fuji around 7:30 a.m., but unlike the one-day trip, the goal is to reach the Fuji San Hotel, about 2/3 of the way up, by 5:00 p.m. This allows a bit more time to hike the windy, steep paths. It also allows people that suffer from altitude sickness get acclimated – if they can make it that far.

Starting off as a well manicured, zig-zagging path made out of red lava rock, the trail eventually becomes a little more difficult of a climb. You sometimes have to use both hands and feet to reach certain points.

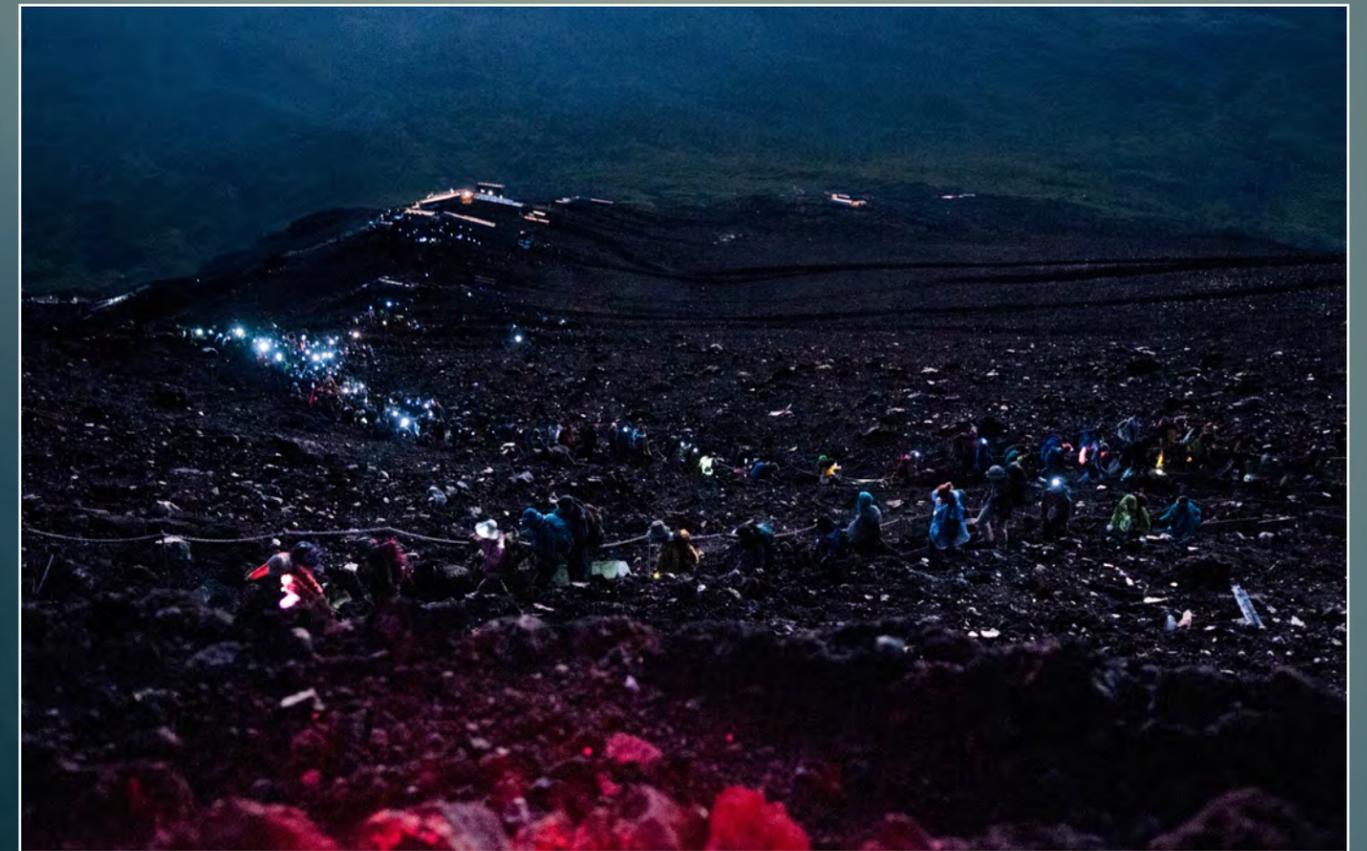


As you near the Fuji San Hotel, the path becomes a bit more tame again. Along the path are stations where you can sit down, purchase food, water, canned air or a brand for walking sticks. Each brand costs you between 300 to 500 yen and some stations offer multiple brands. Be prepared to spend a total of almost 10,000 yen for the walking stick and full assortment of brands.

The Hike Day 2



The hotel consists of a small room with rows of sleeping bags shoulder to shoulder with one another, where climbers have a few hours to have some food and sleep. You can buy food from a limited Japanese menu and one of the employees will wake you up at 1:30 a.m. to continue the journey. Then, the climb to the top continues through the darkness, toward the apex, where most climbers are hoping to see the sunrise.



Even in the middle of the night, there is a constant stream of hikers, endlessly climbing the dark maze to the top. Even though it's summer, it's still freezing cold outside, especially as you near the top. If you make it before the sunrise, you have time to get that last stamp for your walking stick, buy some souvenirs only found on the summit or eat a warm bowl of ramen.

The Apex

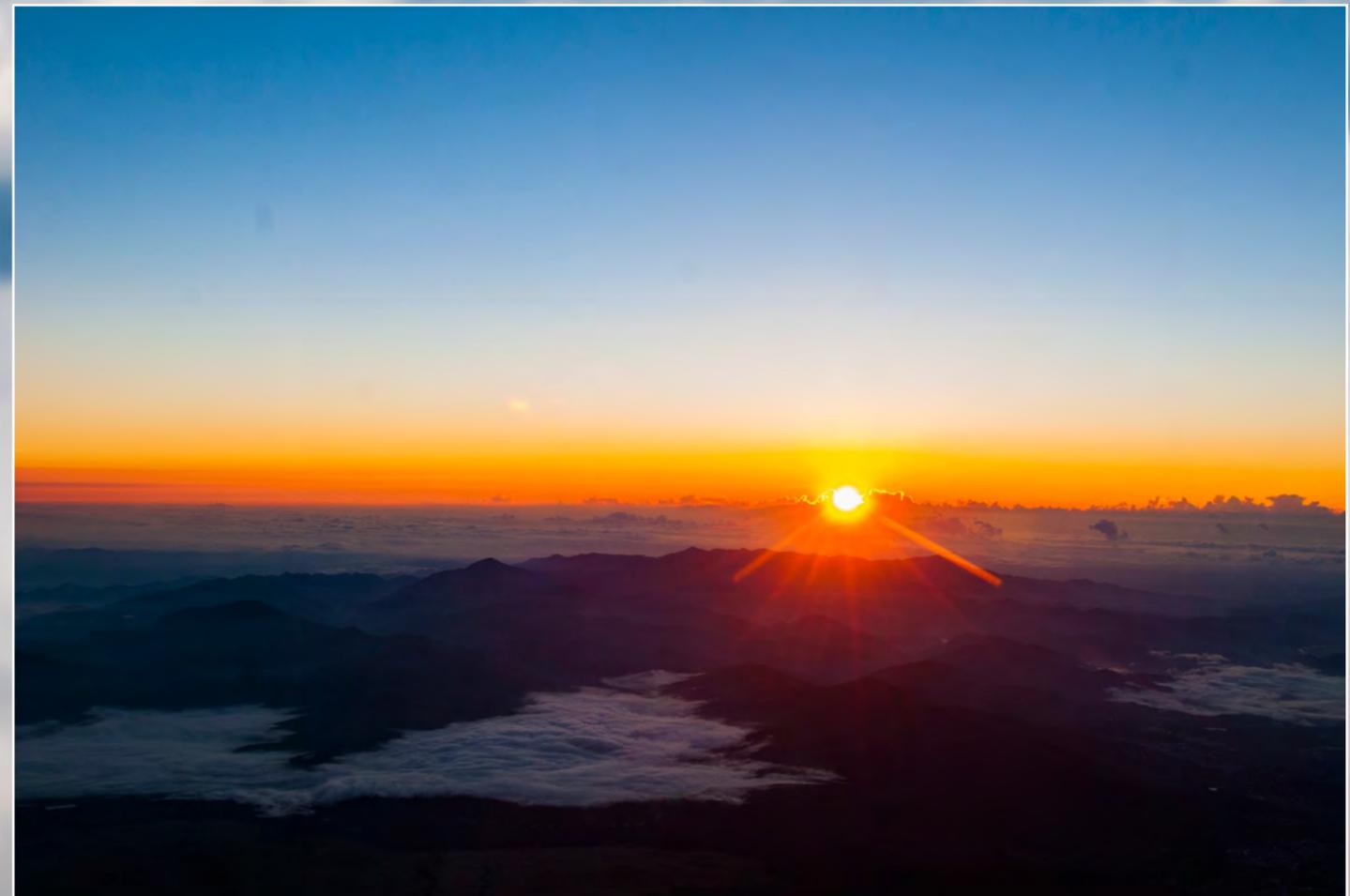
Ever so slowly, the sky turns from a midnight black to a deep purple, then from purple to blue, and blue to yellow. Finally, the sky fills with a beautiful, rich orange. As the sun rises, everyone's eyes are locked towards the eastern sky, fully absorbed in "goraiko" – the arrival of light. Finally, after the sun rises above the horizon and the cold creeps into your already-numb toes, it's time for your decent.



"Goraiko"

The trip down takes half as long as the hike up and consists entirely of loose lava rock, making for unsure footing and small shards stuck in your boots. At this point of the hike, the walking stick seems well worth the price.

From decked-out walking sticks to one of the most beautiful sunrises you'll ever see, Mt. Fuji has a lot to offer. If you have thought about climbing Mt. Fuji, I suggest you don't wait. The climbing season is short and your time in Japan may be too. Not only will you finally be able to tell friends and family back home "yes, I climbed Mt. Fuji," but you will leave Japan knowing you have seen the country from a one of its most unique perspectives.





SEVENTYSIXER
USS RONALD REAGAN

SN Maurice Couch, from Atlanta, assigned to the "Dambusters" of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 195, connects a fuel sample adaptor to an F/A-18E Super Hornet. (Photo by PO3 Nathan Burke)